You're a doctor!
Okay, not a doctor, but you might as well be, because despite only technically being a nurse, you're the only person in your hospital qualified to work with monsters and do soul healing.
So you're a little overworked, and a little tired, but hey! It's a rewarding job! Monsters are great! You're saving lives!
...and then there's this absolute brat of a skeleton coming in with a bullet wound, and your entire life gets turned upside down as you try to aid him on his road to recovery.
This was inspired by Melda_Burke's "Secretly Yours" which you can find the link to in the inspired by. Funny thing is that they said I inspired them with my Red on the Walls stuff??? Full circle yo.

Anywho this first chapter is a little squished bc I had originally tried to write it as a one shot. I hope it isn't too painful.
Enjoy!

See the end of the work for more notes.

- Inspired by Secretly Yours by Melda_Burke
Hello, Nurse!

It had taken some doing, but you finally did it.

You graduated top of your class in monster medicine and soul handling.

You had been wanting to do it ever since the monsters had appeared, knowing that you had a talent as a mage healer that begged to be utilized, even going so far as restart your entire college career in order to do it. You'd been retaught everything you knew about medicine, and none of it made any logical sense for a long few semesters, and even after two years, you had only managed to finish nursing school.

So the bad news is, top of your class means nearly nothing in such a small industry, and you still have several long years of school left before you can claim your doctorate.

The good news, though, is that the world needs you. Even as a nurse practitioner, you are invaluable to any hospital, and as such you had landed a pretty hefty salary even though you were technically still an intern.

More bad news? You're overworked, overtired, and have no choice but to see every monster that comes through the door. You practically live at the hospital, and when you aren't there, you're on call.

But that's alright. You don't mind. In the few months you've been working, you've been feeling more and more fulfilled. You've even helped birth a few monster babies! You've saved several monsters from dusting, but luckily you hadn't had any real emergencies. Monsters seemed to be a very cautious, untrusting folk, so they tended to stay out of trouble.

That is, until the night that a tall skeleton had appeared at the ER entrance, bullet lodged in his sternum and shedding shimmery dust with every step he insisted on taking himself.

He was ornery, cussing out anyone who tried to touch him, hand planted firmly over the bullet so nobody could touch it, a fear in his eyes that you felt from across the room.

When he had finally passed out, you had them rush him to OR while the receptionist hurriedly tried to call the next of kin for you, the whole staff afraid they might have their first monster death on their hands.

You flipped through his chart for the thousandth time.

Of course the difficult skeleton hadn't been carrying any kind of identification, so of course you hadn't been able to notify his next of kin. Luckily, the man had pulled through just fine, thanks to your healing hands.

No, literally. The bullet had grazed his soul, and you had literally had to channel your own healing magic to keep him from dusting.

You checked over the machines in front of you again, almost obsessively. He was stable, thank God, even if his wounds were more than superficial. He thankfully has very high HoPe...although that was probably due to his high LV, which made you wonder what kinda gangster you had saved. Still, you were an optimistic person--everyone can be a good person, even if they've done bad things.
A machine started beeping, and then flatlined, and you whirled around to see the skeleton panicking, yanking cords and wires off of him in a hurry.

“Stop!” You squeaked, lunging to stop him from removing the PICC line supplying what equated to a saline solution to him.

He shrieked, clearly startled by your sudden attack. Before you knew it, he was up against the wall, groping for the window latch as sharpened bones appeared out of nowhere to rain down in your direction.

You dodged to the best of your ability, but mostly for his sake. The attacks were mostly harmless, and there was no intention to kill so they only pierced your clothes before disintegrating against your skin. His fear was palpable in every step you took forward, so you put your hands up in surrender, trying to show you weren't going to harm him.

“Mr. Skeleton, you need to calm down! Your wounds are still very serious, and if you don't return to bed your soul may begin to crack again.”

He paused his assault, sockets narrowing at you even as he began to shake, suspiciously eyeing the dust shimmering to the floor. In the end, he seemed to decide it was in his best interest to listen.

“Don't touch me, human scum!” He hissed as you gripped his arm to steady him. His voice was gravelly and vicious, affected as if trying to mask his fear. You ignored him, pushing him firmly down on the bed and back against the pillows. “I said don't touch me! I am the Great and Terrible Papyrus and you shall not lay your filthy hands on--Ehhh…”

The soft green light of your healing hands silenced him as you healed an ache he clearly hadn't realized he'd been feeling.

“There, that's better, isn't it?” You cooed disarmingly, and though he still watched you like a hawk, he didn't protest. “So your name is Papyrus, is it?”

“Yes.” The word was clipped, laced with petulance you might see in a child. You picked up his chart and turned to the contact information page.

“Well, Papyrus, you didn't have any ID or record on you, so if you could just give us some kind of contact to call for you, then we can get started on the process of getting you all healed up and checked out. How does that sound?”

He nodded curtly. “Sans. My elder brother.”

You nodded, scribbling that down. He recited the number for you, and you handed the info off to Kyle, the nurse's aide assisting you.

“Wait!” He sat up, wincing. “Can...can I make the call?”

You hummed quietly. You can't really let him do that for the first call. “Tell you what. I will call him, and then next time, when you aren't delirious from healing magic, you can make the call.”

“I'm not deliri...delirioush.” He slurred, the sedation in your healing magic taking effect as he struggled to keep his sockets open. “Fugg you, I can make a...a phone call...jus' fine…”

You noted that his pomp seemed to deflate, and a natural Brooklyn accent seemed to slip into his words. It was...kinda cute.
“Sleep, Papyrus. I will call your brother.”

He made a disgruntled noise of argument, but fell back against the pillows with a groan, out like a light.

“he’s been what?!?”

“We suspect it may have been a gang-related accident,” you said calmly, fingers sliding down to Papyrus’ wrist to measure his magic output. It was similar to checking for a heart rate, and you weren’t surprised to find the tenacious skeleton’s output was ideal. “He was wearing a gang symbol when he came in, and the bullet appeared to have been from a type of gun not legally sold in this area.”

“sonuva…” The man on the other end, Sans, sighed in frustration, and you heard a concerned second voice, though they went unanswered. “how is he?”

“Alive and kicking. Threw some bones at me when he woke.”

“an’ i bet it wasn't the fun kinda bone. alright, i’ll come pick the asshole up--”

“Oh, no, he isn't ready for release just yet,” you said quickly. “Today we just need you to come by and sign the paperwork permitting us further treatment. The damage was severe, though my healing and the magitech we keep on hand has kept him comfortable.”

Silence, then some shuffling and a mattress groaning that sounded like he was getting out of bed.

“a’ight. where?”
Visceral Detail

Chapter Summary

Your new charge is proving to be difficult.
Also, what the hell happened to THAT guy?!

Chapter Notes

I'm so happy you guys like this so far!
Here's some more of no-funny-business nurse and brat!Boss

Warning: Gore

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sans (or Red, as he introduced himself) came and went, obviously on edge about something as he signed off on the treatment. He was shorter and stockier than Papyrus, teeth just as sharp and one of them a false gold. He looked like he’d rather be anywhere else, but when he stuck his head into the private room to find his brother sleeping, you watched the tension release and his face contort into a relieved sort of worry.

The care plan would take several weeks of hospitalization, mostly because you're the only healer on staff and especially the only qualified monster care technician. He grumbled a bit about that, but in the end it just can't be helped.

Then you made your usual rounds, checking on the various monsters in the rooms as well as answering a few monster visits to the clinic, which were always a hoot.

“Yes, Mr. Gerson, I am positive that regular turtles do not have higher levels of sentience. Your pet is in perfect health.”

“...You got a spear stuck where? How...nevermind, let’s just get to work.”

“Lesser Dog, this is the third foxtail I have removed from your nose this month. Haven't you learned not to sniff these flowers?”

“Not every river is as clean as the one underground. You need to wash more thoroughly after swimming.”

After sending off one of the many, many rabbit babies with an aspirin for his common fever, Kyle caught your attention.

“Uh, tried to check the vitals in room 3, but…” He shifted, showing you the jagged hole in his scrubs shirt.

Sigh. Room 3 was the bratty skeleton. Yes, you just mentally called him a brat--other nurses and even doctors have been coming to you all day complaining about him--up out of bed, trying to
escape, yelling at nurses to let him use the phone to “Call my useless brother and have him take me out of this sad excuse for a hospital!”, etc.

And they’ve had to replace his PICC three times today!

“A’ight Kyle. You’re off right?”

“Yeah, he’s my last round.”

“Go ahead and go, I’ll take care of him.”

Kyle beamed at you, thanking you as you slipped past to make a beeline for room 3.

He was rattling the window when you came in, trying to figure out the new magic-proof locks that all the monster rooms had. You took his distraction as a chance to look around the room, which he had all but upended. The funny thing was, nothing was broken, and everything still seemed...neatly arranged. As if he only placed the IV stand on the floor, instead of tossed it. Like he wanted it to look a mess, but that he was also a neat freak, or feared breaking something.

You glanced at the whiteboard outside his room, and somebody had scrawled “SEDATE OFTEN” underneath his name, which you took the moment to erase.

By now he had noticed you were there, and had returned to his bed to hide behind the many pillows he had demanded from the other nurses.

“Fight me!” He growled, before you could say anything. “I’ll defeat you and then I’ll be free of this rotten prison!”

You only smiled and gently removed the pillows blocking him from you to sit on the edge of the bed. “Nah, it’s no fun fighting an injured guy. Maybe when you're better?”

“I--”

You shushed him, taking his wrist gently and running your hand along the arm to find that pulse of magic. He sputtered and snatched his arm away.

“What are you doing?! I thought you were a doctor!”

“Nurse practitioner,” you corrected, retrieving the arm more firmly this time. “And I'm only checking your magic output, so sit still.”

He did as he was told, almost too well, locking up as you once again slid your hand down his radius until you felt the steady pulse of magic.

“Alright, looks good,” you nodded, before turning to him. He was a deep grapefruit orange, like rust, and he looked away immediately when you met his stare. “Okay...shirt off.”

He gasped, scandalized, eyesockets latching onto you again with a looks of flustered shock. “Aren't you supposed to be a professional, you tramp?!”

“So I can see the wound ,” you reminded, chiding him in the same tone you used for your younger cousins. He really made it easy to baby him, in a way.

This made him burn a much brighter vermilion, followed by a small, broken “OH.”

He obediently, if hesitantly, removed his shirt, and you made a mental note to get the poor guy
some real pajamas—if he's gonna be here for the next two weeks, he needs something more comfortable than the paper hospital gowns. He’s pretty tall, so the gowns hardly come past his pelvis, which has to be uncomfortable, and you were beginning to wonder where you might even find clothes tall enough for him.

Huh. When he’s this close, and he’s being so quiet, you noticed that he smells like chocolate. Well, more like...hot cocoa. And mahogany. Your father’s house always smelled the same, what with the way your step-mom was constantly baking. It was a sentimental smell, for you, and you had to resist the urge to lean in and inhale deeply—that would just be plain weird.

You removed the bandage gently (it wasn't strictly necessary to bandage it, but the way he’s been, you're glad you did--he seems like the type to pick at it) and examined the deep spider web of cracks on his sternum, originating from the crater in the middle.

Now that he’s awake and stable, you need to pull the damned bullet out, but the way he’s leaning away from you makes it a risky maneuver--and the way he hates cooperating, you have a feeling he wouldn't sit still if you asked.

There was a soft gasp above you, and you realize this is the first time he's seen it.

“You okay up there, big guy?” You asked cheekily.

“I am perfectly fine! Nothing startles the Great and Terrible Papyrus!” He scoffed, moving as if to fold his arms--but then he remembered you were still examining his chest and let his arms fall to the side again.

“Oh, of course not,” you mused, humoring him. “Thanks goodness you aren't one of those fake tough guys who pretend nothing can hurt him.”

His reaction was priceless, his face morphing from bravado to confused shock. “Y...Yes! Thank goodness for that.”

“I mean, you've been so cooperative with me,” you continued, milking it just a little. “And only the toughest of tough guys know when to sit back and let a nurse do her job. You must be really tough.”

Your inner English nerd is cringing at the amount of times you just used the word ‘tough’, but it had the desired effect because he puffed up considerably, a smug look on his face as he moved to angle his injury toward you.

“Of course! I am the toughest!” He was practically preening at your saccharine words, and you internally shook your head. Easy-peasy, you had this guy’s number from the start.

“Good, because this might pinch a bit.”


Papyrus wanted nothing more than to pace angrily, maybe wreck the room a little more, or straight up walk out of the hospital altogether. However, the pain had increased tenfold and he was bedridden for the time being.

He hated this stupid place. Everyone here was dumb as bricks, they don't know how to make tea correctly, the pillows are lumpy and--
...and he's mouthing off out loud right now, to which you are rolling your eyes as you pick up his carefully constructed tornado of a room. He had been trying to make a trap, but of course he didn't have all the parts needed. What kind of hospital doesn't keep scalpels laying about?!

In any case you navigated the mess flawlessly, which he would have been impressed by if he weren't so sour with you.

You had ripped the bullet from his chest with little to no warning, and it had by no means *pinched a bit*. He had a high pain tolerance, and even he shrieked like a--eh, he means he bellowed. Like a man.

...Who is he kidding? This is all in his head anyway. He had shrieked like a tiny human child. It had fucking *hurt*, okay? Like you had ripped a piece of *bone* off of him. If he had known that getting shot would be this much of a literal pain in his sternum, then maybe he might have taken his brother’s advice and laid off on the shitty gang stuff.

He was just trying to do some good. Perhaps it’s all backwards, but...his only marketable skills are intimidation and a penchant for violence. Frisk had worked so hard to get them all up here, and all he wanted to do was to prove to them that he wasn't a total waste of existence.

“You aren't a waste of existence.”

He jumped as you set a mug of tea down on his bedside table.

“Excuse me?!”

“Nothing. Drink your tea.” You said, shopping him up from the pillows to fluff it dutifully. He hated to admit it, but you did know how to take care of someone.

Not that he needed taking care of.

He's a grown monster.

He doesn't like being catered to. He definitely doesn't like having you caress his wrists to “check his magic” or fluffing his pillows or cleaning his room or...making him tea...bringing him several books to read even though it was clearly out of your way...nothing like that, no, he...hates being babied.

He doesn't need taking care of!

“Alright. I am officially off, so this is the last you’ll see of me until morni--”

You were cut off by a sharp beeping, and you furrowed your brow as you checked your pager device, before picking up the receiver of the phone on the wall and dialing an extension.

“Yeah, it’s me.” You said, and immediately your face went from plain annoyance to shock. “*That* bad? Jeez...okay, I'll be right down...no, I dunno about regrowing teeth, but I'll try.”

Then you hung up, picked up your coat off the back of the chair, and took off without so much as a goodbye.

Seconds later, when Sans appeared in his room, he was hardly surprised.

Silas Werscher.
He'd been in a time or two before--usually low-grade road rash or something similar from his bad habit of racing bikes. You usually didn't deal with such stuff--magic in the IVs meant you only had to put your hands in on emergency basis with humans.

But this...this was beyond an emergency.

He was unrecognizable but for the cheesy cursive tattoo of his name on his back, visible because they had cut and peeled the shirt off. He was coated in what looked like three layers of his own blood, missing half his fucking teeth, and his limbs were mangled and broken in ways you honestly wish you could unsee.

You had an iron stomach, but even this sight made you queasy, as you channeled your healing directly into keeping his brain alive, urging his body to right itself. The other nurses around you snapped limbs back into place, dragging ragged breaths and horrified screams from the man even as you soothed the ache.

It felt like hours, especially due to your magic exhaustion, but when you checked the final stabilization time, it had only been about ten minutes.

Silas breathed peacefully behind his breathing mask as they wheeled him out of the OR and into the ICU to keep close watch on him. You had managed to stem the bleeding and fix any major, life-threatening wounds, but he was still severely injured. After you rested, you would have to stop back in and see if you can make him grow new teeth, or at least fix the mess that was the ones he had left.

Nobody had any idea what had happened to him--he had shown up out of the blue at the ER door and the cameras had caught absolutely nothing. You were hoping he had a little bit of memory of the incident when he wakes, but honestly? It's not your job to find out what, it’s just your job to fix it.

Also, Silas is enough of an asshole that he probably deserved it. Not to almost die, but to get punched, at least. Whoever he pissed off was probably either incredibly volatile or simply liked violence.

Speaking of which, you left your purse in Papyrus’ room.

You should probably fully clean up first, but it isn't that bad. After your smock and gloves were discarded, the rest would have to be your washing machine’s problem. You wondered idly, as you made your way to room 3, if you should just trash the scrubs completely and buy new ones.

Your hand met the knob when you paused, hearing a voice that was not Papyrus’.

“...ya ain’t helpin’ nobody by passin’ out dirty greenbacks in the ‘hood.”

You recognized that voice...Red. The brother. But it was way past visiting hours--what is he even doing here?

“ya wanna help people? do it the right way. it ain’t gonna ruin yer ‘tough guy’ rep, a’ight? i know ya want people to like ya an’ all, but ya gotta like yerself b’fore anyone else is drawn to you. respect yerself an’ people will learn to respect you.”

You almost snorted. That's sound advice for the volatile skeleton, actually. There was a short pause, then Red seemed to cut Papyrus’ comment short before he could speak.

“don’t give me any of that ‘great papyrus’ b.s., we both know it’s an act, so cut it out. ya got issues
an’ that’s probably my fault. i’m sorry i wasn’t the older brother i shoulda been, okay? i wasn’t there when ya needed me.”

Oh. This is bordering on a conversation you shouldn't be listening in on now.

“Don’t.” Papyrus seethed, a warning in his tone, one that fell flat underneath the weight of his pettiness. “Don’t fuckin’ start that sappy shit. I’ll make a deal with you, brother. If you give up on that girl, I’ll go legit.”

Girl? Does he mean the girlfriend Red mentioned earlier? You had gotten the impression that Papyrus and Red had a strained relationship, but...

Red sighed. “no. norry, bro. she’s my life.”

“Yes, she’ll be your death, too!”

There was a clatter and it was time to intervene, but when you opened the door, you found nobody there except for Papyrus, who was hurling whatever he could reach at the area his brother's shadow had been standing in.

You rushed over to grab his arm before he could throw the mug of tea you had placed there earlier, and he growled, looking at you with a furrowed brow before trying not to flinch as he struggled to get away from you.

He hissed, recoiling the moment you released him. He regarded you from his new spot on the other side of the bed for a moment, before coughing and standing up straighter.

“You look like somebody played a nasty trick on you at prom.”

What? He saw your blank stare and gestured to your scrubs, and you let out a little laugh--the blood! He was making a reference to Carrie.

“So, the big, bad skeleton watches cult classic slasher flicks?”

“I would hardly call Carrie a cult classic,” he scoffed, moving to cross his arms, then grimacing in pain and settling for clenching his fists. “Perhaps you’ve forgotten that Stephen King is an unparalleled master of the horror genre, but seeing as you are but a simple-minded human I suppose I can let that slide.”

You held up a hand in a stop gesture. “I'm sorry, unparalleled? Are we forgetting Stanley Kubrick? Quentin Tarantino? Guillermo del Toro?”

He bristled visibly, though a flash of something crossed his face that suggested he was actually impressed by your knowledge.

“Are you suggesting that The Shining ’s overall success is due to Kubrick’s portrayal, and not King’s premise?”

“Subjectively speaking, the movie made more.”

His teeth ground audibly, and his eyelights flared. You ducked as one of his pillows came sailing across the bed at you.

“Augh! FIGHT ME!”
I had originally intended for Pap to get really emotional about Sans' conversation, but he's so deep in his Tsundere that I don't think even he knows it upset him.
You groaned and blinked a bleary eye at the clock, which told you you had slept in until seven this time.

Well, that's better than your last day off (sorry-- on call ) where you still woke up at three and couldn't go back to sleep. But you can't blame yourself for sleeping in this time, considering how exhausting yesterday had been.

First Papyrus and his bullet wound had made sure to make you work through your break the night before, and then the clinic, then more of Papyrus' antics, and then Silas' issue. After Papyrus chased you out of his room to the best of his somewhat crippled ability (you still hold firm that Stephen King is a better novelist than director) you had taken the opportunity to duck out before anything else happened, and had actually gotten to sleep through the night for once.

You checked your phone and you were delighted to find nothing that required you back at work, so you dropped your head like lead and tried to sleep some more.

“Eliza, we aren't supposed to be up here,” you grumbled, and your twin sister only shook her head and continued to pull you earnestly up the trail.

“But can't you hear it?” She squeaked, desperation lacing her voice. Even at eleven years old, she had always had a special sense about people in need. “Sis, the mountain is crying! Somebody needs our help!”

She paused and turned to grasp your hands.

“Ellie, don't--” you protested, but she silenced you with a finger to your lips.

“Why do we have this gift if not to help others?” She asked quietly, the golden glow in her chest glowing slightly brighter. “You want to be a doctor, right? Well, doctors help people!”

“I want to not die on a mountain, too, Ellie,” you gibbed, and your twin only laughed and shook
her head...before releasing your hands.

Terror filled your chest as you chased her up the trail, trying to catch her hand and make her stop, make her see that if she keeps going--

Your hand merely grazed hers as she disappeared into the dark of the mountain.

You never saw her again.

You were woken by loud meowing outside your door, and the clock said 9am this time.

As good as it’ll get, even though you don't feel rested. You never feel rested after dreaming about Eliza.

You know now that she probably perished underground. When monsters came to the surface, the King, Asgore, a hulking beast of a man with dark hair and even darker eyes, had confessed to his sins. He had used the souls of fallen human children in an attempt to break the barrier. The list of names of the children was still yet unreleased, though your family was anxiously awaiting the day it came out to see if Eliza was on there.

Even if she is, she probably gave her soul up willingly, you think. She had always been too kind, too pure...if somebody needed what she had, she would give it without a second thought, so if the monsters had needed her soul, you've no doubt she'd have offered it.

You swiped your phone off the bedside table, noting a text from your roommate that kept you from answering the pleading meows at the door.

Victor: Don't believe Hobbes’ lies. He was fed this morning at 8 and even got wet food.

You snickered at the idea of Hobbes trying to take advantage of you--it happened all the time, since you were hardly home. He took the time to demand your attention, receive all the rubbies, and eat twice as much. Normally you'd feed him anyway, but he was getting damn fat, and the vet said he needed a stricter schedule, so the churlish tabby would have to deal.

“No, you already ate,” you scolded the cat as he rubs and purrs and meows around your socked feet as you pad lightly into the kitchen.

Your apartment is spacious, with several empty guest rooms on top of your own room and Victor’s. You had gotten the upgraded place when you started getting paid at Ebott Mercy (you weren't kidding when you said you made a hefty salary) but then you had realized it was a very lonely, messy place when you were all by yourself. As your hours got longer, you had worried about Hobbes not getting the care he needed, and as such you had basically moved your best friend into your guest room without really asking.

Victor had taken it all in stride, of course, happy to be free of his parents’ house and also happy to mother you like you mother literally everyone else you know. He cleaned up after you both, took care of Hobbes, and, bless his soul, had even left some leftover homemade chinese food in the fridge for you.

You warmed it up, giving Hobbes a nibble of the chicken from your chopstick (hey, he’s too cute
to resist) as it turned in the microwave, and hoisted yourself up on the counter to scroll through news on your phone.

 Mostly celebrity bullshit, but there were some gems.

-Dog saves boy from cougar attack.

-Monster scientist becomes first monster to earn official accolades for work on relative theory and renewable energy.

-King comes clean--list of Ebott's lost children to be released once families are notified.

-Cat goes viral with the affectionate way it sleeps.

Woah. Wait. What?

You scrolled back up and opened the article on Asgore, and though it seems more like clickbait than anything, there does seem to be truth to it. You take the moment to send the article to your dad and step-mom, hoping they can get the info directly from their lawyers.

A little bundle of nerves settles in your stomach, and now you aren't very hungry. You leave the chinese food in the microwave and grab your favorite sweatshirt.

Maybe a walk will clear your mind.

Mabel didn't even look up from her novel when the monster approached the nurse’s counter. Why should she bother? The first person to acknowledge him would have to deal with him, and it was Karen’s turn this time.

Still, it was hard to ignore a 7-foot reminder of one’s own mortality, isn't it? In all her years as a nurse at Ebott Mercy, she had never seen a skeleton before, at least not without also seeing lots of blood and guts that didn't belong on the outside. The fact that he had nothing over his bones but an ill-fitting hospital gown meant that she was very aware of how terrifying he was...if she hadn't seen practically everything by now, she might even be intimidated by the way he was tapping his foot impatiently.

“You! Human!” He growled, but she didn't even blink. She'd been called everything under the sun, he'd have to try harder than that. “Human nurse! I demand to know where the healer is!”

Oh, is that all?

Mabel chanced a glance up at his scowling skull. He was clearly very unhappy, hand absently scratching at the bandages over his chest. He looked like he hadn't slept very well, if a skeleton could look tired.

“If I tell you, will you lay down?” She asked, staring at him from over her spectacles.

“Perhaps,” he sniffed. “It has come to my attention that she is the only worthless human in this place that knows how to make a proper cup of tea, and seeing as the last time she has done so was last night, I would say that I am overdue for another!”
“Well, tough toenails, boy,” Mabel snorted, standing from her seat to stare him down. “It's her day off.”

“Day…” His stance sharpened, his sockets squinted angrily. With the large scar-like cracks over one socket, he almost looked menacing—the hospital gown made him look less so, especially since he was self-consciously tugging it down even as he drew himself tall. “Day off? I have been shot, and the only human who knows a thing or two about healing is taking a day off?!”

“That generally happens when you have to work a double shift because a snotty brat gets shot and demands you stay through two breaks,” she responded sharply. “I'd say she's earned the break, and if you think I'm gonna call her in just so you can have another cup of tea, you are sorely mistaken.”

“But--”

“But nothin', now turn around and march your little tailbone right back to bed!”

Papyrus blinked as the nurse extended a manicured finger to point to his room, raising a stern brow at him as he hesitated. When she didn't budge, he kind of...obeyed.

Nyeh. His chest hurts anyways. He was already going to go back to bed. It definitely wasn't because the lady reminded him of the queen, that definitely wasn't it, because he wasn't scared of the queen either. At all. Nope.

Regardless, he found himself back in bed, sulking more than a little bit, pretending to read one of the books you lent him.

He scratched absentmindedly at his bandages, knowing that you'd probably smack his hand if you caught him. He wished he could just take them off and pick out the dead pieces of bone so it didn't itch anymore. But he can't do that, or you'd be mad when you came back and--

Wait! He doesn't care if you get mad!

He growled, tossing the book across the room.

Ha! Take that! He doesn't need your stupid books or your tea! He doesn't need you checking in on him when the other nurses avoid his room like the plague! He doesn't need you to fluff his pillows, or check his pulse so casually like you aren't the closest thing to positive, non-violent physical contact that he's had in months!

He doesn't miss you!

“Gee, I didn't think that book was that bad.”

His skull whipped around so fast that he made himself dizzy, the sound of your voice disgustingly familiar and soothing.

You stood in the doorway with your brows raised in question, hair loose to tumble around your shoulders and no lab coat to hide your comfy gray sweater and navy yoga pants.

“Well, I was just gonna stop by and bring Kyle coffee…” You shook the frappucino in your hand pointedly. Then you held up a shopping bag in your other hand. “But if you're gonna be a dick
about it, then I guess you don't need these pajamas I bought. I can take them home and hem them up for my roommate."

“P...pajamas?” He asked, hands consciously gripping the hem of the hospital gown. It was frighteningly short and degrading to wear...pajamas might be better. But he was immediately suspicious of anyone that tried to give him things without asking for anything in return. “You brought me a present?”

“It's really a gift for everyone else, so we don't have to stare at your coccyx all day.” You snickered, and he felt his face grow warm as you deposited the bag on his lap. “Do you need help?”

“Of course I don't!” He snapped, scowling at you. “Even a child can get dressed!”

You watched him for a long moment as he struggled embarrassingly with untying the ties behind his back, a smirk of plain amusement on your face.

“Do you need--”

“Fight me, whelp!”

You laughed, and he felt his face grow warmer as your deft hands untied them for him, and even warmer as your hands brushed gently down his spine to do so. He almost accused you of getting fresh, but he knew that you were being professional.

“Arms back.”

He obeyed, and you slid the pajama top over his frame, allowing him to button the front himself. It fit rather well, surprisingly--the length actually fit his arms, and covered him down past the tops of his iliac crests. It was black, with red trim and though it wasn't silk it was incredibly soft.

You politely turned away so he could slip the matching pants on, and he was pleasantly surprised to find that they fit him in the legs, as well.

“There. Much better,” you said, turning around. He gestured to himself in a sweeping motion, silently asking how it looked. “I knew it. Red and black suits you.”

“I could make a paper bag look good, but this is preferable. I suppose you did well.”

“Well, I suspect that’s as close to a thank you as I’ll ever get from you,” you mumbled, rolling your eyes and crossing your arms. “I mean, I saved your life, despite how hard you fought anyone even touching you, but sure. The pajamas are nice.”

Saved his...stars, how close to dying had he been? His hand came up to press gently against the large crack in his sternum, and even through the pajama shirt and bandages he could feel the sting of the injury. He supposed that you might have actually done that, saved his life.

You sighed, crossing over to where he was and gently leading him back to bed.

“Anyway, I'm only stopping in, so let’s get your vitals.”

“Isn't it your day off?” He asked, sounding slightly more concerned than he meant to.

“Yeah, but nobody else wants to deal with your brat ass,” you said, smiling coyly at him. Teasing. You were teasing him.
“Well, that is hardly fair,” he said, almost to himself. “If you aren't getting paid then somebody else should take the time to...hey! I am not a brat!”

“Oh, sorry. ‘It's been less than twelve hours since my last cup of tea, I demand you find the one nurse who isn’t here to make me some’!” You mimicked, affecting your voice in such a way that he knew you were mocking him.

“I don't sound like that!”

“‘Yes, you do.”

“You know, I'm beginning to think it is you who is the brat here!”

You laughed, and your eyes softened just a tad, and your hand slid down the length of his forearm to settle on his wrist, and he couldn't help but shiver. You looked at your watch as you counted silently, and after a long minute you released his wrist, smacking his cheek in a gentle, playful manner.

“Looks good, your highness,” you said sarcastically, before he could even sputter out a protest to the smack. “Pain level?”

He opened his mouth to seethe disagreement, but stopped. “Is there a scale?”

“One is fine, ten is about to pass out and die. Y’know, like a bitch.”

“You're especially cantankerous this morning.”

“I'm not on the clock, I could be drinking a margarita right now if I wanted.” You snorted. “But instead I'm here asking about your pain level.”

“Six.” He said, then after a beat he added: “It pinches, as you would put it, apparently.”

You considered this for a moment and then sighed, pushing your sleeves up. “Alright. Unbutton.”

Ah, his face is warm again. He hates that. “Fuck off!”


With a grumble, he complied, and you peeled away the bandages. Remembering last time, he pointedly looked at the ceiling instead of the nauseating cracks in his sternum.

There was a slight pain as you pressed your hand against it, but then relief flooded his body as you worked your literal magic. If your other hand hadn't been holding his shoulder, he might very well have collapsed as every fiber of his being relaxed.

When the tingle stopped, and he opened his drowsy sockets, you had laid him back against the pillows and were buttoning his pajama shirt carefully. You said something about books, and he heard himself grumble something in return…

When he blinked his eyes open again, the sun had risen high in the sky, and there was a to-go cup of hot coffee on his bedside table.

No, wait, not coffee. Tea. He reached over groggily to read the scrawling handwriting on the side, and he had to chuckle a little at your humor.

_Fight me?_
Chapter End Notes

Plot and banter. The meat of this fic.
Welcome back to Melda_Burke who was gone for a bit for personal break. We missed you!
“Excuse me?”

You were startled from your record book by a quiet voice capturing your attention, and looked up to see a young woman standing there.

Pushing your reading glasses up on your nose, you straightened up and gave her a smile.

“Can I help you?”

“I'm here for a visit, but, uhm...I'm not sure where his room is.”

“I can absolutely help you with that,” you said, setting aside your books and pulling the keyboard closer. “Name?”

She looked a bit at a loss for a moment, before quietly muttering “Boss?”

You blinked, unsure if you heard correctly. “Boss?”

“Ugh, sorry, I...that's what Red calls him. I don't know his real name.”

Red sounded familiar…

“Uh, maybe a description?” You gently pressed.

“Tall.” She said immediately, gesturing high above her. “Skeleton monster...massive brat.”

Oh. Red as in ‘Sans’...Oooohhhhh, you remember hearing Red call him ‘Boss' that night you overheard them talking.

“Oh! Papyrus!” You said out loud, making sure she knew you understood her. “Spot-on description by the way. He’s just down the hall in room 3.”

As she left, you pursed your lips, unease settling in your chest. He'd been extra bitchy today,
something that probably had a lot to do with how your shift didn't start until four in the afternoon and as thus he'd had to deal with Mabel's manhandling of him for most of the morning. You really hoped it wouldn't translate to this poor, unsuspecting girl.

You remember how grouchy he had been when you walked in, dragging his IV behind him with a look that threatened to kill, as if he might swing the damn thing at the next person who made eye contact with him. You made a point to be the next person, just in case, and he had immediately started rattling off a huge list of things he wanted you to fetch for him: tea, of course, and more pillows and fresh blankets and a new remote for his TV and is there any way you can tune him into the MTT channels on the ancient box in the corner of his room that constantly switches itself to PBS?

The thought of him being forced to watch Sesame Street for hours on end was actually hilarious, so you sidestepped his requests. Instead you handed him the bag of puzzle books you'd bought that morning and politely asked him to return to bed.

He grumbled the whole way, but did it anyway, and he'd been relatively quiet since, head stuck in his new sudoku book. He was startlingly fast with them, and you were even thinking you might take a crack at it on your break.

“Bed 12 is finally awake,” Kyle muttered, leaning over the nurse’s counter to draw you from your thoughts. “They got that newbie nurse’s aide trying to take his statement down. His teeth are so bad that he can’t even say his name.”

There was a hint of humour in his tone, and you didn't blame him. Bed 12 was Silas, and if Papyrus was a brat, then Silas made him look like an absolute cinnamon roll. Silas was downright disgusting, constantly making passes at nurses, humble-bragging, talking about how cool he was, just general douchery that made you feel ill.

“Yes. The teeth. What a damn shame I can't fix that.” You deadpanned, features untwitching. Kyle hid his snicker behind his hand, knowing that you hadn't even tried.

The asshole can go pay the dentist. You already saved his life, which, after he literally spat on you for being a maginurse, was more than he honestly deserved.

You would think the fact that you had grown up on the same street, known each other for literal decades, and graduated at the same small high school on the outskirts of Ebott might count for something with him, but you would be wrong. You had been friends, once upon a time, but if anything, it only made him hate you more.

Kyle looked about to say something when a door slammed down the hall, followed by the collective gasping from all the nurses at the head nursing station.

You swiveled around just in time to see the girl from before, stalking down the hall as quickly as she could. Her hands were dripping blood onto the pristine tile, tears streaming down her face as she adamantly ignores the cries of the nurses behind her. As everyone is looking at her, you’re already on your feet and making a beeline for Papyrus’ room, frustration rising with every step.

You don't know the whole story, you try to tell yourself, but you had a hard time believing that the resident brat would have a good reason for making a girl cry and bleed.

“What the hell happened?!?” You hissed as you opened the door to his room.

He looked at you with a strange, wide-eyed look. “What?”
“I said, what happened?” You repeated, stalking over to him. “What did you say to that poor girl?”

“Poor girl?” He scoffed. “On the contrary, that girl is a GODDAMNED firecracker. Did you hear? She yelled at me. Me!”

He seemed almost in awe of this, leaning back in his bed with a sigh.

“She called me all sorts of names, too. I'm not sure she even knew what half of them meant.” He whistled slightly. “That settles it. Red isn't good enough for her.”

“You made Red’s girlfriend cry? Why?”

He looked up at you, scandalized. “I did! That simply won't do, I must apologize immediately. Can I have my cell phone back?”

You deflated a little bit. He wants to apologize? Huh. Never thought you'd see the day.

“Uhh...yeah, I can grab that I guess.”

A good twenty minutes to get into personal effects, plus another ten of rifling through the box labeled as his and you finally found his phone, making mental note to ask him about the well-worn scarf in there. It just struck you as something that he cared for a lot.

When you presented him with the phone, he immediately ignored you, punching in a quick-dial and holding it to his ear.

“You're really going to apologize?”

He cursed and redialed as voicemail picked up.

“Of course I am! I can't expect to woo her letting her leave like that!”

“Woo her?”

He redialed again, ignoring your confusion.

“Of course I'll need the perfect song to serenade her with! If it’s a phone call, it has to be one that doesn't require too many visuals. She'll have to just imagine my handsome face as I--”

“You're going to serenade her?”

He sighed, annoyance clear in his expression as he finally acknowledged your shock. “Yes. Keep up with the conversation, human, I don't like to repeat myself!”

There was a click on the other end of the phone, and you heard a gruff confusion on the other end.

“SANS! You must get home immediately, and bring that human straight back to me! She left before I could finish what I was going to say!”

He paused, and you could only hope that Red was staunchly refusing.

“Well, she was the one who came to me. I only just received my phone back in order to call and apologize. Yes, apologize. So send her right back!”

He ended the call and began to smooth the wrinkles in his pajamas.
“Nurse! Fetch me a mirror so I may be certain I look as dashing as possible.”

You stared at him dumbly as your rage began to build. Not only had he made a girl cry, and bleed, no...but he actually thought her rage and pain was cute, and, regardless of the fact that she was taken (by his brother!) he still had the gall to believe a song would be enough to fucking seduce her.

“You are actually a lunatic,” you said, around ground teeth. “Here I thought you were just an asshole but no, you're a fucking sociopath!”

“Excuse you, I do have a conscience,” he scoffed, rolling his eyelights.

“You--I just--” Your unfinished sentence hung in the air as you tried to put words to your feelings.

There was a strange hum, and you turned, wide-eyed, to where Red had appeared in the corner of the room. His mildly surprised look said he hadn't been expecting you, either, and you just threw up your hands in defeat and turned on your heel to leave.

“I give up. Goddamned skeleton monsters.”

“NURSE! I DEMAND MORE TEA! WITH HONEY! STAPH! OR SAPLING! OR WHAT THE FUCK EVER THE MEDICAL WORD IS FOR ‘NOW!’”

Papyrus’ voice sizzled through your speaker in your office and you instantly regretted having moved the intercom somewhere he could reach. You were still fuming, and his treatment of you was making it more and more difficult to treat him politely.

“You know, sugar, we’ll all pretend not to see anything if you go wallop that boy a round or two,” Mabel called into your office.

“Tempting, but I suspect he might actually like that,” you grumbled, remembering his tone of awe as he remembered the girl yelling at him.

“Even better. Means he won't report you.” Kyle teased as he passed by your door. “Hey, bed 12 is asking for you...I can tell him you're busy kicking the ass of the other brat in the unit, and that he'll have to wait his turn?”

“Nurse! I have buzzed you thrice now! Where the hell is my tea? ”

“No, Sil-ass sounds better right now.” You decided, turning the volume of the speaker down so you couldn't hear Papyrus’ screeching.

You made a point to walk directly past Room 3’s window, to which you couldn't help but grin as Papyrus shouted in distaste behind the glass. By the time you reached Silas’ bed, you could already hear Papyrus shuffling around the room, either getting up to follow you or wrecking the room again.

Then you were faced with the snuggle-toothed wonder, and your resolve to not feel bad for him was waning as you saw how bad it really was.

“Mr. Werscher. It's a... pleasure to see you again.”

“We’ve known each other since we were born,” he said, with great difficulty. “Call me Silas.”

“Nah. Makes it sound like we’re friends.”
He grimaced at you, but then winced in pain at the action. “C’mon, now. Help a guy out? Work your magic a little?”

“Oh, now you want my magic? I thought I was a freak of nature?”

He glanced at the blanket covering his lower half, hands balling in the sheets as his face actually showed shame. Damn. Whoever beat him up must have finally rattled some goddamn decency loose.

“I said some awful things, did some awful stuff. I know. But...I think karma got me already, huh?”

“Then she definitely didn't hit nearly as hard as she wanted to,” you mused, drawing the chair from beside his bed to sit. You lowered your voice, trying to keep your concern to a shallow level--sometimes you were too kind, too sympathetic for your own good. “What’d you do? Square up to the wrong gangster? Get into something with the Hellhounds again?”

He shook his head. “Fucked up. Messed with a monster that didn't wanna be messed with.”

He pointed his chin at Papyrus’ door.

“That girl from earlier. Did some awful stuff to her. Her boyfriend didn't like it. Don't... owww ….don't blame ‘im.”

That girl got the short end of the stick. You need to send her a fruit basket or something.

You narrowed your eyes, arms still crossed over your chest defensively. “You're usually a snake that plays up his losses as heroism. Why are you telling me this?”

“Because I know you won't tell. Doctor-patient confidentiality?”

“Nurse practitioner.”

“Yeah, whatever. But, c’mon, Hazel, help a guy out?” He gestured to his fucked up mouth, which quite honestly was the least if his face’s worries.

“Childhood nicknames? You must be desperate.” You sighed, standing and pushing your sleeves up. “I will try , but no guarantees. And I can always call Red to come fuck them up again if you turn into a little bitch-boy after this, understand?”

He nodded as quickly as his injuries would allow, and you cracked your knuckles, trying to summon up enough good will to get the magic started. It was difficult, since he was such an ass...but then you remembered how he had been one of the last people to call off the search when Eliza went missing. You remembered a cocky little thirteen-year-old Silas as he tried to cheer you up on your first birthday without your sister by taking you for a joyride on his ATV. You remembered him picking cow dung out of his teeth as you doubled over laughing, his ATV several yards away in Farmer McNathy’s pig pen.

...then you remember the horror on his face when you had healed his fractured arm, and everything went downhill from there.

You sighed and dropped your hands to rest on his fucked up face, leveling a stare on your estranged childhood friend. He closed his eyes in a slight wince as his jaw snapped back into the proper place and his teeth started straightening out slightly. You did as much as you could, but it was draining trying to make it do things it didn't want to do. In the end it was only slightly better, though the pain was clearly alleviated.
He sighed as you laid him back against the pillows, and for a second you saw him as he used to be. Damn your sentimentality.

“What the hell happened to you, Silas?”

He opened his mouth to respond, but was interrupted by--

“HELLO FROM THE OTHER SIICIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIDE !!”

You groaned and cradled your aching head. “You've gotta be kidding me.”

“I MUST'VE CALLED A THOUSAND TIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIMES !!”

Silas was out like a light, and your head began to really pound as Papyrus serenaded what you assumed was Red’s poor girlfriend.

“TO TELL YOU I’M SORRY FOR EVERYTHING THAT I’VE DONE !”

You need a drink.

Chapter End Notes

Wow, Silas used to be nice?
If you have any ideas or medical AU things you want to see, then let me know in the comments!
The Magic Word

Chapter Summary

You're still sour with Papyrus...
...it doesn't last long. He's nothing if not at least a little charming.

Chapter Notes

I'm really loving this story, even if it's hard to continue to write him as a brat. I don't want him to progress too quickly!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Papyrus stared at the crossword puzzle in front of him, barely registering the words on the paper. His phone was pinging on the bedside table, probably a slew of messages from his brother, gloating about how he had proposed and the human girl had accepted. He had been texting him pictures of the two of them together for three days now, ever since the night she left in tears.

He wasn't sulking. No, he doesn't sulk. But he was a bit put off by it all. He was certain that if he had not been bound to this blasted hospital bed, he would have had the girl in no time!

...although the proposal had only happened mere hours after he had decided to court her, so even if he had been free to come and go, there may not have been enough time.

In any case, it was actually not the thorn in his side today. No, that was definitely you, or lack thereof. There had been no tea when he woke up these last few days, and no matter how much he hit his buzzer you never responded. He saw the redheaded human nurse more often than you (Kyle? Kevin? He can't remember which is which.) and when you did come in, you didn't banter or exchange wit. You dealt with him with cold hands and colder eyes, and your healing did the trick but left him feeling more violated than warm and fuzzy.

He supposed you were only being professional, but it was strange that you had been so friendly his first few days. Perhaps that had been a fluke, and your true personality was a lot more clinical?

But if so, why had you gone to all the trouble of buying him these pajamas? And these puzzle books? And coming to see him on your day off? Seems like a lot out of your way if you're as grumpy as you come off lately.

Not that he cares. He doesn't need all that pampering. He definitely does not like being pampered.

But...you have a soul of kindness, he knows it, because your healing magic is strong enough to be significant. In humans, only the main trait carries into the magic they can use, and healing magic is green and green is kindness. Someone with that much kindness in their soul is not likely to be cold unless…

Unless he’s done something to upset you.
He scoffed out loud at himself. What could *he* have possibly done to upset you? The last time you had even spoken outside of your manhandling was when you had been grilling him about his brother’s human.

He pressed the buzzer next to him on impulse, but realized he had nothing to say. His finger slipped from the intercom and he fell back against his pillows with a grumble.

Like hell he was going to come crawling to you to ask you to be nicer! He doesn't even need you to do anything but heal this stupid hole in his sternum! Outside of that, you could be dead for all he cared!

The door opened and he straightened immediately, swiveling his head around to make a snide comment at you…

Except it was the redheaded male instead.

“Alrighty, Papyrus, let’s see here,” he sighed, flipping through his charts and taking the readings from his machines. He supposed that it was the RNA’s job to do all this, not the nurse practitioner’s, but you had been doing it the first few days. “Well, it all looks good, except your HoPe levels are still lower than projected. I'll make a note for MP and we’ll get back to you on that.”

He turned towards the bed, and Papyrus could see that the name tag read “Kyle”. Huh. So the redhead was Kyle, which means the nervous-looking blonde one was Kevin. Dually noted. And apparently he called you MP, which he supposed stood for “Maginurse Practitioner”…he wanted to correct him, but...embarrassingly enough, he can't actually recall your name. He always just called you “Nurse”, and you don't wear a name tag.

“Pain level?”

“Physical or existential?” He snorted, grimacing as he tried to cross his arms, the pain stopping him from moving too far forward.

Kyle chuckled a little. “Just physical. I'm not qualified to be a shrink just yet.”

“4 when I am idle. 7 when I move about.” He didn't have the energy to give the man any snark. He was in a bad mood, and just wanted him to leave.

Kyle frowned at the page as he marked that. “So, you would say the pain is getting worse?”

“Occasionally. Where is the Maginurse? Isn't she supposed to do this? Are you even trained in monster medicine?”

“MP has to work the clinic this time of day. There are a lot of monsters that need her help, since she's the only one qualified to write them prescriptions, so she doesn't always have time to waste with brat-taming.” Kyle raised a brow at the skeleton, who blinked and frowned at his accusation.

He could press it and throw a fit…but he was curious about other things.

“She is the *only* Maginurse on staff?”

“Only one in the *county*.”

“But who takes over when she leaves?”
Kyle sighed. “Why do you think she's almost always here? She hardly ever gets to leave...even on her day off she came back to deal with you, because you wouldn't let any of the RNs or RNAs do anything.”

He furrowed his brow, eyes falling to his puzzle book. He hadn't realized it was quite as bad as that. Now that he thought about it, even when you weren't dealing with his healing or redirecting him to bed, he often saw you cross by his window at all hours of the day. “But if she's always here, then when does she sleep?”

“On her breaks, in the on-call room. Or sometimes at her desk, if I don't catch her.” The man said, sitting on the end of his bed. “Do you understand now? She's burning the candle on both ends, and it seriously drains her to even be as nice as she has been.”

“But she hasn't been nice! She doesn't even talk to me and manhandles me like an old joystick!” He scoffed, pointedly looking away from the puzzle book now. “She never answers my calls, either!”

Kyle laughed, a short, dangerous laugh that cut right to the embarrassment centers of Papyrus’ brain, shaming him.

“Dude, I've heard your calls. You sound like an asshole at best.” He stood and slid the chart back into the slot at the foot of the bed. “I'll let her know that your pain is getting worse and we'll see about getting some higher dosage on these magic IVs.”

The man then gathered the rest of his papers and slid the pen back in the neck of his mauve scrubs. He went to leave, but paused in the doorway, looking back over his shoulder.

“You know, if you want her to be nicer to you...maybe you could try saying 'please' the next time you hit that button.”

And then he was gone, and the door clicked closed and he was left to his own thoughts once more.

You read over Kyle’s report a third time, searching the readings for an answer that was beyond your reach.

His pain had increased from a 6 to a 7. It seemed like a small jump, but in your field it could mean something is very wrong. Why isn't it getting better? It seems like it would be very straightforward to close a hole and some cracks in bone.

His HoPe was what was worrying you. According to Red, Papyrus’ HoPe should be fairly high, higher than most. With his LV, it should be somewhere in the thousands, and yet his max right now is around 600. That's a huge jump...he isn't in danger of dusting anymore, but...

There's no getting around it. You're gonna have to get in there and dig around and see if there's shrapnel you missed before. And he's gonna need physical therapy, too, if the nurse reports of his obvious pain crossing his arms is any indication.

And you can't increase the dosage on his pain meds or you might miss important signs like this. Not only that, but because you're still on twice-daily healing, increasing his dosage would make him near-comatose, and even he isn't so big a brat that you want to dope him out. You've learned that many, many monsters suffer from severe PTSD from the underground, and no matter how well they seem to handle themselves normally they were very easily triggered into episodes when they felt they weren't in control of their bodies. You didn't want to trigger an unknown issue, and especially not in someone as volatile as he was.
Nobody deserves to cry themselves to sleep because they're afraid for their lives. This had been the reality of many monster patients when you had first arrived here, and you had vowed it would never be that way again. Your research here was crucial to the handling of monsters all around the world, and if you can convince everyone in the magimedical world to look for kinder ways to handle these people...then you'd do everything you can.

Even if they're egotistical sociopaths who don't even realize they're insane.

“Nurse!”

Speak of the devil.

You sighed and removed your reading glasses to rub your tired eyes. You're on hour 16 of this shift, with only a few naps on breaks, and you're not sure you have the energy to deal with his attitude.

“I need tea! And...I also require assistance on my crossword.”

Okay, that one was new. You stood with a sigh, unsure if you would answer. A crossword did sound like a nice distraction, and you could check on the wound while you're there.

The intercom buzzed again, and you waited to see what snark he had left to say.

“...Please.”

Your eyebrows shot up so quick that you worried they might tangle with your hair. Did he just...use manners?

He must be in more pain than you thought.

“Knock knock,” you joked, rapping on the door as you walked in.

Papyrus tore his eyes from the television, where they were playing reruns of Saved By the Bell. It was one of those episodes that didn't really translate to modern day--Zack was currently on screen with a hugely racist native American outfit, headdress and all.

“I brought the tea,” you said sheepishly, holding the mug up as you crossed the room to place it on the bedside table. He seemed surprised to see you, and even leaned away from you for a beat when you approached.

“You came.” He observed, eyelights flicking up and down your form. You're wondering if you look as tired as you feel.

“Well, you did ask nicely.”

Your eyes flicked to his machines for a beat, but you had to remind yourself you're on break. Surely Kyle had been able to get the correct readings earlier...but...well, it can't hurt to check.

“Kyle says your pain level increased?” You asked, crossing over to the HoPe gauge to measure for yourself.

“Slightly. Is that bad?” He asked, absently scratching at his bandages through his pajama top. He was staring hard at you, still unsure of if you were going to be nice or not. You turned and caught him scratching, swatting his hands away with a sigh. “Well, excuse me if it's itchy! I'd like to see you survive a bullet without any itchiness!”
You cracked a small smile at that, and then a little laugh. “Hopefully I never have to. Alright, let me look at it.”

“You don't have other patients to tend to?” He asked, his voice a little quieter than he would have liked. It made him sound weak, and he hated that.

“I'm on my break right now,” you hummed, hand travelling down to his wrist and eyes averting to your watch to measure the pulse of his magic.

But if it was your break, shouldn't you be sleeping? He feels bad about that, but you seem happy so he shuts his mouth. If you're willing, and it'll take away the itch, then he can save his snarky remarks for later.

“Just don't overdo it,” he decided to say, and you paused in the act of peeling his bandage back.

“What's gotten into you?” You asked, narrowing your eyes. “Are you feeling alright? Feverish, maybe? Stomachache? Can you even get a stomachache if you don't have a stomach?”

He scowled, and for some unfathomable reason it made you laugh. “I'm offended! Am I not allowed to worry?”

“Just didn't think you had it in you. Looks like you're a good guy after all.”

“Of course I am!” He scoffed as you continued your inspection. “I am the Great and Terrible Papy-rruuuuussss--”

The last syllable was a pained hiss as you poked your finger directly into the hole in his chest, and he grabbed your wrist to jerk your hand away. You allowed the movement with little surprise as he glared up at you.

“Excuse you! It is rude to stick your fingers in holes without permission!”

“Oh, is it now?” You snickered, hand only half covering the laugh. “What's the matter, Papyrus? Suddenly you don't want my fingers in your holes?”

“I...I...No, that's not--”

“You...are telling me to poke your holes all I want?” You mused, leaning in as if trying to listen better.

He made a frazzled noise and a blush spread across his skull at your implication.

“I meant the bullet hole!” He stammered out finally.

“Well, I have a ton of paperwork that says I can stick my fingers all kinds of places, so hold still before I pick one of the others instead.”

He fell silent, obviously mortified, but did as he was told and sat still.

You giggled, leaning in closer to inspect the damage. You can see why it’s itchy--the dead matter has converted to dust inside the cracks, so it's just a matter of getting it out.

“What is that?” He asked, somewhat nervously as you retrieved the air nozzle from a drawer in the bedside table.

You squished the rubber ball on the end so that it puffed air in his face. “To remove the dust. It
won't hurt.”

“Last time you gauged what it should feel like, you were sorely mistaken,” he grumbled, leaning back and tensing up as you worked the small metal tip into the hole. You could tell he was resisting the urge to flinch away--it has to feel weird to have something sticking into you like this.

You carefully puffed away the dust, and his grip on the sheets grew tighter as you had to press it into the finer cracks.

“So Sans is the older brother?”

He looked up at you, confused, but realized you were trying to distract him. “Yes. By several years.”

“But you're the double-A alpha?” You asked, remembering his heat type from his paperwork. Heat types were like blood types for monsters, determining base instinct and ladder of dominance. Sometimes it still confused you, regardless of your training, but his wasn't hard to recall--he had to be one of maybe 3 AAs in the entire monster community, the highest alpha rank one could be. The strongest monsters.

He blushed a little at the mention, even as he puffed up and smirked. “How did you know that?”

“Sans filled out your paperwork the first day so we could treat you.” You carefully maneuvered the air nozzle into another crack, and he hardly noticed this time.

“We are both double-A’s,” he admitted. “It is very rare, but then again, so are skeleton monsters.”

“You're both double-A’s?” You let out a low whistle as he winced against the puff of air in his wound. “That's impressive...and probably messy.”

“Well, I don't fuck my brother,” he scoffed, rolling his eyelights.

“No, but it must be an endless display of dominance,” you muttered, mostly to yourself. “Maybe that's why you're so bitter and grouchy...he probably beats the snot out of you every time since you're so busy fluffing your feathers.”

“He--! He does not!” The skeleton protested with a stutter, proving you probably hit the nail on the head.

You finally removed the tip, and he was breathing heavily through his nasal cavity as if trying not to scream. The second it was gone his whole body relaxed.

“Pain level?”

“...7,” he winced, hand coming up to cover the hole self-consciously. “You are terrible at gauging how painful your procedures will be!”

“I really am sorry,” you cooed disarmingly, removing his hand to replace it with yours, coated in gentle healing magic. “Is that better?”

He groaned, sockets sliding shut as he relaxed against the pillows. “Y...yes. It is.”

You hummed quietly to aid his relaxation, feeling your magic curl to fill the space. He was struggling to keep his eyes open, and you took the moment to do a CHECK directly on his soul.
The vermilion fire in his chest sparked and churned lazily, reacting to your magic like a cat in a sunbeam. It was a beautiful shade, really—much brighter and more solid than the colors of other monsters, though you supposed that was due to his being an AA type.

This particular shade of orange-red...Audacity. You almost laughed at that—you had never seen a more accurate soul color on anyone, human or monster.

There was a hiccup in the magic, and you pulled back to look at where he had shakily gripped your wrist.

Despite his relaxed state, you could sense the confusion and fear around him, so you stopped immediately.

“Is something wrong?”

“I don't want to go to sleep,” he said, so quietly you almost didn't hear him. “I just...there's so much of this puzzle left and I…”

He looked seconds away from a panic attack, but lucky for you, you had dealt with many a monster who didn't want to go to sleep. You quickly retracted your hand, making sure to draw back the sedative properties of your healing until you could visibly see him square his shoulders, relieved at the control returning to him.

“No problem, Boss,” you said softly, and the fear in his eyes was replaced with surprised curiosity at the nickname. “And that is the only time I will ever call you that.”

His smile twitched. “We shall see about that!”

You shook your head, moving to get up from his side, but he caught your arm and you looked back at him with a raised brow.

“I still need help with number 12 down,” he explained. “And I suppose you are as good a person as any to ask. If you aren't doing anything else with your break, perhaps we can race to see who can fill in the most words?”

You plopped back down on the bed next to him and he scooted to make room so you could stretch out. You took the book and pen from the bedside table, clicking it open as you smirked mischievously at your charge.

“Get ready to get owned, skeleman.” You scribbled in the answer after barely glancing at the clue. “Hallucinate. C’mon, Sans said you were a puzzlemaster, give me a hard one!”

“Oh, you're good. Alright.” He puffed his chest out, retrieving the book to flip to a blank crossword. “If I win, you call me ‘Boss' from now on.”

“And if I win, you have to sing and dance for the kids in the children's ward.” You countered, and then paused before adding. “After I've cleared you to move about.”

He chuckled, and there was an evil gleam in his eyelights.

“Very well. Let’s get started.”
if anyone has any medical/doctor AUs they wanna see done here, I'm happy to hear them!
**Visiting Hours**

Chapter Summary

Papyrus has visitors, and you see a lot more of Silas than you ever wanted to. Also, is that the ROYAL SCIENTIST?!

Chapter Notes

This one took a bit longer but I like it. For anyone keeping track, Papyrus and Silas have been in the hospital for two weeks now. One more week of silliness before Melda_Burke's story picks up and things get crazy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You have seen a lot of monsters at your residency here at Ebott Mercy. A lot of monsters.

But you had never seen the two who were staring you down over Red’s shoulder right now, one a tall female with blue scales and an eyepatch, the other a golden drake monster that stood a good portion shorter than anyone else present.

Two red eyes and one menacing yellow one stared holes into your skull, and you smiled back, unnerved. Your inner geek was excited to see new types of monsters, and you were staring rudely when Red spoke up.

“jus’ right here?” Red asked, tapping the visitor’s clause on the paperwork.

“Yup. And then they have to sign in...sorry about all the paperwork, it's just because the last time…”

Red made a face between a grimace and a grin. He clearly remembered the last time his brother had a visitor--it had been his girlfriend, after all, and it hadn't gone well. As such you had had to put limited visitation orders in with his papers.

Red silently wrote in the names of the monsters behind him, and the human teen that was with them, and the others stepped up to add their signatures.

The human you recognized immediately. There wasn’t anyone in any monster-related field who didn't recognize Frisk Dreemur, monster ambassador and the miracle kid that broke the barrier at only eleven years old. They just turned 13, if you remember correctly.

“You’re the monster ambassador, right?” You asked as they stepped aside. They brightened at the attention and nodded, extending their hand to shake yours as you introduced yourself. “I had no idea these two trouble brothers knew the ambassador!”

“hey, who ya callin’ trouble, eh?” Red growled, a hint of humor in his tone as he slid the clipboard
As if in answer, the intercom in your office crackles, and you could hear Papyrus throwing a tantrum from where you stood down the hall.

“Nurse! I've been waiting for my tea for over an hour!”

Red chuckled as the other two monsters grinned and rolled their eyes. “Alright. I’ll give ya him. But I’m not trouble, am I?”

Frisk tugged on your jacket, and you looked over to see them signing something to you. You don’t speak sign language, but part of the joys of magic is being able to understand intention behind languages.

“Oh, I think he’s just grouchy because I told him he needs a bath today,” you reassured them. “Which, incidentally, he was fine with until I told him it was Kyle who was giving it.”

The teen giggled, a shy, quiet sound, and Papyrus continued to shriek over the intercom behind you.

“S-sounds like he’s in a foul m-mood,” the drake monster said, pushing her glasses up her snout as she moved to shake your hand. “I’m Doctor Alphys, the royal scientist.”

“Oh! Pleasure to meet you!” You shook her hand enthusiastically, excitement sparking in your eyes. You had read so many articles by Dr. Alphys, both for school and pleasure. “I’m--”

She held her free hand up to stop you. “Ebott’s first Maginurse Practitioner. I know. I’ve been following your--your work closely, it’s v-very impressive.”

Oh. My. God.

The Royal Scientist, the Royal freaking scientist knows who you are?! You wind up staring dumbly at her, trying to process this and failing miserably. There’s a glint in her eye as her clawed hand tightened on yours.

“I would love to discuss some of the finer points of magimedical procedures, if you get the chance,” she said, the stutter completely gone as she became more confident in the subject. “I’m particularly interested in the unknown grey areas of magic involving humans, both with mage- alphas like yourself and also non-mage betas. Sans has been... unwilling to participate in my studies with his mate.”

“Oh, I’m certain that I could--”

Red cleared his nonexistent throat, and when you looked at him he was shaking his head, signaling you not to comply. You have no idea what Alphys has planned, but your gut tells you you should probably listen.

“...I could share the notes I have, and if I find anything else.”

“C’mon, Al! Quit nerding out so I can go punch Papyrus for gettin’ his ass shot!” The blue-scaled fish woman said, a mix of exasperation and adrenalin lacing her words as she flicked her long red ponytail back over her shoulder.

I’m ready to see him...I’m worried about him. Frisk signed, frowning slightly. He keeps yelling into that intercom. Is he always like this?
“yeah, well, this is par for the course, kiddo,” Red snorted, ruffling the teen’s hair. “he’s just usually pretending to be cool around you.”

_He is cool! _Frisk huffed, hands on their hips for a moment before they resumed signing. _Papyrus is the coolest! _

As if on cue, there was the familiar commotion at the nurse’s station and then, speak of the devil…

Papyrus came stomping down the hall, his IV dragging behind him and murder in his eyes as the new RNA, Kevin, tried desperately to coax him back to bed.

“She wants me! I require my--”

He stopped dead at the sight of his brother and visitors, drawing himself up taller, his scowl melting into a look of surprise.

“What’s this? Undyne? Alphys?” He asked, regarding the fish woman and the scientist.

_And Frisk!_

Frisk jumped up before you could stop them, throwing their arms around Papyrus, who wheezed in pain but returned the hug as if nothing was wrong. You watched his knees buckle, but you weren’t halfway out of your seat before he shot you a glare that said “correct their affection and you die”.

When the teen finally released him, you were there with a steady hand to help him pretend he was alright, and you could tell he was grateful.

“brought ‘em by to sign the paperwork so’s they could visit ya,” Red said. “because, y’know, you have t’have special permissions now.”

“It is not _my fault_ your mate couldn't stay away from me,” he huffed as you began to walk the group back to his room.

Hey, with them distracting him, you might actually get something done today.

_Silas was grumpy when you approached his bed, but what else was new?_

“Today’s the day,” you announced, somewhat cheerfully. You can't even tell if you're faking it anymore. “I get to move you to a room so the only person you can annoy is yourself!”

“I thought doctors were supposed to be nice to patients,” Silas grumbled, and you took the moment to pat yourself on the back a little. Thanks to your healing skills this past week, you could now understand him with no problem, and he even had several teeth already regrowing in the vacant spots in his gums.

“Nurse Practitioner,” you corrected as you dumped him into a wheelchair.

“Augh! Fuck, Hazel, ‘do no harm’!”

“You're fine.”

He was, so he crossed his arms and shut up, allowing you to wheel him away past the huge crowd in Papyrus’ room. He averted his eyes from the crowd of monsters, but when you wheeled him into Room 2, he stiffened.
“I have to be here? In the room next to the skeleton?”

“Helps to keep all the brats in one place,” you explained, helping him gently from the wheelchair to the bed. “Keeps me from running back and forth like a chicken with my head cut off. Why?”

“You know why.”

“Contrary to what you seem to believe, I actually don’t know everything about you anymore,” you scolded, pushing him back against the pillows. “After you called me a freak and ignored me for, like, fifteen years, I kinda lost my read-Silas’-mind ability.”

He grumbled a bit as he laid down, hands coming up to rub the spots on his arms that were probably still sore from your healing magic. On the outside, he looked fine except for a few scratches and bruising, but you knew he looked a bit like a smoothie underneath the skin.

“Ellie. What she told us. Remember?” He grumbled. “There were voices in the mountain, she heard them. We thought she was crazy...then almost two years ago, bam! Monsters come crawling out of the mountain.”

He looked accusingly up at you.

“And you choose to heal them. Study them? They probably kill--”

“We don’t know anything for sure!” You shouted, startling him. The raucous voices in the next room grew quiet, and you lowered your voice to a growl as you fixed his IV with a little more force than strictly necessary. “Don’t pretend you know anything more than I do about what happened to her, you asshole.”

“Fuck, Hazel, I’m telling your boss how you manhandle me.”

“I’m private practice, jerk, good luck getting me to care.”

There was a knock on the door, and you turned to see Dr. Alphys standing in the entryway.

“S-sorry to interrupt, but I couldn't help but w-wonder. Are you going t-to heal him?”

You and Silas exchanged a look, one of his hands still fisted in your lab coat to stop you from stabbing the IV in. You took the distraction to place the IV, and he whimpered as you released each other.

“I suppose I could do his session now, since Papyrus is occupied.” You said, stripping your gloves. “Why?”

“Well, I’ve never had the-pleasure of observing a human mage in action,” she explained, adjusting her glasses. “It would be fascinating to see how your magic works.”

“Sure thing, come on in!”

“Hey, I think I--” You pinched Silas, careful not to catch one of his bruises, something you never would have done if you weren’t childhood friends. “Fuck, ow, you fucking bitch…”

Alphys shuffled in and drew up a chair, producing a little notepad from her sweater pocket as she sat, a glint in her eye as she gestured for you to continue.

“Pain level?”
“Eleven whenever you're around, apparently,” he huffed, and you raised an eyebrow at him. “...Six.”

You marked it on his chart. “Do you want me to work on your face again?”

He averted his eyes and mumbled something under his breath. “...what?”

“I said…” he looked up at Alphys, and then motioned for you to lean in. You obliged. “...my, uh...man-area? It’s...you know.”

“You want me to heal your dick?” You hissed back at him under your breath, and he turned red under your stare.

“Come on... nurse practitioner. Help a dude out?” He begged. “It feels like needles when I piss, not to mention…”

“Oh, gross, Silas, I don't need…” You paused. For a second there you had forgotten that you were currently his primary technician, and your own history aside, this was actually your job. “Shit. I actually do need details.”

He mumbled his symptoms for you, and thankfully, aside from having to uncover the appendage (you had never seen a more fucked up private area...and you've seen what extreme cases of gonorrhea does) you were able to do it without actually touching it.

A deep breath. A long-off memory of him with braces and the ugliest Christmas sweater you had ever seen…

The magic coiled in your chest, and when it felt like it would burst, it slid gracefully down your arms to pool in your palms. The emerald glow cast a water-like pattern around the room, and you hovered your hands over his groin and focused on willing it to right itself.

“That is fascinating,” Alphys mused at your elbow, and you smiled proudly.

“Thank you, I've got a lot of practice.” You said. “Works better on monsters, though.”

“That might be an input/output issue,” she offered, moving closer. “Have you tried adjusting to make up for the excess magic in human souls? Monsters are entirely made of magic, so you don't need the magic to work as hard. Human souls are more concentrated, so you should focus your input directly on the soul.”

“No, that's cool, everybody just stare at my junk,” Silas muttered. “This isn't degrading.”

“Shush,” you scolded him, moving your hands to his chest like she instructed. He yelped in surprise as your magic flooded his body.

Surprised yourself, you drew your hands back quickly, but when you checked underneath his gown it was shockingly already healed.

“Woah. That is faster. I could have him out of here in less than a week at this rate,” you whistled, dropping his hospital gown.

“You, uh...you fixed it?” Silas squeaked, looking between you and Alphys warily. “Just like that?”

“Just like that,” Alphys confirmed, scribbling on her notepad. “Fascinating! You are quite the
phenomenon, I would like to study your powers more closely in the near future, if that's alright.”

Okay, mark it twice today that the actual Royal Scientist has said you're impressive. You might actually faint.

“I’d like that,” you said quickly, accepting the business card she extended.

“Excuse me ladies, I hate to interrupt, but…” Silas gestured to where his hospital gown had begun to tent. “You might want to leave while I test this thing out.”

“Ew, Silas,” you gagged. Professionalism was so difficult with him. “Keep it in the gown, we’re leaving! Geez!”

“So what was all the yelling about?” Undyne asked when Alphys returned to Papyrus’ room, the door clicking closed behind her.

“Hmm?” The drake looked up quizically from her notepad.

_The yelling?_ Frisk asked. _We thought you went to see what it was about?

“The nurse is always yelling!” Papyrus scoffed, rolling his eyelights. “I am not surprised.”

“nah, bro, you always make her yell,” Red reasoned from where he was lounging in the bedside chair, feet up on the bed. “she's actually really nice and quiet normally.”

“I do not! She...she treats me no different than the others!” He sputtered, and Frisk giggled and pointed at his rapidly reddening face.

_Yeah, but you're blushing!

“I AM NOT!”

“Aww, my favorite edgy nerd baby has a widdle crush on his nurse,” Undyne mused in babytalk, pulling him into a headlock for a noogie. He growled and shoved her off.

“You are only lucky that I am injured, or I would end you for that!” He hissed. “I care nothing for the human, other than that she heals me so I can leave this cursed fucking hospital.”

“Oh, but she is fascinating,” Alphys interjected suddenly. “I've nev-never seen such n-natural healing talent in anyone but the queen! Sure, I had to stare at that surly male human’s genitals for much longer than I ever wanted, but-but the data I retrieved is beyond valuable!”

“woah, you hadta look a dude in the dick?” Red made a disgusted face. “the hell is the nurse doin’ jackin’ someone on the job?”

“I AM CERTAIN THAT IS NOT WHAT HAPPENED,” Papyrus screeched. “She was probably healing that obnoxious human that you put here, brother.”

Red’s smile turned to a grimace and his sockets narrowed. “say what? that silas fucker lived ?”

_This is better than Pay-per-view._ Frisk signed with a snort.

“She's always arguing with him. I'm telling you, she doesn't treat me any different!”

“well, that's cause you're both brats .”
“I am not a brat!”

**Yeah! Papyrus is the coolest!**

“if pap is the coolest, then why is his nurse healing some other dude’s dick instead’a his?”

“I'm certain she would heal my--”

The room grew quiet as Papyrus stopped short, seeming to realize what he was about to say, a deep vermilion as Undyne laughed openly at his distress.

“Dude! I totally ship it!” She chuckled, and Alphys’ eyes glinted behind her glasses.

“Oh, I absolutely agree~”

*I want Papyrus to marry the pretty nurse, too!*

“Augh! **FIGHT ME!**”

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Chapter End Notes

A little bit of plot, and what does Alphys have planned for Nurse? Now that everybody ships them, get ready for Papyrus to deny every feeling vehemently.
Life and Times of a Chronic Workaholic

Chapter Summary

Papyrus and Silas both start physical therapy. Also, you haven't slept in three days.

Chapter Notes

I drew these two nerds, because why wait around for fanart when you can draw it yourself? I got the idea for part of this chapter from Indecissive, who commented it on the last chapter (:)

You yawned, pen tapping rhythmically on the clipboard as you went over the numbers once again.

Both Papyrus and Silas were starting group physical therapy today, and as much as you wanted to be anywhere else, you had been asked to sit in on the session, since they were your special cases.

And so, here you were, waiting for the two brats to get all the way down to PT so you could observe, take notes, and work out the kinks in their healing process.

...Not that they weren't doing just fine working out their own kinks, according to several disgusted nurses who now refused to go into either room, having caught them both with their hands in their pants more than once.

At least Papyrus seemed bashful about it. Silas just shrugged and winked at you, and even though you knew he only did it to gross you out you couldn't help but gag.

...with Papyrus, you had chosen not to address it, but morbid curiosity had you wondering what exactly he had going on down there. You knew he was an AA, but he was also an Upsilon, so he could make both female and male parts...but how? You were so, so curious...but it was probably best not to ask. There was no medical need for that information other than your own notes, and you knew him well enough at this point that it felt kind of weird to take notes on his junk. Hell, it had been weird enough healing Silas', you didn't need a repeat of all that.

You heard the Physical Therapist, Allison, greet somebody, and your head popped up to see a very cross Papyrus and a smug-looking Kyle strolling across the room towards you.

“You!” Papyrus growled, pointing at you. You mimicked his point confusedly.

“Me?”

“Yes, you!” He huffed, hand absently palming his shirt above his bandages. “Where have you been? This idiot hardly knows how to use a remote, much less how to tune it to MTT!”
“Yup, that's me, technology challenged,” Kyle snickered, obviously enjoying Papyrus’ foul mood. You raised an eyebrow at him as if to silently ask why he was making your life more difficult. Why, Kyle, why?!

“Well, it's time for Physical Therapy anyway,” Alison soothed, somewhat successfully. “Papyrus, right? My name is Allison. Your nurse has filled me in on the parts that need attention, so why don't you go ahead and come over here for warm-ups?”

“I…” Papyrus looked between you and Allison, a slight hesitation in his form. “You aren't doing the session?”

“I'm not a physical therapist,” you reminded him. “I'm a--”

“Nurse practitioner, yeah, we know, jeez,” Silas groaned as Kevin wheeled him into the room. His mother must have brought him some clothes when she visited yesterday, because in place of his hospital gown was a set of faded green pajamas. “You only remind us every fifteen minutes.”

“Ohh, somebody woke up on the wrong side of the gurney,” you snapped back, and he glared at you, fading bruises doing nothing to hide his displeasure as he self-consciously patted at the buzzed ginger tufts on his head, hand tracing the long scar that marked where his head had split.

You remember having to help shave off his long curls when he came in, and the amount of gore matting what had once been a very pleasant shade of auburn. That huge scar was going to impede hair growth, so it might never go back to normal--not to mention that despite his newly regrown teeth, he still had a nasty scar from his chin, over his lip, as well as a scar splitting his eyebrow.

You supposed now that his hair was growing back, and his life was slowly becoming more routine again, he might be starting to feel a little uncomfortable with his looks.

“You okay, Silas?” You asked quietly, and he started slightly, hand shooting back down to rest in his lap.

“Yeah, yeah...just peachy.” He grumbled, looking away. “Look like canned dog food, but hey, at least my junk works.”

“You don't look like dog food...least not more than normal,” you snorted, extending a hand to help him from the wheelchair. “Alright, we’re gonna start with the double-beam, to help you walk, and then I can see what still needs healing.”

“Everything, pretty much, but sure, watch me hobble about for your own amusement if that's what it takes.”

“I promise you, I'm not doing this to be sadistic.”

“Well, that's a first.”

You rolled your eyes as you helped him to the double-beam, releasing him to support his own weight. He hissed in pain as his arms struggled to hold himself, and you took pity on him and stepped in between the beams in front of him, supporting his chest to take some pressure off.

“C’mon, Si, you know I'd never do anything to hurt you.” You said, surprising even yourself with how genuine you sounded. He looked up at you in a mixture of shock and appreciation. “Walk. You can do it.”

He grunted, stumbling into you. You huffed under his weight, but luckily he'd always been rather
lithe-limbed and gangly, so you hoisted him back onto his feet with little effort.

“Again!” You insisted, resuming your position.

“Fuck off,” he groused.

“Mr. Papyrus, I really need you to focus on me for this.”

You turned to catch Papyrus hurriedly looking away, taking the elastic band from Allison and following her instructions with a little too much fervor.

“There, now if you fold the elastic like this--” Allison looped the elastic band around, and it took all his willpower not to just roll his eyelights. The elastic was nothing compared to his monster strength, but he followed the motions anyway.

He eyed the weights on the other side. Perhaps if he showed this Allison lady that his strength surpassed these bands (ouch, he moved a little to far forward and it stung a bit) then she would let him actually train. He was more than antsy with being in bed all the time, plus…

His eyes wandered over to where the unpleasant ginger was grouching at you, body draped over your small frame as you supported him along the double-beam.

“Y’know, Hazel, I think you just wanna see me fall.”

“If that was the case, I'd let your nose hit the mat. Again.”

The man huffed in annoyance, but moved at your command, taking a wobbly step supported by you. Your eyes trained on his feet in concentration…

...how come the human gets to do PT with you? You said you weren't doing his session because it wasn't your job, but yet you were ten feet from him conducting someone else’s session!

Not that it mattered. No. It didn't really bother him, he just doesn't think you should have to do things that aren't your job. You already do the work of several people, there's no reason you should have to do this, too.

It definitely isn't bitterness because you aren't doing his sessi--

“Mr. Papyrus, that's too tight--”

SNAP!

He hissed, dropping the band as his hands flew up to his shirt, pain blossoming in his chest. It felt like a thousand needles stabbing him directly in the wounded sternum, and he blinked away the blurriness in his vision as his free hand maintained a vice-like grip on the bench.

And suddenly the pain subsided, and his swimming vision focused in on your concerned face as you pressed one healing hand against his chest.

“Papyrus, are you alright?” You asked.

He nodded, not trusting his voice. Your healing was a relief, sweeping through his body and drawing a curse from him.

It didn't last long. He sighed as you pulled your hand away, and he allowed you to move his skull about and check his eyes for responsiveness.
“That...hurt.” He muttered shortly.

“I tried to warn him,” the doctor sighed, and you let out a bitter laugh.

“Yeah, he isn't too keen on the whole listening thing.” You unbuttoned his shirt a little bit and peeked beneath his bandages. A sharp intake of breath proved that it was not a pretty sight. “Alright. You're definitely done for the day after that. C'mon, up you go.”

“Let me know when he's ready to come back,” Allison sighed as Papyrus followed your motion, pretending he didn't need to lean on you. “We didn't even get through warm-ups.”

“That's alright, you can torture Silas instead.”

“Hey!” The human protested from where he was leaning heavily on the bars, abandoned.

“Take it like a man, Si!”

Papyrus couldn't help but grin as he settled back against his pillows once more.

Certainly, the error had been embarrassing, but your reaction was more than desirable, and it ended in the annoying human’s suffering.

The only downside is…

“Pain level?”

“...Irrelevant.”

“Papyrus.”

He sighed and shifted, biting back a wince. “...9.”

It hurt like he was hit with a two-ton truck, except all the impact was localized on the one spot. He knew how to read the machines by now, and he could clearly see his HoPe had dipped below 400. It was steadily climbing, but he suspected it would top out at around 600 again.

You sighed and turned to fiddle with his IV, and suddenly the pain was a lot less distracting.

“I'm upping your pain med dosage just for right now, but only because I won't be able to heal you much more until I've had a long rest.”

*That's never been a problem before*

He looked at you curiously as you wrote a few lines of instructions out for the RNAs, your braid looking frazzled and needing a long few minutes of attention. You yawned, and if occurred to him that he had seen you yawn quite a bit today.

He tried to remember the last time somebody told him you were on a break, and the only thing that came to mind was the other day when you yourself said so, before sitting down and doing his crossword challenge. Which you had tied. No matter what you said, he believes the six-letter words should count as two 3-letter words and as such you had definitely tied.

“You should take a break immediately,” he suggested, and you eyed him curiously. “So you can do your job and heal me!”
You laughed and slid your pen back into your coat pocket. “Yeah, well, I was supposed to be on my break two hours ago, but neither you nor Silas can be left to the mercy of the other nurses, so here I am.”

Understatement of the century, you couldn't help but think.

You had worked a double the day that you healed Silas’...parts...and had managed to catch about a half an hour’s sleep here and there throughout yesterday, as you ran back and forth between the two brats’ rooms--Silas’ mom had a million questions, both medical as well as personal (“Oh, sweetie, it’s been so long!”) and between answering the best you could and running more tea to Papyrus just to get him to back off...you hadn't had much of a break there.

You were supposed to go home last night, but that didn't happen because the Slime family had an emergency birthing of twin slimes at midnight, one purple and one pink. The whole process was a fascinating research subject, so when you were supposed to be on break after that, you were actually in your office writing about it in your medical journal.

After that you went straight into today’s shift, fueled by a huge can of Rockstar and half a muffin gifted to you by the bunnies that run the local market. At noon, when you were supposed to break for lunch, you had been asked to handle the PT, and now here you are.

“You're on break right now?” He asked, surprise lacing his tone.

“For the first time in, like, two days, I think I actually will be,” you sighed, frowning at your paper. These numbers look all wrong, but that might be the sleeplessness. “As soon as I figure out why--”

You shrieked in surprise as he caught your hand and yanked you down onto the bed, effortlessly removing your coat and tossing it onto the chair.

“Papyrus, what the--”

He shushed you, pushing you back against the pillows....

...and then he settled on the other half of the bed, shoved one of your books into your hands, and turned on the TV.

“There. Now you're on break. And because you can't seem to do something as simple as resting without somebody making you, you shall have to do it here,” he huffed in annoyance. “Do your paperwork if you must, but you will do it laying down!”

...should you press it? That this is actually a really nice thing for him to do?

...nah.

You settle his chart on your lap with a small smile. So the big lug has a nice bone in there somewhere after all!

Kyle ran a hand through his hair with a sigh, looking around the nurse’s station hopefully. He knew you were supposed to be on break until 6, but you're just so much better at dealing with all the questions in the clinic. It was something quick he could ask your opinion on, and then he could leave you alone.

He admires your work ethic. He doesn't know how you do it, running back and forth between the clinic and your patients. He'd received several lengthy, venomous texts from Victor already telling
him to make you go home...he really wishes he could do that, but nobody tells you what to do. You're literally your own boss, since you're private practice within the hospital, so unless you collapse they can't do anything.

But whatever higher power seems to provide you with your energy? He needs to subscribe to that. Because you've literally saved his ass and countless lives in the six months you've worked here because of it. Everybody around feels the same--they wish you could rest, but you're literally the only one who can do your job without the place falling apart.

“Saw her go check on Brat number one,” Mabel offered, seeing his distraught face.

He sighed, laughing a little. “The skeleton. Should have guessed, thanks, Mabel.”

The older woman hummed in response, smile twitching. He wondered if she had ever actually smiled, or if she was born with that scowl.

Okay. One question, just confirming something, then he can force you to go lay down in--

He stopped in the doorway, surveying the scene in front of him with surprise.

The skeleton was there, of course, head drooping slightly to the side as his crossword puzzle hung off his lap, soft snoring whistling through his nasal cavity. When he was asleep, he almost looked friendly.

But the real surprise was the way you were tucked against his side, reading glasses askew, jacket abandoned on the nearby chair. Your hair had fallen completely out of your braid, and the chart in your lap was teetering on the very edge of falling off.

And you were fast asleep, breathing lightly as your face pressed against the large monster’s ribs.

Holy shit.

This was so adorable he might actually die.

He grinned as he snapped a quiet picture on his phone, for posterity. He doesn't know how this happened, but he was relieved to see you actually resting for once.

Hey, maybe this Papyrus guy isn't so bad after all.

He reached over and retrieved the chart, sliding it back where it goes at the foot of the bed. Then he carefully attempted to lean over and remove your glasses--

--and froze when something hard and decidedly sharp pressed against his throat. Slowly, slowly, he moved back, and Papyrus’ weapon and powerful glare followed him all the way.

“...Is that a literal sharpened bone?” Kyle asked.

“Yes. And not the fun kind. Wake her and I will personally see to it that you never wake again,” the skeleton hissed, pressing the bone closer for emphasis.

Kyle held his hands up in an attempt to placate him, and the monster narrowed his sockets.

“I only came in to ask her a question--”

“Ask it later.” He insisted. “...how long has she been here without going home?”
“...almost three days,” Kyle muttered shamefully. It sounded way worse when said out loud, especially since everyone just...lets her do it.

Papyrus’ sockets flashed with anger, and he seemed to debate something in his head.

“She needs to recoup her healing magic. She's useless until then. Come back when she's awake.” He said finally.

“But I just--”

“Did. I. **Stutter**?” He growled, magic flaring in his socket.

Kyle got the distinct impression that even with a hole in his chest, this guy could still kill him if he wanted.

“...No. Just...take her glasses off, or she'll get a headache,” Kyle pressed, leaning over to retrieve an extra pillow from under the bed. “And try to put this under her neck so it doesn't hurt later.”

Papyrus nodded, and lowered the bone, allowing Kyle to back out of the room and click the door closed.

“She in there?” Mabel asked as Kyle power-walked back to the nurse’s station.

“Tell everyone that nobody is to go into that room until she comes out,” he said urgently. “If he didn't like me, I would have been a shish-kabob.”

Mabel smirked.

“I see. Maybe it’s time to place the bets after all.”

Kyle laughed dryly. "Oh hell yeah. Put me down for the week after he gets released."

Chapter End Notes

Come bug me about these nerds!
The Captain and the Second-in-Command

Chapter Summary

You are finally taking a night off to hang at home with Victor and Hobbes. Which means it's Kyle and Papyrus against the world, apparently.

Chapter Notes

I'm so happy you guys are enjoying this so far! The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and it makes me so happy! Check out my moodboard for Nurse on my Tumblr, and feel free to drop in with questions, theories, or imagines!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Vic?” You called through the house as you nudged the door closed behind you. “Vicoooooorrrrrrr?”

Your best friend and roomie didn't respond, so you assumed he was either mixing music or not home. Either way, it looks like you're on your own tonight.

There was a jingling noise, and Hobbes burst into the hallway, making a mad dash for you and punctuating each step with an urgent meow. You laughed and tried to step around him to set your groceries down, but the pudgy calico was dancing around your feet and pawing at your calves, and by the time you put the bags on the counter he had hopped his fat little butt up there to purr and meow and demand your attention.

“You know, there's somebody at work that reminds me of you,” you told the cat as you gathered him in your arms.

He mewled in response, flopping deadweight as you carried him along, basking in the attention as you scratched his ears.

“Vic?” You tried once more, knocking your bare foot against his door. There was music on the other side, so you at least knew he was in there. “Hey, I brought stuff to make quesaritos!”

The door flew open, startling Hobbes and causing him to flail until you dropped him.

Without the soundproofing you had applied to his room, the music poured into the shared space as Victor appeared in the doorway, headphones around his neck and smile on his face.

He must have had an event of some kind today, because he wasn't in his pajamas even though it was past six. Instead he was wearing a pair of faded cuffed jeans with a ripped knee and a dramatic skull print t-shirt with the sleeves cut off, putting his tattoos on display.

...is that a new tattoo? You filed it away to mention later.
“Hey!” He called over the music. “You're home!”

“Yeah,” you tried to answer. “Does the landlord know you're having a small rave in there?”

He rolled his eyes and his bracelets jingled as he held up a small remote, and the music clicked off.

“How long are you home for?” He asked, a giddiness in his voice as he grabbed your wrist, dragging you inside the room.

“Uh...until midnight?”

He made a buzzer noise with his mouth as he flopped in his computer chair. “Wrong answer. Kyle texted and said you don't have to be back until morning.”

Dammit, Kyle. Ratting you out. You rolled your eyes and parked it on his bed. “I have paperwork.”

Victor leveled a stare on you, eyebrow raised in a scolding manner, before turning to his computer. “Well, we'll see. Check this out.”

You didn't listen to music often, but half of the music on your phone was Victor’s. It was a talent his very traditional parents had not really approved of, and as such he'd made you lots of stuff since he moved in as a way of thanks. His mixes were a blend of several genres, and each one was unique. He jokingly called it “New-Age Post-Punk Trash Rock”, but it was more like...Nirvana meets Black Sabbath. Except when it was occasionally more like Fall Out Boy meets the Violent Femmes.

His new song leaned more towards the latter, and even though it was a rough cut that sounded a bit like a train wreck, his genuine smile and the knowledge that he was doing what he loved had you grinning.

After several minutes of listening to him rant about his newest vision for his EP(it was different every time you talked), he firmly denied you the right to make dinner by booking it to the kitchen and starting in on it himself.

“Vic, I can--”

“Nope. You can sit.” He insisted, pulling out a chair for you. “Besides, I make better Mexican food. It's in my blood.”

“Stop,” you giggled, but he only waggled his eyebrows at you, smirking as he pulled his beanie off to deposit it on the counter.

You gasped audibly, and he looked back, eyebrow raised.

“Your hair! It's purple!” You said with disbelief, and his questioning look melted into amusement.

“Yeah, Hazel, I dyed it like, three weeks ago,” he chuckled, running a hand through it to loosen the strands from the throes of hat-hair.

“Ugh, don't call me that right now,” you groaned, wrinkling your nose as you thought of Silas back at the hospital. “I hear it enough from Silas at work, it kinda wore out on me for now.”

“Silas Werscher?” He asked, surprised. “What's he doing at the hospital? If you tell me he actually got his shit together and became a nurse or something...”

“Nah. Got absolutely wrecked for trying to make a move on someone’s girl. And by wrecked I
mean, like, inches from death.” You held up your fingers in a pinch motion to show how close Silas had been to the other side. “Ironically, it was the brother of another obnoxious patient of mine that came in the day before with a bullet in his chest. Small world I guess.”

The smell of taco meat filled the air as he whipped up his family’s famous quesaritos.

“Woah, wait, back up. Gunshot victim?”

“Oh, yeah. His name’s Papyrus. Skeleton monster, seven feet tall, very loud and very demanding,” you rattled off as he put the rice on to boil. “I think between him and Silas, I’ve probably made about 45 trips to the cafeteria for tea in the last two weeks.”

“A skeleton monster, huh?” Victor mused, slapping a tortilla in a pan and smothering it with cheese. “Sounds familiar for some reason...You see all kinds, don't you?”

“Kinda have to,” you snorted. “Except I end up seeing mostly him, because he's so demanding. Yesterday I slept through the beginning of my second shift because he threatened Kyle with an actual bone-sword not to wake me.”

“Oh!” Victor dropped the spatula he was using and dug in his pocket for a moment, producing his phone. “This guy! I knew he sounded familiar!”

He smirked as he showed you a picture of you tucked against Papyrus’ side, passed out like a rock and drooling slightly, with the large monster drifting off next to you.

“What?!” You squeaked, and Victor laughed and pulled the phone away from your reach as you swatted for it, your face turning a deep crimson. “Where...how?”

“How do you think?”

You gasped, scandalized. “Kyle! I'm going to kill him! Crap, I hope he hasn't sent that to anyone else...”

He shrugged, pocketing his phone. “Wouldn't bet on that, cuddlebug.”

You groaned and put your head down in your arms, and as you did Victor took a scan of your exhausted state, a process he had trained to a near-art form when it came to you.

You had left your lab coat at the hospital, so you must have actually been kind of rested from your long nap with the skeleton monster at work, because you usually forgot. Your hair had been pulled back neatly, probably an attempt to not look so tired when you came home to his critical eye, and he could see the wear on your fingernails from tirelessly healing people these last few days.

He hated that he almost never saw you, even though you lived together. This was at least three weeks since the last time he saw you, since you hadn't even known about his hair, and it got pretty lonely.

Not that it was anything new. He'd known you since you could crawl, and whereas once upon a time there had been nothing more important than goofing off...nowadays, and this was how it had been since Eliza had gone missing, you were a workaholic. You threw yourself into your schoolwork in school, and into your studies in college. When you redirected your major to Magimedical Theory and Practice, you had redoubled your already strained efforts, and it had only gotten worse with your job at the hospital.

“Hey, if he's making you rest, then he can't be all bad in my book,” he said softly, to which you just
made a noncommittal noise of displeasure. “I just mean, give the brat a chance. He has his heart in the right place, yeah?”

“He doesn't have a heart. He's a skeleton.” You snorted, but he saw a hint of a smile when you looked up. “But I guess he *is* endearing...in his own, fucked up way. Silas, too, sometimes.”

“Hey, woah, let’s not get crazy now.”

“Don't answer it. Do not.” Victor warned as your hand inched towards your phone. “I swear to all that is holy, I have been waiting three weeks to watch My Hero with you and if you--”

“Hello?” You giggled into the phone, dodging the handful of popcorn he threw at you.

“Hey, MP.”

“Hey, Kyle. Everything okay?” You asked, brow furrowing in concern over the worry in his tone.

“Uh...yes and no.” He replied, and you could hear a crash in the background. “We have a full-blown tantrum over here, and he won't talk to anyone.”

“Silas or Papyrus?” You asked, having a sneaking suspicion which brand of brat this was.

“Papyrus.”

You sighed. “Give him the phone.”

Kyle mumbled something about not trusting him not to break it, but after a bit of shuffling you could hear the voices clearer.

“UNACCEPTABLE!”

“Mr. Osseus, you need to calm down and head back to bed before you hurt yourself.”

“I DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM HUMANS!” A loud crash sounded, followed by a frantic beeping. “I AM THE CAPTAIN OF THE ROYAL GUARD! NOBODY TELLS ME WHAT TO DO! NYEH!”

Several more crashes, and you dropped your head into your hand as Kyle came back on.

“Hey, MP’s on the phone.”

Papyrus cut off mid-shriek, and it fell silent except for the beeping.

“...Hello? Nurse?” His voice was much quieter now that you had him in the phone, and you thought you might actually hear a hint of guilt in there.

“What in the world is going on over there?” You hissed, and there was an audible click of some sort.

“These humans you left in charge think they can bamboozle me!” He huffed on the other end. “They are trying to get me to let my guard down, but I, the Great and Terrible Papyrus, never relinquish my attention!”

“English, please.”
“They are trying to drug me!”

“Hey, now, let's not use harsh language like that, sir,” came another voice that you recognized as one of the male doctors on staff.

“Fuck you! I don't want your rufies, you son of a--"

“Is that Dr. Stephens?”

Papyrus was silent for a moment. “That is what his name tag says.”

“Speakerphone please.” You waited for the beep. “Rudy.”

“...Hello, MP.” The older male voice replied.

“Why is my patient saying you're trying to drug him?”

Victor had scooted closer to hear the conversation better, now, shoving popcorn in his mouth with a glint in his eyes. This was about to get good.

“Young patient has been nothing but belligerent to any staff who have--”

“Why. Is he. Saying. You. Are trying. To drug him?” You repeated, slowly this time, since he was apparently too stupid to catch it the first time. “Are you, perhaps, trying to administer a sedative to him?”

“A mild one, to calm him and keep him from--”

“Alright, Rudy, I'll break it down for you. You are a cardiologist. Your business is with the human heart. Monsters have no hearts, so barring the fact that there is no medical reason for you to be in my patient's room anyway, you also know the effects of sedatives on monsters of the alpha subtype...oops, I guess you don't know that, do you?”

“No, I--”

“That's right, you don't know. Because the only people in that hospital who know anything about monsters is me and Kyle. Have you consulted Kyle?”

“I told him to leave him alone,” Kyle chimed in. “He ignored me.”

“I am a doctor! No nurse’s assistant is going to tell me how to do my job!”

“Aye, corto de luces…” Victor shook his head. “El burro sabe mas que tu.”

“But it isn't your job, it's mine!” You snarled into the phone, and even Victor looked surprised. “And when I am not there, Kyle is the fucking expert, and ignoring his advice without consulting the Maginurse Practitioner is a form of malpractice, and could seriously injure or impede the healing process of a very delicate injury. Do I make myself clear, Dr. Stephens?”

There is silence on the other end for a long moment, save for both Kyle and Papyrus stifling laughter. Victor was making a face somewhere between terrified and proud soccer mom.

“...Crystal clear.”

“Good. Now, I suggest you march your happy ass back on down to cardiology, because if you are still there when I get there in the morning you will not be a happy man.”
“...Yes, ma’am.”

Papyrus smirked smugly at the balding, grumbling man as he left, not even trying to resist the urge to flip him off as he went.

He had never heard you get that frustrated, but if he was quite honest, he was actually impressed! Not only did you lay down the law and mark your territory, so to speak, but you put that pompous prick right back where he belonged and reminded him that “Maginurse Practitioner” trumps him any day. That confidence was definitely a staple for you, even on your most tired days.

“Papyrus.”

His grin fell as he looked back to the phone in his hand. Oh dear.

“Remove speakerphone, please.”

He did as instructed and held the phone up to his skull.

“Yes?”

“If I get there in the morning, and your room isn't exactly how I left it, you will be a very sorry skeleton yourself.”

He scoffed. “Please, don't insult m--”

“I just had to interrupt my marathon of the new season of my favorite anime for all this bullshit, so for the love of GOD do not test me,” you snapped, and he could hear someone snickering beside you. “Pick up your room, and behave at least until I get there tomorrow or else I will not be gentle.”

...is it bad that he doesn't really want you to be gentle?

He shook the thought away, dismissing it quickly as if it bit him. He definitely didn't find you attractive, especially not when you were threatening him.

“Capiche?”

“I don't know, I'm awfully tired,” he sighed dramatically, trying to rile you up some more.

For fun. Not because it was hot as hell. Because it wasn't. Not at all.

A short silence, and then you laughed a little. “Alright, Boss. It's your funeral if you don't listen. See you tomorrow.”

He felt a shiver run up his spine unexpectedly at the way you hissed his nickname, and when you hung up, he shoved the phone back into the male nurse’s hands and landed on his bed with a huff.

“She tell you to clean up and behave?”

“That is none of your business!”

“Well, you know, the last patient who didn't listen to her...she ignored him for like, three days.” Kyle said, pocketing his phone before pausing, his grin dangerously amused. “Oh, wait. That was you.”
“Fight me, you prick!” Papyrus growled, and Kyle expertly dodged the pillow he lobbed at him, ducking out of the room with a loud laugh as he closed the door behind him.

Dammit. He's smiling. Even the smug asshole in the mauve scrubs was starting to grow on him.

He turned a critical eye to the room around him.

Kyle had graciously picked up the HoPe monitor while Papyrus had been listening to you wreck that doctor guy, so the beeping was gone. However, the room was still a disaster, considering he had been throwing everything he could reach at the middle-aged “doctor” who had been trying to poison him, and he could see quite a few things that made him feel...guilty.

He stooped to pick up the copy of *IT* you had brought him the other day, smoothing the now-creased paper cover as best as he could. It had been worn when you gave it to him, lovingly dog-eared in all the scariest parts, but now it looked downright disrespected, and he felt bad about that. He made a mental note to replace it for you when he got discharged...he's not one to mistreat borrowed items.

He gathered the other books, thankfully unharmed, and the cup covered in skeletons playing instruments that he kept his pens in. You had brought it in to tease him, but he actually was quite fond of it. He really missed his drum set and guitar back at his apartment, so it made him feel a little bit more at home.

...now that he thinks about it, he feels really bad that you had to be called on your night at home. He wasn't wrong, necessarily, but he supposed he could have handled it better...and with less destruction.

Fuck, his chest hurts from bending over already. He sighed and sat back on the edge of the bed, frustration knocking at his temples. He hates feeling so weak and useless. Years of training under Undyne in the Royal Guard, even surpassing her in strength and LV and then finally in rank, and yet he can be bedridden by something as trivial as a bullet from some human weapon. Stupid physical weapons, humans should fight with intent like everyone else…

He reached over and hit the buzzer, but didn't say anything. You weren't here anyway, so it wasn't like you would answer.

The door clicked open, to his surprise, and the redheaded RNA stuck his head in.

“You rang?” He asked sarcastically, leaning on the doorjamb.

Papyrus looked around the room, palming his chest with a grimace. “It would appear I do not have the stamina to do this on my own.”

Kyle's eyebrows nearly disappeared into his thick curls. “Are you...asking for help?”

“Don't make me spell it out!” Papyrus growled. “This is demeaning enough already!”

He hated that smug grin this bastard always had on his face.

“What's the magic woooooord~?” He snickered, clicking the door closed behind him.

“You can't be serious.”

“What's that? They need me at the nurse's station?” Kyle mused, cupping his ear and pretending to listen.
Papyrus groaned, wishing for the billionth time that he could cross his arms to fully express his displeasure. “... *Please?*”

“Actually, the magic word was ‘doo-wop’, but since you're new to being nice, I'll forgive you,” Kyle teased, rolling up the sleeves of his undershirt and stooping to gather some things from the floor. “I'll do the floor, you just organize, okay?”

Papyrus nodded, and set about tidying what he could reach without bending, and pretty soon they were making good progress on the room. His mind wandered to how confident you had been in Kyle’s skills on the phone, and he realized that if *you* trusted the man to care for him while you were gone...

Well. Then maybe Kyle wasn't so bad after all.

Chapter End Notes

He's learning!

Also, hello Victor! Yes, he is Mexican Latino. This is my first time writing a bilingual character, so I hope it was fun for you guys! If you are a spanish-speaker and have any pointers on writing a good bilingual Spanish speech pattern, feel free to leave me tips! And he is based on an old friend of mine, hence the disapproving parents, so I really wasn't trying to stereotype that way even though I know it can come across like that.

And Kyle and Papyrus bonding gives me life. Kyle and Victor's friendship gives me life. I am all about the positive m/m friendships over here.
The hospital was buzzing happily when you arrived the next morning, as sleepy a Sunday as you would ever see here. You stepped quickly, smile on your face and arms laden with both paperwork and a bag full of surprises for your favorite two brats. You had only planned on bringing some stuff for Papyrus, to make up for last night, but you couldn't resist the Girl Scouts outside the store, and Samoas had always been Silas’ favorite.

You paused as you passed the cardiology unit, peering in until you made eye contact with Dr. Stephens, who coughed and pretended to be doing something important.

“You're right,” you said, stowing your bags behind the counter and setting your sunglasses aside.

“Good morning, Jasper. How are we feeling today?”

“I can be,” you said, “but I'm still feeling pretty shitty and unmotivated.”
“Oh, you know, can't complain,” he said, his voice soft as he clasped your hands in his. “I've only coughed one rose today, you know.”

“Well! That's good!” You squeezed his hands back, eyes looking over his appearance slowly, taking in the new thorn pricks along his arms and lips, and the blush of the roses that were slowly taking over his face and chest. “Hopefully we can ease the pain a little bit.”

Taking Alphys’ advice to heart, you moved to focus a healing hand over his soul, focusing on the kindred green flame in his chest.

Not for the first time, you cursed his children in your mind. Hanahaki Disease is always fatal, unless the unanswered feelings wane on their own, but Jasper’s disease wasn't romantic in nature. No, his unanswered love was the love for his children, who haven't visited him nor allowed him to see his grandchildren for nearly a decade now.

Of course, you don't know the whole story, nor would you ever. But in your experience, Jasper was the sweetest old man you had ever met...if you could be his kid, you'd do it in a heartbeat.

But he insists that his children aren't to blame. You suppose his past is his own.

“There. How’s that?”

He beamed up at you, his one visible eye shining with gratitude. “Much better, thank you, my dear. You are such a wonderful young lady.”

“Only for sweet patients like you,” you said softly, smiling back at him. “Try to get some rest.”

Kyle followed you back to the nurse’s station, still clutching Jasper’s chart.

You knew what he was going to say before he even opened his mouth, and you sighed, cutting him off.

“I know.” You muttered, eyes drifting down to your hands. You silently cursed yourself for not being stronger...for not being able to heal him.

“It's going to be soon. Maybe within the week…” Kyle trailed off, grief in his eyes. “Any word from his family?”

“Of course not,” you grumbled. “And I have done everything. Considering the reason for his disease, I suppose I shouldn't be surprised…”

Kyle shifted uncomfortably. “Maybe we should prepare for them to... not come?”

“No!”

He took half a step back at your outburst, and you bit your lip, cooling down immediately.

“...Sorry…” you mumbled. “Prepare the reports, and leave them on my desk. I'll call the lawyer in this afternoon to handle the--”

“No, I'll do it,” Kyle said quickly. “Please, you already work yourself to the bone, let me do this.”

You contemplated this for a second, and let out a resigned breath. “Okay, but it goes both ways. You need to sleep, too, Kyle.”

He laughed, tousling your hair as if you were a kid. “I'll sleep when you go a whole night without
“Damn, guess neither of us are ever sleeping,” you joked, batting his hands away. “In any case...I guess I can let you handle it. I trust you. But, don't slack on studying for your exams, either--I already have your nametag that says ‘Kyle Cameron-RN’!”

You gestured to your daydream, and he chuckled, setting the chart down on the counter.

“No problem, MP. I’ll be a slightly more knowledgeable person that does basically the same things in no time!” He teased. “Oh...”

He glanced over at Papyrus’ closed door, and you cocked your head curiously.

“I was going to ask...but it's pretty quiet in here today,” you said warily. “Is he...alright?”

“Dunno, honestly,” he shrugged. “I tried to check in on him this morning, but he was still sleeping.”

That is...disconcerting.

“Maybe he's feverish?” You grumbled, picking up the bag you had set aside for him. “I’ll go check on him.”

You hoofed it as quickly as you could to his room, knocking quietly before you opened the door.

“Papyrus?”

There was no answer, so you shuffled inside and leaned over to check on him.

Huh. He was sleeping. A quick CHECK of him showed he hadn't been sedated, which meant you didn't have to kick Dr. Stephens’ ass...but it appeared to be a matter of the increased dosage of pain meds you had given to compensate for your night off, which made you feel a little bad. If his soul was in that much pain, to draw enough to sleep? You shouldn't take any nights off in that case...

The mattress whined as you sat next to him, sliding one hand up to feel his forehead for a fever.

You shrieked in surprise as his hand shot up and caught your wrist, and before you knew it he had tossed you across to the other side of the bed. Your shoulder slammed against the HoPe machine, but you didn't have time to react to the pain before you had to dodge quickly, a bone embedding deep into the drywall behind you.

“What the fuck?!” You squeaked out, scrambling away from the bone. The intention behind that bone had been to KILL, a thousand times removed from the evaporating bones he usually tossed.

He didn't answer you, but jumped out of bed and advanced on you, and you finally got a good look at his face...

...and immediately recognized the clouded over look in his sockets.

The door started to open, but you lunged for it, cutting Kyle off with a startled cry as you shoved your weight on it, slamming it in his face and pushing him out of the room. You clicked the lock closed.

“Stay out! He's having an episode and more people will only make it worse!”

Another startled noise from the other side, as well as you, as a bone pierced the door inches from
You whirled around to face him, standing firmly with your back to the door. You put one hand in front of you, and a soft green shimmer formed a shield in front of you as he loosed another bone in your direction. It deflected and buried itself six inches deep into a monitor, causing a shower of sparks.

“Papyrus,” you pleaded gently. “You have to wake up now, sweetie.”

He groaned, hesitating slightly and bringing a hand to cradle his skull, eyelights flickering. That’s a good sign.

“Human…” he whimpered, voice nearly childish as he trembled, advancing on you. You stood firm until your shield bumped his chest, and he stopped. His eyes were less clouded, but now full of fear and a sense of bravado, as if he was about to do something dangerously stupid.

“Papyrus?”

“Human, you have to hide!” He gently grasped your arm, looking around anxiously. You kept your shield between you, but bent at the elbow to gently allow the advance, and followed his movements down into a kneeling position as if you both were hiding from someone. His magic was swirling restlessly around him in an intense aura, as if in fight or flight mode. “You musn’t be seen! I shall deal with Asgore...do not give me that look, I can win!”

You wondered who he thought he was talking to.

“Papyrus, Asgore isn't here,” you said softly. “You are on the surface, now. This is Ebott Mercy, and I'm your Maginurse. You were shot in the chest, and I've been taking care of you for the past two and a half weeks.”

“If he sees you he will...ugh…” Papyrus cradled his head once more. “I can't...lose you...again...please…”

You shushed him gently as the fierce fiery glow dissipated slowly, dismissing your shield to place your hand over his wound.

“Come back to me, Boss.”

He folded against the pressure of your hand, and you caught him easily as he swayed, blinking dazedly.

“...Nurse?”

“Yup, that’s me,” you soothed, helping him to his feet to shuffle back to sit on the bed. “Easy, big guy.”

“I...I thought you were...I thought I…” he trailed off, looking around the room, and as his wit sharpened, his face grew more somber. He looked from the bone in the door to the one through the monitor, and then over at you, guilt in his eyes. “...I swear I had picked it all up...just like you asked.”

There was soft beeping from the ruined machinery, but you shook your head, gentle hand firmly keeping his gaze set on you.

“It’s alright, I believe you,” you soothed gently, brushing his cheekbone with your thumb from
where you held him.

His hands came up slowly to brush your sweater, which you only just now noticed had a jagged slash in it from a rogue bone earlier.

“...Did I...?”

His voice was so quiet you hardly heard him, and his eyes held so much apprehension that your heart melted just at the sight of him.

“No, no, don't you worry,” you reassured him, pulling your sweater up with your free hand to show him you weren't hurt. “I'm unharmed, see? I'm a strong gal, I can take a hit anyway.”

He pulled his face from your grasp, clearly unconvinced, breathing deeply. “I'm very strong, you know. I doubt you could take a hit from me like that.”

“Even so, I have this.” You stepped back and formed your shield, and his head snapped up in surprise. “See? No worries...and it's my fault for upping your pain meds anyway, I should have known better.” He made a gruff noise, hands pressing absently against his sternum where the wound was, as if to ground himself. “Papyrus, it’s my job to care for you, and even if it wasn't I would do it anyway.”

He scoffed, rolling his eyelights. “You are only saying that so I’ll relax!”

“No, I'm saying it because it's true. C’mon, lay back and I’ll bring you some water.” He obeyed, albeit robotically, still avoiding your eye. “...and then I have a surprise for you, if you're up for it?”

He twitched, still not looking at you, but you saw a small smile forming. You beamed down at him, knowing you'd won, and turned to adjust the pain med in his IV so this wouldn't happen again.

“I'll be right back, alright?”

“...Bring tea,” he said, smile twitching a little wider, which in turn made you smile wider. Good. He was acting like himself again.

“Mmm...okay. Just this once.”

By the time you came back with his tea, he was proud to say he was feeling better. The shaking had subsided after the first couple minutes, and he was more than ready to excuse his actions to you.

Only, you didn't ask.

Instead you gave him his tea and set about getting him set up for the day, apologizing profusely for the way that his pain meds had knocked him out. He wasn't able to tell you it might have happened anyway...he suspected it was the lack of safety rather than the pain meds themselves. After that doctor had stormed out the night before, he had had a hard time convincing himself he was safe enough to sleep, and it must have carried over into his subconscious when he had finally passed out.

But like hell he was going to admit he felt unsafe. He's an AA, a boss monster! He had higher LV than 99% of the underground, and no nightmare about his past is going to upset him...even that one…
...he was secretly happy you didn't ask what he had seen. It was a blur, to be honest, and even if he did remember it wasn't something he felt comfortable discussing. Maybe someday, when he knew you better--

Er, scratch that. Once he's out of the hospital he supposes he won't know you at all.

Yes...you'll go back to being perfect strangers. He'll return to his apartment, and somebody else will occupy this bed, and your time. You'll bring somebody else tea and he'll return to trying to find something worthwhile to put his time into...without you.

...why does that upset him so much?

“Magic output seems back to normal,” you mused, sliding your hand delicately down the inside of his radius. He suppressed a shudder--a particularly sensitive spot, and you brushed it near every day. “Meds reduced...HoPe stagnant at...658.”

You pursed your lips, pen raised to tap them thoughtfully as you stared at the HoPe machine.

“That's higher than yesterday,” you said finally, though your brow still creased with concern. “Do you want me to heal now? Or later?”

“You're the doctor,” he scoffed.

“Nurse practitioner,” you reminded him, though it felt more playful than usual.

“...Do what you must.”

You shifted slightly, looking at him for a beat longer than he might have liked. He wondered what you were always looking for when you looked at him like that, and if you ever saw it.

“Let’s save it for later,” you said gently. “Right now we have to start the marathon!”

That...that was a joke, right? He stared at you, but you didn't laugh.

“Excuse me?” He scoffed finally. “You haven't even cleared me to walk, and you want me to run a marathon?”

You shook your head, smirking. “No, dummy. A movie marathon.”

What the hell is a movie marathon? He grimaced at the idea of running back and forth between here and the movie theatre, or whatever that entailed.

His sockets narrowing in suspicion. “Am I supposed to run with movies? Or to the movies?”

You gave him the same perplexed look he was certain he was giving you a moment ago when he had been waiting for you to laugh.

“Uh...no. A movie marathon is when you watch a bunch of movies one after the other.” You cocked your head to the side curiously. “Haven't you ever done that?”

“That sounds incredibly lazy!” He jeered, struggling to cross his arms. He noted that he could at least do that now, albeit for only a short moment before the pain set in. “I am the captain of the royal guard! I haven't the time for such trivial things. I was much too busy trying to capture humans.”

When you didn't answer right away, he glanced over at you curiously. Your smile was strained into
“Did you...ever catch any?” You asked quietly, and he noticed your voice tremble slightly.

He blinked, a little surprised at how unsettled your question made him. “Of...of course! I'm not entirely useless, I caught Frisk, didn't I?”

You let out a sigh, seemingly relieved. He watched the tension release from your shoulders...but he still felt the need to steer the conversation somewhere else.

“In any case, we cannot have a marathon with movies, for we don't have any movies!” He sighed. “And until that woman in PT decides to allow me to lift the weights..I am, regrettably, stuck here.”

“Well, I have a solution to exactly one of those problems.”

You stooped down to grab a bag at the base of the bed, and tossed it on his lap, gesturing impatiently for him to open it.

“...I thought you didn't like Stephen King?” He asked, perplexed, as he opened it up to find several box sets of Stephen King films. He picked up a copy of the new *IT*, turning it over in his hands, taking pride in the collector’s cover and...remembering his guilt for wrecking your paperback copy of *IT*.

“I don't necessarily dislike him...but you *really* like him, so as an apology for all that you had to deal with last night, I thought I'd get you this.”

That is...incredibly, incredibly thoughtful. In fact, other than the scarf Sans had made him when they were kids, it was probably the most thoughtful gift he had received...well, ever!

...why do you go to all this trouble for him?

He could feel his face heating up in a blush, and he turned away slightly and coughed, holding up the copy of *IT* he had been examining, and you took the hint, padding lightly over to the TV to put it in the DVD player.

He watched you carefully, as if trying to decipher a difficult puzzle. He was still feeling slightly off from his episode, he supposed, but watching you...for some reason it made him feel better. Your presence made him feel better.

Er, no, scratch that. It was just the healing magic that made him feel better, certainly...there isn't any other reason. He just feels attached because of the way you care for him. What's that called? Some form of Stockholm Syndrome?

There was a deep ache in his chest, and he brought his hand up to cover the bandaged wound with a grimace. It didn't *feel* like the same pain as when his injury twitched. No, it felt...deeper than that. Something pulling at his being.

You handed him the remote, giving him an affectionate pat on the shoulder, and the ache subsided with your touch. As the movie began to play, you buzzed about the room, drifting in and out, and every time you checked the HoPe machine you frowned, and he couldn't help but think that you looked better when you were smiling.

Not that he cares if you're smiling! But a happy healer is a more efficient healer...he thinks...and when you frown, the ache gets sharper. By the end of the day it had waned completely, but he was still thinking about it as he fell asleep.
He dreamed of you, and his chest bursting into a rainbow shower of colors--your face, shocked and bewildered, and his face as he coughed up more of the color. The color choked him, drowned him, tingled through his body like thorns digging in, roots stretching all around him and embedding into the vermilion glass vase in his chest.

When he woke in the wee hours of the morning to an empty room, the ache was back briefly...

...it was probably nothing.

...right?

Chapter End Notes

oh no...what's wrong with Papyrus?

Come fight me on tumblr!
Take Responsibility

Chapter Summary

Alphys tries to help you with Papyrus' case.
Red's mate is in trouble.

Chapter Notes

Alright, so, here we are, finally at the chapter that picks up Melda's story again. I wanted another fluffy chapter or two but decided it could wait, I wanted to start this here.
This coincides with the chapter "Trouble in Paradise" from Secretly Yours.

TW: medium gore from mild injuries

Kyle glanced at your closed office door nervously.

You never closed it. You never disappeared into there unless for a break, and your break wasn't for a while...but Dr. Alphys had shown up, and Kyle knew exactly what this little meeting was about.

He glanced over at Papyrus’ closed door. He'd been quiet today, save for an obnoxious request or two for tea...but Kyle knew that his HP was still not climbing correctly. Something was fundamentally wrong with the healing process, and though their favorite skeletal brat was slowly regaining movement and quickly regaining his usual attitude, the HP never went higher than 680.
You had even taught him to perform a direct soul CHECK, thinking maybe the machine was on the fritz...but it was looking more and more like his HP was permanently stunted, or that it was the emotional healing that would take a few years to pass.

That didn't mean he couldn't heal, of course. But it meant there could be unforeseen complications, so before you could discharge him you had called in the real expert.

He can hardly believe its only been three weeks since Papyrus and Silas came through the ER. He kind of feels bad for Kevin, who had only just started working here the day Papyrus stumbled in.
The poor kid was a nervous wreck, and being worked twice as hard as a new hire should due to the demand for monster-sympathetic staff. Even as Kyle’s shift drew to a close, he wondered if he should stay anyway, just to help the kid out…

...but he can't hold his hand forever. When Kyle moves up to RA, then Kevin is going to be the one stepping up to the RNA duties in his stead, and while there are plenty of other RNAs and RNs...there aren't very many with any sort of gift for healing.

Kevin’s healing wasn't nearly as gifted as yours--in fact, it served more as an anaesthetic than healing, and it could make magic stitching like nobody’s business, which was useful in its own right...but it didn't hold a candle to your ability to practically zip wounds up, and hell, apparently
regrow teeth. You insisted he would learn more as he grew, but Kyle firmly believed the kid simply belonged in the paramedic unit, caring for trauma at the site until they could get back to you...or maybe he was just jealous that he wasn't a mage himself. Who knows.

“Kyle, go home,” you scolded as you shuffled out of your office with Dr. Alphys close behind you, red eyes affixed to the papers in her clawed hands. “Your shift was over 30 minutes ago.”

“But--”

“Zip it, mister! Now march!” You insisted, shooing him fervently from his seat and up into the hall.

He couldn't help but grin as he left, making sure to flip you the bird over his shoulder when he was sure Mabel wasn't looking. He just saw so much of his sister in your posture, your sassy remarks. Most people balked when he said you were like a sister to him, saying that's just what they all say—but they didn't understand. You just... screamed sister, from your very being. Victor and him talked about it all the time, this sense that you were always searching for a sibling, and they theorized it was why you had never had a real relationship beyond the occasional one night stand...constantly sister-zoned... Vic thinks it comes from losing your twin, but it didn't really matter why you disarmed him so.

He really, truly loved you, like his sister. And that was the truth.

Alphys tapped the microscope in front of her, impatience knocking at the corners of her mind.

This whole thing was, indeed, perplexing. Papyrus had always been a very strong individual, as opposed to his brother's fragility, but regardless of his natural abilities, he didn't seem like he would ever fully recover from this gunshot wound.

It's likely, from your notes and recordings, that the hole and the crack will remain in his sternum no matter what, and it will become a huge weak point for him unless he learns to protect it. Knowing his recklessness, it might not ever happen, so she had resolved to find something they could do to act as a shield of sorts.

After all, as much as she disliked the skeletons, Papyrus and Undyne were best friends, and her mate would be devastated if anything happened to him. And Alphys would lose a very rare specimen--AA monsters were like shooting stars, and the only ones she had ever seen were the skeletons, their late father, and Asgore himself.

You had graciously given her a sample of your magic, and her claws were twitching just thinking of all the amazing experiments she could run with it...and imagine if she got ahold of some of your blood! She had already tested to see your A/B/K-Multi designation, and had been delighted to find you were an Alpha, just as she thought. The possibilities with your magic, knowing the sky was the limit...human, and also an Alpha.

Endless potential.

And imagine if you and Papyrus became mates! An Alpha mage and an AA monster? Your children could be the most powerful--

...but she was getting distracted. Papyrus wasn't mating with anyone until he healed, that was for certain.

But she would surely have to slip it into the conversation at some point.
Papyrus grumbled, trying to get comfortable in the itchy hospital gown he'd been forced to wear because some idiot nurse spilled coffee on his pajamas.

He was only lucky it had happened *after* physical therapy, because there was no way in hell he would have been caught dead in this thing in front of Allison. She was much too pretty to be humiliated like this in front of her.

Not that you weren't also pretty. Objectively! He could appreciate your features...but it wasn't as if you were his type.

He was restless, and although his pain had decreased considerably over the last few days, he still felt like there was something looming over him. A dark cloud, of sorts.

Something eerie. A bad omen.

Or perhaps he had simply watched too many horror movies over the past few days.

He craned his neck to gaze out the window, trying to see if you were nearby. He had buzzed you three times now, and if you didn't come handle the asshat in the room next to him soon, then he would simply have to do it himself!

Whatisisname had been *tapping on the fucking walls* for hours now! He hated that he already had to see his ugly mug during PT, but on top of that it seemed the ginger was an...acquaintance...of his brother. He had gathered fairly quickly that Sans had been responsible for making the man’s face resemble hamburger, and he had not been subtle in his distaste for monsters and mages alike. Papyrus had very nearly knocked the cripple out at PT that morning for something he had said about you…

...not that he cares. Just that he's the only one who gets to make fun of you. For reasons. Totally valid reasons.

Unfortunately, he also gathered that you knew the fool rather well. Childhood friends, perhaps, but estranged, if the body language was anything to go by. Papyrus had spent centuries underground learning to read body language, and since time passed so drastically differently on the surface, he had had to quickly put that knowledge to use. He observed time differently than humans--one day on the surface was one week underground, due to magic properties involved with the barrier and pocket dimensions, and as such he felt like he had been here for-fucking-ever even though he was experiencing it all at the breakneck surface speed. This world was so...fast-paced. It was easy to make mistakes, such as getting shot, when the pressure is so high here.

Sometimes he goes back up the mountain and camps out in his old house for a week or so to collect his thoughts...and its still the same day when he returns.

It's like a super power, really.

But the hospital is on the surface, and he's wasting *so much time* here. If only he was healing underground, he could be gone several weeks until it heals on its own and get back to his apartment by the end of the week!

And so, with those thoughts, and the incessant tapping on the wall, he was beginning to feel very,
very irritated. Fidgety.

And you haven't been around at all! That made him…

...nothing. It made him nothing. Certainly not uncomfortable or nervous. He can handle being on his own. Hell, once he's out of here, he'll be on his own all the time!

...he buzzed you again.

“NURSE! If you do not handle your brat human then I will!”

“Like to see you try, freak!” He heard his neighbor call through the wall.

“That's it!” He growled, throwing the sheets off and grabbing his IV stand, grumbling to himself. “Whatever you are doing had better be damn well worth it, nurse!”

He stalked out towards the nurse’s station, down past the desks and making a beeline for the ER reception. He recalled hearing a call for you over the intercom, probably some dumb kid’s broken arm or something.

“Mr. Osseus, where are you going?”

The new blond RNA was struggling to keep up pace beside him, holding something in his hands, and Papyrus scoffed at him, tossing his IV stand in the kid’s general direction. It skidded past and down the hall to land at the foot of the very person he was looking for, and he opened his mouth to reprimand you for your lack of attention, shoving a cleaning trolley out of his way.

“NURSE! I HAVE BEEN BUZZING FOR NEARLY FIFTEEN MINUTES! WHERE HAVE YOU--”

Blood.

He smelled it before he saw it but there was a lot of it, so much of it, and it was all over your hands as you attempted to apply pressure to the human on the floor.

Woah. Wait. Back up. That's not just any human, and you aren't the only one covered in blood--Sans is crouched on the other side of his injured mate, eyes frantic as you glared up at Papyrus for his interruption.

“...been.” He breathed, finishing his sentence. Then panic. “What happened to the human?!”

Nobody answered him, and Kevin, the blond, shoved past him impatiently to hand the item he was carrying to you. It turned out to be a neck brace, which you fastened swiftly as Sans held pressure on, and they heaved her limp body into a prepared gurney.

Papyrus’ mind began to race, back to things he hadn't thought of in years--he was rusty as fuck at healing, but he had to be able to help somehow, right? This wasn't just any human...

Papyrus could see the panic in his brother’s sockets as she slipped from his grip…

...but then those sockets landed on him, and all thoughts of healing went out the window as he felt the magic crackle in the air. You sensed it immediately, looking up urgently from where Kevin was talking to you in a quiet, rushed tone.

Papyrus shamefully took a step back, though if anyone ever asked he would vehemently deny it. Sans was lazy, but given the right motivations he was...deadly. Papyrus had experienced that
firsthand, most recently being shortly before getting shot, and he wasn’t pleased at the prospect of doing it here, in front of you…

...not that he would ever lose in front of you...er, rather, not that being in front of you was the important part in the first place.

“why did my angel say you had somethin’ to do with this?” Sans growled, advancing one step towards him to close the gap he had created.

“W-what?” He cursed the stutter in his voice, eyes flicking to where you were casting them wary glances as Kevin finally carted the human off somewhere. “Surely, Brother, you do not believe I’d-“

“and why would she lie, huh?” Sans was the picture of righteous fury, and, assuming he survived this encounter, he really wanted to be there when his elder brother found the ones that were truly responsible.

He was about to summon his bone-rapier for defense, should Sans start to swing, but surprisingly you jumped in between them, your shield bumping Sans back half a step as you squarely defended him, bloody hands and scrubs serving to make you look...positively terrifying.

...oh no. That's hot.

No! That's not hot! Fuck! He doesn't know anymore!

“There will absolutely be NO fighting in my hospital!” You seethed, pointing squarely at his brother even as you elbowed him in the ribs behind you. “If it will shut you up, I can heal her to the point of making her lucid enough to properly explain herself to everyone. Then, if you both insist on fighting...well, I won’t stop you, but you’d better take it out of my ER, damn it, or I’ll have the cops in here before you can blink!”

Sans stared blankly at her for a long moment. “...you can do that?”

“Typically, only in extreme emergencies, but yes.” You huffed. “Come with me.”

Like hell he was missing this.

Papyrus swiftly fell into stride a step or two behind you and his brother as you briskly took him to one of the previously empty rooms near the Cardiology unit.

Hmm. He had never seen the new blond human actually work before, but his magic was flawless as he completed the stitching on his brother’s mate (what had he called her? Angel? He cannot for the life of him remember her real name).

You woke her quickly, your magic undoing most of the damage that now seemed mostly superficial once the bleeding had stopped. The ensuing conversation made Papyrus sick to his stomach--

--it was his fault. Some gangsters he had messed with, wanting revenge, mentioning him by name, if what she was saying was correct, and he could feel his head spin with guilt as they asked her all sorts of violating questions, and Sans’ eyes continued to bore holes in his skull.

Judging him. That is what Sans does best, after all.

Blaming him. Well, there's no denying that they used his street name.
...pleading with him. For a solution. He wasn't sure Sans was even aware of how desperately he looked to be seeking the comfort of Papyrus’ reassurance.

“Papyrus.” You said finally, after Angel had fallen asleep. He stared straight ahead, refusing to look at you. “Papyrus... bed.”

*Yes, ma’am*

He flushed a little at his mind’s supplied response, but crossed his arms, pretending that his grimace was in refusal and not pain.

“Absolutely not.” He stood firm, and he could feel your hazel eyes burning into him as you ground your jaw, debating whether you wanted to stand here and argue, or go wash the blood from your hands.

“Fine.” You said firmly, through clenched teeth, and he felt an involuntary shiver of pleasure betray him, though he attempted to remain nonplussed.

...what the hell is wrong with him?

---

You let them stand vigil over Angel for an hour or two as you cleaned yourself up and, after much inner debate, gave Silas a hushed warning about Red’s presence, just in case he got the wild hair up his ass to get up and walk about to bother people.

Then you were back in Angel’s room, discussing the situation with Red and a very scolded Papyrus, who looked both angry, worried, and guilty all at the same time.

Good. It was his involvement with the local gangs that had rained this hell upon the poor girl, and you were almost proud to see him taking that responsibility on his shoulders like he should. He'd come a long way from the day Angel had left the hospital crying.

Though...as much as you think it's great that he's taking this responsibility seriously...it ultimately isn't his fault. It's the people who attacked her that did this.

“I’m relieved that whoever did this had no chance to make it worse. People who do this type of stuff too often go unpunished,” you sighed, mostly to yourself as you dragged a weary hand over your face. “I wish the law could just round them all up and…” Well, you suppose that isn't possible. “But that’s unrealistic. Anyway, I’m sorry you all had to go through this.”

It was meant to be reassuring, but you felt like maybe your compassion was falling short today because for a long moment, there was only silence behind you as you softly fluttered healing hands over Angel’s face. You bit your lip, hoping he would at least see that you were doing your best to help...

“...you know what, nurse?”

Your entire body went rigid at Red’s icy tone, and...a sense of foreboding crawled up your spine.

“i think my bro’s good to go, wouldn’t ya say?”

You had no idea what Red could mean by that, but you spun on your heel to see him holding Papyrus by the front of his gown, and panic rose in your chest.

Teeth ground, you tapped your foot impatiently and tried to give off your best nurse-ly vibe,
hoping to convince him not to do...whatever it was he was going to do.

“He may be your brother, but he is my patient, sir,” you said slowly, magic crackling in response to the impending magic in the air. “He still needs a few more days before he’s at his full strength.”

“I’ll drop ‘im off after we’re done, then.” He replied carelessly. “don’t tell anyone I borrowed ‘im for a few hours.”

“Why? What are you doing, Mr. Sans?!” You tried to catch Papyrus by one of his limbs as Sans yanked him back, and you missed as they disappeared into thin air, Sans’ voice curling the last part of his words into the air like an echo.

“not me. him. and what he’ll be doing is learning how to clean up after himself.”

Chapter End Notes

Alphys be shipping them so hard. For science.
And Sans, you asshole! He's not ready to be out of bed, let alone taking on mysterious enemies!
If it wasn't clear, Papyrus refers to him as Sans and Nurse refers to him as Red.
For Good Reason

Chapter Summary

When Papyrus returns from his...brotherly bonding exercises...neither of you really get what you expected.

Chapter Notes

There is excessive amounts of blood in this chapter, and it's very heavily referenced.

Check out my Fight Me! AU headcanons if you want to see what this story would be like with other Papyruses! And feel free to drop in with questions of your own (: 

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Papyrus wasn't necessarily violent by nature.

No, he had always been a gentle soul when he was small, and had always tried so hard to do the right thing--but somewhere along the way, somehow, he became as warped and twisted as the others underground.

He can't remember his first kill or why he did it, but he does remember crying, wiping away huge blood-orange tears as he attempted to look strong about it, shaking the dust from his scarf and telling himself it was for good reason.

As long as there's a reason, as long as it is to protect...that's the lie he fed himself as his LV spiraled upwards, turning him from the gentle child he once was, staining his soul with deep clouds of red.

He wishes he could remember what he was protecting, but it's long gone, a far-off memory buried in dust and blood and locked inside a box in a heart made of solid stone.

But even his stone heart has weaknesses. Weaknesses like the poor human girls (some adults, but some children) he had rescued from the Hellhounds the day he got shot.

“Nobody deserves to be a slave,” he had said to Sans when he told him about the way he dismantled the Hellhounds’ human trafficking ring.

Sans had scoffed and asked when he went from gangbanger to vigilante.

Sans’ mate was one of those weaknesses, too. At first it was merely because he worried she would kill his brother, that they would have children and Sans would age and die, and leave him all alone...then he thought it was because he wanted her, but as those feelings waned and he still felt the dull ache that drove him to protect...

Maybe it's because she's a double Beta. BBs are fragile, so fragile, and AAs either want to mate with them or protect them at all costs. That's just instinct. And while Sans certainly fell into the former category, Papyrus found himself in the latter, and as he helped his brother track down the
ones responsible for her injuries, his guilt nearly consumed him.

It was because of his actions that he got shot, and now it was also because of his actions that she had gotten hurt. They thought she was with him, and they had kidnapped and beaten her before his brother’s magic had teleported her to safety—a feature he would have to be sure to add to any ring he used on his future mate as well, it seemed.

What if she became crippled? Her arm had been sliced pretty badly. What if she was blinded? Her eye had been swollen shut with bruising, and being blind in one eye was a pain in the ass...he would know, since he hadn't been able to see out of his scarred left one for as long as he could remember.

...what if she died?

He shook his head, snapping himself from those thoughts. No, he can't even begin to believe that, not when you are there. If there is one thing to say about you, it's that you were a very powerful mage-healer--she will be fine, and probably with little to no injuries remaining by the end of the day.

No, the true problem, he reminded himself as he stared hard at the building in front of him, was how she would feel when Sans came home. Now that would be his fault, something he failed to prevent. As the flames grew higher, the teen in his grasp whimpered at the bodies around Papyrus’ feet, cringing as the blood smeared from his hospital gown and onto his crisp new bandana that bore the symbol of the now-extinct Hellhounds.

“Hush, child,” he hissed, gripping him tighter with one hand as his other swung his rapier up to rest upon his shoulder. The teen watched it, silent, as the bloody bone-blade dripped in the pale light of the flaming building. “If you fuss, then my brother might change his mind about killing you...and I do not want to see a kid die today. Do you?”

“N...no, sir,” the boy stuttered, hands grasping at Papyrus blood-slicked fist, trying to disentangle it from his shirt. Hmph. A far cry from his bravado of earlier, spitting on his captor as if he was hot shit. But even Papyrus would think twice about talking back to himself right now, considering the amount of gangsters he had just put down with only one hand.

“I said, stop struggling!” He growled, and the kid froze, seemingly remembering everything he had seen in the last hour, nervously glancing at Sans as he strolled lackadaisically from the building, as if he wasn't completely drenched in blood, as if he hadn't completely lost himself to an early heat with bloodlust.

As if both of their LV wasn't staggeringly higher than before.

Papyrus made a mental note to warn Angel about his brother’s heat before they took him back to the hospi--

...the hospital. He just remembered.

You're waiting for him.

The hospital was overcast with a poisonous din, a sense of foreboding, an eerie gray...

Nobody was in the waiting room, or in the halls. Doors were shut, curtains drawn tight. There was the usual ringing of phones and the sound of hushed nurses answering, but it all seemed very far away.
Your magic buzzed all around them, and even though Sans had turned all the cameras away from where they stood, they still felt as if they were being watched.

Papyrus had seen this movie before, and it was the kind where people die. He half expected Pennywise to come slinking from the shadows, since abandoned hospitals were very high on Papyrus’ list of fears.

Not that he has any fears. He's not afraid of anything.

Except maybe cockroaches, but that's only because they're filthy.

...as Sans and Papyrus stared at the empty halls, they both seemed to read the amount of trouble they were in.

“well, uh...good luck with your girlfriend, bro,” Sans said, smacking Papyrus on the back and shoving him forward.

“What?!” Papyrus hissed, snagging his brother by the collar before he could get away. “Heat or not, you are not leaving me here to do this on my own...AND SHE’S NOT MY GIRLFRIEND!”

“i can, and i am...and she is,” Sans said bluntly, smacking his hand away and dodging another grab before disappearing completely. “don’t die on me!”

The hall was silent once more as Papyrus gave a betrayed look to the empty air that his brother had occupied no more than a second ago.

He navigated the halls slowly, taking care to turn the cameras away so as not to be seen covered in blood. If he could just make it to his room without incident, then he could relax, dispose of this bloodied gown properly, and shower it all away. A nearby whiteboard marked that you were off tonight--if he was lucky, you might have actually taken off this time, and he might not have to deal with it until morning!

With that thought relaxing his shoulders, he quietly slipped into his room, beginning to tear the gown off.

“Nice of you to join us.”

He froze, recognizing your voice even through the displeased growl that laced your tone. He turned slowly to see you leaning against the foot of his bed, legs and arms crossed as if to close yourself off in every way possible.

Before he could say anything, you gasped, and he realized he must look a right nightmare--covered in blood in the pale moonlight streaming in through his window.

“It isn't what it looks--” he started, and then amended. “…Maybe it is, but I can explain!”

You jumped off the bed in a hurry, and he felt his chest ache as you began to back away quickly.

*No, no, that’s all wrong! Be angry, yell at me, slap me for leaving--

He didn't want you to be scared. His hands were up, in surrender, without thinking. Don't be scared, he pleaded silently as you pressed back against the window.

“Please, I won't hurt you,” he said quietly. “Do not be afraid...I just--”

“Afraid?!” Your voice was an urgent hiss as you whirled around, clicking the lock and drawing
the blinds. You yanked a clean hospital gown from the basket next to you and threw it on the bed. “Take that thing off and put it there, I’ll dispose of them both. And don’t get any on the sheets. Afraid, fuck, Papyrus, I’m only afraid for you.”

You turned back to the basket, pulling out his clean pajamas and settling them on the chair, muttering to yourself.

He stood there for a long moment, hands still up as if to soothe you, as his jaw went slack in surprised confusion.

...what?

“Well?! Take it off and get in the shower, idiot!”

He can’t argue with that, nor could he think of any reason not to trust you, so he obeyed, wondering if maybe you had knocked his lights out and this was just a dream.

While he showered in the attached private bathroom, you got busy taking care of the bloodied garments according to protocol, dumping them in the contaminated linens to be burned later. There were so many disgusting items in there that nobody would notice anyway.

You stripped the sheets and added them anyway, just in case, and remade the bed and mopped the drips from the floor and fluffed the pillows and--

Once you were done with your tasks, you slowly sunk back into your spot on the bed, your medical need to rid the room of contaminants ebbing to give new rise to your anger.

*How dare he* just disappear for six hours like that!

Six hours!

You didn't know if he was dust in a ditch somewhere, and when Red had reassured Angel over the phone (four hours after disappearing) that all they did was eat some bad sushi, you didn't believe him for a millionth of a second. And so you had sat on it for two more excruciatingly long hours, fuming, and worried, and frustrated, and worried, and enraged, and...worried.

And the blood. Jesus Christ, it wasn't like he was soaked but you could tell he had killed quite a few people with fatal slashes to an artery--and even if he had been squeaky clean, you could see his LV was higher than when he left.

...should you be so calm about this? Well, not like you're calm, you're pretty fucking pissed, but the whole “obviously murdered a bunch of humans” thing is pretty unsettling.

You know what? For some reason... you only have one question.

“Did they deserve it?” You asked him as he came out of the bathroom in just his pajama bottoms, towel hanging around his bare shoulders, wiping the droplets from his skull.

He froze, blinking at you in surprise as if he hadn’t expected you to still be there.

When he didn’t answer right away, you elaborated.

“Other than what they did to Red’s fiance, did they deserve it?” You prodded. “Were they scum? Is the world better off?”

You watched his demeanor shift to confidence, a weary smirk on his skull as he slowly ran the
towel over the intricate tattoos on his arms, and gently over the spider web of cracks and the seemingly permanent hole on his sternum.

“The world will not miss them. Nor will they miss the rest of them, whom...went missing...the same time as I got shot.” He scoffed. “Children. They sold children.”

Your heart jumped into your throat at the implications.

“You mean…”

“The youngest I saved was no older than eleven,” he seethed, anger flashing fresh in his eyes. “And today, the gangbanger we spared? Fifteen. The boy didn't even know how to take the safety off of his shiny new toy.”

Your hand fluttered up to cover your mouth, agape with shock. You had known his injury had been gang-related...you just hadn't known to what extent, and you certainly hadn't expected it to be...quite so noble.

Children being trafficked like cattle...no older than Eliza had been when she had disappeared. A fear you had long since tamped down rose in your throat, and you watched as he caught your expression...

...you suppose you had two questions.

“A woman my age, amber eyes,” you said quietly. “Would have looked...a lot like me. Was she there? Back when you got shot.”

Papyrus leaned back against the doorway to the bathroom, studying you closely. “...Not that I recall. No.”

Relief and grief. Re-grief? You sighed and rested your elbows on your knees, cradling your head in your hands momentarily. It didn't mean she never was...but she wasn't currently, most likely, and that's...something.

You heard him shuffle his feet, and felt the bed sink behind you as he took his spot. You're supposed to be mad at him...especially since he murdered who knows how many people today...but the thought of Eliza, so young and sweet and full of graciousness, and other girls and boys her age forced to do unspeakable things...

Dammit. What should you do?

...Eliza was the one with the strong sense of justice. What would she do?

Papyrus watched you warily, unease pricking at his bones.

He really did not want to have to mind-wipe you. They had done it to several survivors and such, but it was a tricky thing...he would have to erase all knowledge of his existence, which, with bystanders and gangsters who had only seen him once was fairly easy. But you...he'd lose everything. Every conversation, every crossword puzzle, every day from the last three weeks. You wouldn't know who he was...and that...that made him uncomfortable...no, sad. Sad and angry.

The thought of losing you was devastating. He didn't have many people he could easily talk to, especially due to the forced estrangement between him and Sans that he had caused with his own actions. And even though he would be leaving the hospital soon, it wasn't the same as leaving your memory completely.
...but you had been quiet for far too long, and you weren't as angry or as scared as he had thought you would be, and that level of unpredictability made him...nervous.

“Good.” You breathed finally, and his head snapped up in surprise. “You did a good thing. Good fucking riddance.”

“...What?” He asked, unsure if he had heard you correctly. You stood all too quickly, and he threw his arms up in a defensive stance, expecting an attack--

But it never came. Your hand met his wrist gently, giving a slight push until he was obediently moving to lay back against the pillows by reflex.

“I'm very sorry that I've been so busy today,” you said, a sly smile on your face. “But next time, you should use the intercom to buzz me.”

He's officially lost. “...I've been gone for six hours.”

“Oh, Papyrus...if you were gone for six hours,” you dug your nails into his wrist momentarily, and ah, there you were. “...I think I would have noticed.”

“...Yes?” He tried, still confused.

“But no...you've been in your bed here all evening…” You continued, and it dawned on him exactly what was happening. “Haven't you?”

“Of course...of course I have. Yes. All evening.” He muttered slowly, and you nodded in approval as your soft green magic got to work checking on the hole in his chest.

There was no more talking as you focused on your task, but his eyes stayed trained on you as long as they could, relief sweeping over him, both in terms of healing the aches he had acquired over the last six hours…

...as well as the knowledge that you stood firmly on his side of the battlefield.

That was a good, warm, fuzzy feeling.

Or maybe it's the magic.

He hardly notices when he falls asleep beneath your gentle touch.

...when he wakes, you're gone, but there is a mug of hot tea as the early morning sun peeks in through the drawn blinds, and his pajama shirt laid neatly at the foot of the bed. The humming warmth is still there, like your handprint has been burned into his chest, and for a long while he just stares at the ceiling. He doesn't even mind that the human next door has started knocking on the walls again.

He drifts off several more times, unwilling to fight the waves of exhaustion caused by overusing his magic while injured.

He dreams of a beautiful garden full of golden flowers, a stone bench, and your buzzing green magic enveloping his soul and for the first time in a long time, or maybe in his life, he truly feels…

...peaceful.
So now we know what Pap did to get shot--and consequently what he did to get Angel hurt. They don't seem like they'll trouble us again, though...they're kind of all extinct. Wonder what will happen now? And do you think Nurse made the right decision? I wanted her to be angrier but she writes herself and she is so hard to pin down lol
Purely Medical Curiosity

Chapter Summary

Silas takes the initiative to protect you, and although it's misguided it's admirable. Kyle is the big brother you never wanted.

Chapter Notes

Hey y'all, thanks for your patience!

He can't see.

Oh, God, he can't see. The pain is excruciating, and his hand flies up to scratch at the dust pouring from his socket, fingers pulling away covered in oozing marrow. His other eye is blurry, and he can't find the human, and all he sees is his own marrow and dust as it spills over the golden flowers, marring their perfect honey petals with deep rusty red.

Is that...is that his magic? How did it get so dark? It used to be clementine, sweet and perfect and unspoiled, and now it looked like dried blood splattered across the ground.

Next to the human’s deep crimson.

His head is pounding, his only good eye blurring horrifically, and he can hear sobbing somewhere around him…

The human! He reaches blindly, but meets only the cold ground and slick flowers.

The sobbing is far away now.

And he can't...he can't...

He can't see he can't see he can’t see--

“Papyrus!”

He jolted awake, pain blossoming in his chest as he sat up far too fast. He blinked, one hand coming up to clutch at his shirt over his wound, pressing firmly enough to feel the pain, grounding himself...and the other came up to trace the scarred bone over his left eye, counting the nasty slashes...1, 2, 3...1, 2, 3...

“There you are.”

He jumped slightly, noticing for the first time that you were standing beside his bed. His hand left his scars as quickly as possible, moving to twist into the blankets instead.
Your eyes lingered on his scars, and you looked as if you wanted to say something, but you eventually tore your gaze away and turned to collect his mug from the bedside table.

“I thought I'd wake you...sounded like an awful nightmare,” you said quietly, and then made a small frown. “You didn't drink your tea?”

“...Too tired,” he said simply, as the lights in the room finally focused in and he could see clearly again.

“You did use a lot more magic than I would have liked,” you said, somewhat scolding, and then, before he knew it, your hand was gently moving his jaw so that he would look at you.

You made eye contact for all of two seconds before his breath caught and his chest contracted, causing him to double over with a wheeze. Something about your face in that moment, he couldn't handle it...but it passed quickly, and when he looked up again, you were patiently waiting for him to set the pace.

He wanted to apologize.

“Warn me before grabbing me next time,” he growled instead, falling back against the pillows with a huff.

“Again, I do have a waiver that says I can grab you,” you responded, brow raised...then you looked a little guilty. “But alright. Sorry.”

“No, don't be,” he sighed, running a hand over his skull in exasperation. “You are only doing your job, after all.”

“And you are only grouchy because you're magic-sick,” you teased, tapping the mug thoughtfully. Instantly it began to steam, and you held it out to him. “Drink. You’ll feel better.”

He accepted it, secretly impressed at your casual display of magic. You show him a new trick seemingly every day, and he's starting to wonder what else those hands can do--

“Oh, wow, you okay?” You squeaked, snagging a napkin from your labcoat pocket to offer to him as he sputtered tea down his front suddenly, skull flushing a deep vermilion. You took the moment of him coughing to examine his face closely, checking for signs of distress…

...are those freckles? Tiny spots of slightly darker orange stood out against his flushed face, and you wonder how they worked...

No, not the point. No matter how adorable they are.

“Hot!” He said suddenly, sitting up straight and snatching the offered napkin to wipe at the tea dribbling down his mandible. “A-are you trying to scald me?!”

“It was barely hot at all, princess,” you snorted, shaking your head. “Anyway, you're late for PT, so get up and let's go. Allison said I can help out by running you through the smaller exercises today, while she focuses on Silas.”

You didn't have to do too terribly much for PT--mostly just watch and make sure Papyrus didn't snap himself in the bullet hole again.

Allison had her hands full with Silas, who was both ornery and surprisingly mobile, and you felt a
little pocket of pride swelling in your chest as you observed how well he was able to walk after just
a week of your healing magic.

Papyrus was watching you watch him. You always had your eye on the crippled human, and
whenever he saw you look at him your history with the man was clear. It irked him, for some
reason, that you watched his progress so intensely, that you bantered with him and cooed soft
words of reassurance as he had seen in previous PT sessions.

It bothered him, how Silas kept glancing over at you, pretending that he hadn't insulted mages like
you to Papyrus yesterday. How the ginger kept sneering when you looked, but when you didn't his
face was soft, guilty, and almost reverent. How you snuck glances over at him, a small smile on
your face.

“What is it about that unpleasant human that you even enjoy?” Papyrus scoffed suddenly,
surprising even himself.

You blinked and whipped your head back to look at Papyrus, brow furrowed in confusion and
surprise. “What?”

“The ginger human,” he nodded in Silas’ direction. “You are always looking at him and smiling. It
is clear to everyone that you used to be an item and yet you--”

“Woah, woah, wait, back up,” you said, throwing up a hand to stop his tirade before it began.
“Wait. You think that Silas and I…?”

When he didn't respond but for a raised brow, you burst into giggles, shaking your head.

“No. No! Oh my God, no.” You insisted, waving your hands fervently. “No, we're old friends,
sure, but he's an asshole.”

Oh. Well, that makes him feel better. Eh, not that he felt bad.

“I can hear you!” Silas groaned from where Allison had him doing the stationary bike.

“Good!” You responded, cheerfully flipping him off. “That's fifteen years of karma crawling up
your--”

There was a beeping from the strength testing machine in Papyrus’ hands and it caught your
attention as the both of you looked down at the little screen to see the stress warning flashing.

Max-capacity

“Ha! Look at that! Even your machine says I'm right as rain!” He said proudly, and smirked
triumphantly at the ginger, who was scowling at him from over Allison’s shoulder. “I would
probably break the thing if I went full strength, you know.”

“Oh, I'm so sure,” you snorted, and he leaned in, brandishing his bones as if they were muscle.

“Yes, can't you see? I'm practically nothing but muscle.” His grin widened at your little smirk, and
he struck a pose, good mood prevailing over his previous grouchiness. Maybe now he can start
lifting the real weights instead of the sissy rubber stretching bands. “Go ahead, feel them if you
don't believe me!”

You humored him, poking firmly at his tattooed bones, and your face when you actually felt the
give of his invisible magic that gave him strength was priceless. “Wow, you actually do have
something going on up here.”

“I told you so,” he sniffed, withdrawing enough to give you his signature smug look.

You let out a little chuckle as you marked something on his chart, and then did a double-take, a surprised smile growing on your face.

“What?” He asked, craning his neck to see your checklist.

“Hold on,” you said, snatching it to your chest with a playfulness in your stature as you hopped off the bench you’d been sharing and flounced over to Allison. The two of you quickly stepped aside to discuss something in hushed tones as Silas limped over to him.

“Skeleton,” the human growled out.

“Asshole human,” Papyrus returned, crossing his arms (delighted to find how little his injury twinged this time). “Is there something I can do for you?”

Silas narrowed his eyes, mimicking the crossed arms and squaring his shoulders as if to appear bigger...but he wasn't intimidating in the least. “Yeah. You can stay away from Hazel.”

He quirked a brow in interest. “...Oh?”

“Yeah, or else things might get ugly between us.”

Papyrus scoffed, standing slowly so that he towered over the human. Even with his shoulders relaxed, he exuded a threat with his size alone, and it reflected in the human’s eyes. “I believe the last time you told a skeleton what to do, you were the one that got ugly. Is there any reason this time should be different?”

He had to admire him a little, because he wasn't backing down despite his clear inclination to run, and Papyrus could respect that.

“Because this isn't some rando girl from the tracks,” he hissed back, gesturing to where you were concentrating on papers with the PT lady. “This is her. Hazel is important to me, very important, in a way nobody could ever understand. We've known each other since we could crawl, and I will eat my teeth a thousand times before I let her make the same mistakes we made when we were kids. Monsters have already taken enough from her as it is, and while I can't control that bleeding fucking heart of hers that drives her to care about you freaks, I can do something about assholes like you.”

Monsters have already taken enough from her as it is.

What the fuck was that supposed to mean? You had never mentioned any qualms with monsters, and had, in fact, stated the exact opposite many times--you loved monsters, you wanted to be around them, to heal them. Hell, seemed like it was your life mission to work yourself to death in their name at times.

He leaned down until he was eye-level with the insignificant crumb, searching his scarred face for any form of a lie...and finding none.

He truly considered himself the hero of this adventure. How amusing.

“I don't know about her past, but I think…” Papyrus started slowly, his good eye flaring with magic menacingly. “…that the nurse is an adult, who is capable of caring for herself. Furthermore,
I don't give two microscopic shits what a bug like you thinks of me, and I don't care about whatever sense of morality you think you are appealing to or whatever misread signs you think you have picked up."

Silas took half a step back as Papyrus leaned ever closer.

“I shall spend time with whomsoever I please.”

“But--”

“I'm not finished,” he seethed, and the man’s mouth snapped shut. “Better. I shall spend time with whomsoever I please, and so shall she, and there isn't anything you could do to stop us if you wanted to. Do you know why?”

He shook his head, and Papyrus shoved the strength testing machine into his hands. Silas seemed to get the hint, and squeezed...but no beeping. The needle moved about halfway to where it was for him.

“There. You see?” Papyrus asked. “You are nothing. You couldn't even swat a fly off my shoulder. So don't you ever, ever in your life assume that you can tell me what to do.”

Silas tossed the machine down onto the desk beside them and stepped up once again. “Is that a fucking threat?”

Papyrus leaned back, chuckling. “Well, it certainly isn't an invitation to tea.”

“Listen here, you fuckin--”

“Silas!”

He froze as you padded back over to them, reading glasses slipping down your nose as you raised a questioning brow at them.

“...just...chatting.” Silas offered, mumbling. “Nothin’ else to do until your little book club is done.”

"Chatting?” You looked to Papyrus for confirmation, and he shrugged.

“Weather. Movies. Small talk.” His eyes watched Silas’ stiff form closely as you pushed your glasses up and tucked a stray hair back.

“Guy stuff,” Silas supplied.

“Yes. Guy stuff.” Papyrus said.

“Oh...Kay…” You glanced down at the chart in your hands. “Oh, oops, my pen!”

You turned and trotted back over to Allison to retrieve it, and Papyrus and Silas went back to staring each other down.

“I don't know what your game is,” Silas said through ground teeth. “Jerking her around. Flirting with her. You aren't even the same fucking species, so don't get so mighty thinking that she actually likes you or something. She just feels bad because you freaks don't have anybody else to look after you.”

A well-timed ‘your mother’ joke supplied itself in Papyrus’ mind, but he didn't want to stoop to this peon’s level...besides, it...it wasn't as if he was wrong.
You only spent so much time with him because there were no other maginurses, and because the others did not want to deal with him. The way your magic had curled so gently around his injuries, perhaps he had taken it to mean something deeper, or that a bond of sorts had been forming, even though your demeanor was objectively no different around anyone else. He supposed he had allowed himself to entertain a deeper connection, only because you were so understanding...he knew he was difficult, but it felt nice to have someone be patient with him for once...as Sans once had...and...

Dammit. He hated to admit it, but the ginger had a point.

“See? You know I'm right,” the human chuckled, looking immensely proud at Papyrus’ silence.

“Fight me!” He growled, fist clenching.

Silas held his hands up, his face growing serious for a moment. “I'm not looking for a brawl, I just...she's a nice person. Maybe too nice. Even for me, since I don't exactly deserve it either...so don't go dragging her martyr-inclined ass into your shit, and don't mistake her kindness for anything other than that.”

“...as if I'd wish for a human in such a way,” he scoffed. “You are as delusional as you are presumptuous--I already know that the nurse’s kindness was in her very being...or else she would not have any healing magic with which to heal your needle-sized prick.”

Silas sputtered angrily at the insult. “H-hey, it isn't--how--you--”

“In any case, human, I do believe nobody has a say in my time with the nurse for as long as I am here,” Papyrus mused. “And it isn't as if I'll be sticking around long after. So this is a pointless argument, seeing as we both shall be here for quite some time...wouldn't you agree?”

Silas looked about ready to kill, but his body relaxed as you returned to their side, and Papyrus smirked triumphantly at the way you leaned more towards him.

“Alright, I have good news and great news,” you said to him, and he nodded you on. “The good news is, with the way you destroyed that strength test, you're ready to begin outpatient physical therapy with Allison at your own leisure.”

“Lovely,” he smirked, side-eyeing Silas, who was grinning cheekily back. What? What is he so happy about?

“And the great news,” you continued, shuffling the papers in your hands to produce a smiley face sticker, which you stuck to the front of his pajamas. “Is that that means I can discharge you as early as tomorrow!”

You made a little ‘yay!’ movement, grinning at him.

Wait.

What?

He blinked slowly, processing the information.

Discharged. He could leave. Tomorrow. Forever...hopefully, anyway. He could go home and...do whatever he wants. Lift weights, play music, get in fights (small ones of course), stay out all night…
Nobody to tell him to stay in bed, or to stop shouting, or to lay down, or to sleep.

...nobody bringing him tea, either. Or waking him from nightmares.

He...isn't excited, you gather from his expression. He looks almost as if you just shot him again, slightly betrayed and hurt, with conflict in his posture.

“But, uh, I still have to do your out work, and if everything isn't kosher, then you'll be stuck with me,” you offered, and he seemed to snap to attention.

“Please, I am perfectly fine!” He crossed his arms, puffing up slightly. “Surely everything will be...more than acceptable. Then I can escape this hellhole...” He pointed his chin distastefully at Silas. "...and this thorn in my side.”

Little did he know, you already had his outwork done.

In fact, you had been preparing for this moment since the day he came in, and all his paperwork was prepped for signing, all his counts measured and monitored so closely that you could have discharged him that very second if you wanted.

Your fingers tapped against the desk as you pored over the notes again, looking for...for what exactly?

Something you missed? Not likely. A sudden development? Even less likely. Maybe you were just worried, since he seems so reckless, and you want to keep him safe. Without you around to make him take it easy, he might hurt himself, or make the injury open up, or….or….

Or maybe you just weren't ready for him to leave yet. Maybe you'd grown used to his presence. Maybe you had started to look forward to hearing his buzzer, or seeing his dumb smirk when he thinks he’s won the argument. Maybe you had started to like relaxing and doing crossword puzzles, or picking up his room after he threw a fit, or bantering with him as he tried to pretend he didn't want your help.

“So Brat #1 is going home, huh?” Kyle asked softly, his sudden appearance only half surprising as he slid the papers over slightly so he could see them over your shoulder. “Dang, broke the machine? And he's had more energy, too...HoPe stagnant at 700 for the last few days, but that's not so bad, right?”

“Well, 700 was the goal,” you said with a nervous laugh. “Passed with flying colors, as they say.”

Kyle hummed, unconvinced, and drew the spare chair out to plop down, pushing a hot coffee over to you. “It's alright to worry about it still. Even if they leave, they're always our patients, right? He can come back if it doesn't get better.”

“But it should be better!” You insisted. “It should be healed! I even grew back Silas’ gnarly-ass teeth, why can't I even do this much?”

“MP, you're being way too hard on yourself,” Kyle said sternly, sliding a hand over to rest on top of yours. “You brought the guy back from the brink of death, and you've nursed him this much in only three weeks. He's strong, and able, because of your good work.”

You pressed your lips into a thin line, mulling over Kyle’s words in your head. It was all true…

“I still don't feel comfortable letting him go,” you said finally. “I just don't know why.”
Kyle chuckled, squeezing your hand.

“Oh, sweetie...that's just because you have a big, fat crush on him.”

“Huh?!” Your head snapped up to look at him in confused betrayal. “Wh-what? I don't...I do not!”

“Sure, whatever you say,” the redhead laughed withdrawing to dodge your swipe as you attempted to smack him for his antics. “Admit it! You wanna call him Boss... in beeeeeed ~”

“ _Oh my God ,” you hissed, covering your rapidly reddening face with your hands. “No, we are not having this conversation. Oh no, this is definitely not a thing!”

“It is totally a thing.”

“I don't have a crush on him!”

Kyle snagged your medical journal and flipped it open, eyebrow raised. “Let's see here-- ‘patient is a male-presenting skeleton monster with an AA-Upsilon designation. Upsilon are capable of creating both male and female reproductive organs--’” He held it out of your reach with his advantageous height as he continued. “Oh, look, there's a side note-- ‘wonder what it must look like, made completely of magic. Is it the same vermillion as his soul? Does it attach to the appropriate area or--’”

You snatched the notebook from his hands and cradled it defensively against your chest.

“Th-that is purely a medical curiosity!” You squeaked, face burning with embarrassment.

“Oh? Only for science?” He asked, a mischievous smile forming in his face.

“Wait. No. Kyle, no, I know that face get BACK HERE KYLE !”

“Hey Papyrus--” He wheezed as you threw your weight against him, knocking him out of the doorway where he had been calling through Papyrus’ open door. He staggered several steps, and you heard tittering laughter from the various nurses still present.

Kyle huffed and dragged you upward with him, fighting to remove your hands from his face, laughter making his struggle all the more difficult as Papyrus stuck his head out of his room curiously.

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“Don't listen to him!” You insisted, struggling to keep the laughter out of your voice as you clung to your RNA like a koala. “He's delusional! He ate some bad tuna! He's got scarlet fever!”

“If none of dose fingf,” Kyle attempted around your hand, before finally wrenching your fingers from his mouth as he dragged you into Papyrus’ room with him. “Finally. Papyrus, MP wants to know what your--eeeeewwwwWWWWW!”

Kyle visibly shuddered as you licked the back of his neck, regretting your actions instantly as he dumped you to the floor and you spat the taste of his sweat from your mouth.

“Jesus, you're disgusting!” He groaned, shrugging his shoulder in an attempt to wipe the feeling of your saliva from him.

“...What the actual fuck.”

You both looked up at Papyrus’ stony expression of confusion, and then at each other.
“Kyle, no,” you warned, knowing you couldn't reach him in time.

“Kyle, yes.” He responded, grinning.

You narrowed your eyes, thinking of all the ways you could get back at him, like a snake rearing to bite. “Kyle Cameron I swear to--”

Kyle looked at Papyrus with his big, stupid grin...and pointed to you.

“MP wants to know what your dick looks like.”

Chapter End Notes

Kyle ships it so hard. And he will do anything to win that pool.

The flirting! The flirting is happening! And Silas, why you gotta be a jerk? Your heart's in the right place but you're still a jerk. So Papyrus is getting discharged, and neither he nor Nurse seems to be ready for it...also, theeeeeeeere's the comedy that drives this story!
Chapter Summary

Everyone wants Boss to flash his junk.
You're considering your least favorite booty call.

Chapter Notes

Hey Guys, sorry for the wait. Just took me a while to write this one, and it ended up pretty long. I'm not sure if I like it but it moves the story along.
Anyway, here we go again!
*Smut warning: Masturbation

Dyne: Ok...so you showed her your dick, right?

(xxx): WHAT?! NO! THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY INAPPROPRIATE!

Al-Chan: You basically got the green light!

Dyne: Yeah, man, it isn't inappropriate if she asks

(xxx): SHE DID NOT ASK! THE REDHEAD NURSE WAS ONLY TRYING TO EMBARRASS HER! SHE SAID IT WAS PURELY A MEDICAL CURIOSITY!

ReddyFreddy: ain't that what al said when she set up cameras in undyne’s house underground?

Dyne: Woah, Al, you never told me about that. Kinky.

Al-Chan: Just try showing her your junk! For science!

(xxx): YOU SAY EVERYTHING IS FOR SCIENCE!

Dyne: C’mon, nerd, this is your last night with her! Make it count!

ReddyFreddy: yeah, boss, give er the good dickin so she doesn't forget about ya

(xxx): I HATE ALL OF YOU.

(xxx): SHE’S BACK. I'M TURNING YOU FREAKS ON SILENT.

Dyne: Take pictures!

Al-Chan: Take notes!
ReddyFreddy: take her hard!

“Who you texting?”

Papyrus fumbled his phone, clicking the screen off and chucking it directly into the tiny trash can next to the bed.

“Nothing! Nobody! Get off my back!”

You covered your mouth to stifle a giggle as you crossed the room, still too embarrassed to make proper eye contact. He watched you shuffle over to the HoPe machine, messing with the knobs and muttering quietly to yourself.

He was embarrassed to say he was actually...considering his friends’ advice. You had said that Upsilons were rare, and that you might not have another chance to observe something like that...even as beet red as you had been during your explanation, it had genuinely seemed like you wanted to take notes for your medical journals.

He shouldn't be surprised. You're the first and only Maginurse in the county, and your notes probably have to be as complete and concise as possible--you have probably taken notes on the reproductive parts of many other types of monsters before him, and had only withheld your curiosity out of politeness. He...shouldn't be surprised...and he certainly should not have felt a shameful sense of excitement about the whole thing after Kyle had pointedly informed him.

...excitement that had nothing to do with wanting to nail you to this mattress. Because that would be inappropriate.

So was Alphys right? Do it for science? He was discharging in the morning, and who knows when the next Upsilon will come into your care? It would be miniscule in comparison to all you had done for him--he really did owe you big time.

“Sorry about Kyle...again…” you mumbled suddenly, drawing him from his thoughts. “He can be so tactless. I hope it didn't make you uncomfortable.” You paused. “I, uh, didn't ask about it because I thought you might think it was weird, but it really is just for medical reasons, I mean, you're the only AA that has ever been in my care or likely ever will be, but an Upsilon? You're like a shooting star when it comes to medical stuff and...and I'm only making it worse, probably, so I'll shut up now…”

She practically gave you the green light!

“No,” he coughed slightly, feeling his face heat up slowly as he began to imagine what you would do if he pulled it out. “Eh, it is only natural. I am used to Alphys making strange requests ‘for science’ so…”

“Yeah, I bet, she seems...driven.”

“Pffft. Maniacal is the better word.”

You snickered a little, and his smile twitched. You were relaxing again.

You turned back from the HoPe machine and sat on his bed, hand absently running down the inside of his radius to rest on his carpals, and even though you had done it a thousand times before it made him suppress a shudder.
What is wrong with him?! Here you are, trying to be professional, and because of one stupid comment from the male nurse he was feeling so weird about it all.

“WHEN IS YOUR BREAK?!”

You blinked and jumped slightly at his sudden change in tone, dropping his wrist like it bit you. He coughed and adjusted his volume.

“I was only, eh, thinking that you were working through it again. Since it's normally this time of night.” And definitely not thinking about how to transition into showing you his dick. For science.

“Oh, uh. Haha, no, noooo, I….most certainly am not,” you lied unconvincingly.

He raised a brow. “Oh for the love of...you are, aren't you?”

“Well, I have to do the rest of your out work--”

“What, pretending to check the machine? Measuring the same things you measured earlier?" He inquired. “You could do those in the morning, and it would be more useful then.”

You averted your gaze, biting your lip slightly. He watched you closely, a sense of...disappointment on your features.

“Uh...yeah. Guess so.” You said quickly, standing from the bed. “Uhm, I'll just leave you alone, then.”

You turned to flee, but his hand caught your wrist before he could think. You looked at him, and his skull was dusted vermilion as he looked anywhere but you.

“That isn't to say that you can't stay,” he mumbled. “Because if you did, eh, there would be...you could...you know…”

*Just tell her she can take notes on your dick
*It’s the least you can do
*She’s your primary care physician...it isn't weird

You seemed to realize what he was implying, and your smile spread quickly across your face.

“Oh, yeah, we could do that,” you said. “Since it’s your last night, and I said...yeah. Let me go get ready!”

And with that, you scurried off out the door, and he was left with his mind racing as he watched you leave.

Go...get ready?! What the hell does that mean?!

...should he, er, get ready, too? Should he be at attention when you get back or do you want to see the process? Oh, this is a terrible idea…

...he’s never been so nervous to show someone his dick before. Is it because it isn't sexual? Or because it inherently is? Why is he worried about how big it will appear in his pajamas, or if you'll...touch it…
...well, that's embarrassing, he scoffed at himself, his skull heating up in a flush as he realized how incredibly aroused he was. Truthfully, he hadn't touched himself since getting caught that day by the stern older nurse, and seeing as he had been confined to a hospital bed, he hadn't had any chance to indulge in a one night stand or respond to Muffet’s booty calls. He was pent up, so of course the thought of a moderately attractive (alright, who is he kidding? You're very attractive...for a human, anyway.) person touching him would be enough to get him going.

...maybe he should...take care of it quickly? So that he doesn't...accidentally give you a facial.

Oh Lord, why is he picturing that?! Well, it certainly did the trick, and now his unformed magic was very obviously an insistent cock, straining against his pajama pants with a muted glow through the black fabric.

...fuck it. He'd rather not let off unexpectedly in front of you, and knowing you, you would get sidetracked doing something for someone and he'd have a good few minutes anyway.

Just to be safe, he slipped from the bed and into the attached bathroom, and though the harsh fluorescent lights and grim tile were a lot less appealing than the bed, he wasn't about to complain.

He didn't do this often, so usually getting started was awkward for him, but he'd already conjured the image of you covered in his cum in his mind, and it was persistent despite his many attempts to think of something else.

He supposed he needn't have worried how it would look against his pajama pants, because it was impressive as always. If there is one thing he never doubts, it's that he’s big, and he had many, many compliments from Muffet and other hookups stored away in his mind to back it up.

He huffed in relief as his hand found a rhythm, the image of you becoming a guilty pleasure in his mind. He remembered the feeling of your hand running down the inside of his radius, and imagined you doing it slowly, teasingly...maybe you'd use your magic to make his soul tingle, make him sleepy, and have your way...it was hot, and his breathing quickened, but…

With a frustrated grunt he forced his hand away. He felt downright disgusting, using you this way--if he finished, he couldn't look you in the eye knowing he had disrespected you like this. Strangers, Muffet, hell, even some of the other nurses, he had no problem getting off picturing them--but they weren't the ones coming to mind, no, that was you, and the reality is that he actually respects you to a degree.

He can't do that.

Irritated, he patted at his pockets for his phone--maybe he can remove your image from his brain if he looks at some naughty pictures? He has quite a few of Muffet, and some that his old flames still send him from time to time.

Shit.

His phone is still in the trash can in the bedroom. Bit of a buzzkill, but his magic still ached as he threw it back into his pants. He’ll have to be quick, he thought, as he scurried out of the room to retrieve it. He's wasting minutes.

His fingers closed around his phone, and he smirked triumphantly as he straightened up, finger centimeters away from the PICTURES icon--

“Whew, sorry I took so long!”
He screeched and tossed the phone directly back into the bin, Muffet still winking up at him as she posed suggestively for the camera. He kicked the bin over so he didn't have to see her, and tried to be nonchalant about turning towards you.

“Well, it’s about time, I--what’s all that?” He asked, confusion taking root where his arousal still hazed his mind.

You had removed your lab coat and scrubs top, leaving you in your long-sleeved white undershirt, and now stood there with a bowl of popcorn, a bag of candy boxes, and a handful of DVDs, looking at him with your own level of confusion.

“Moooooovie stuff?” You responded slowly, quirking a brow. “I thought we could watch my favorites, because you still said Stephen King was the best. Did you mean watching his stuff again? Because honestly, I'm super burnt out on those.”

M...movie stuff.

You...had thought he was suggesting movie stuff.

Because you had promised you'd sit down and watch some movies with him sometime before he discharged.

...and he’s still hard as a rock, and you’re flopping on the bed, patting the sheets next to you, and he’s noticing the undershirt was tighter than anything he had ever seen you wear...

He forced the thought from his mind, dropping deadweight onto the bed and swiftly pulling the covers up to hide his hand adjusting himself. When he was settled, you leaned back and made yourself comfortable against his pillows, pressed against his side as you hit play on some movie you had put in.

Internally, he was screaming.

This was the worst possible situation.

Papyrus seemed to be enjoying the movie, even if he was uncharacteristically quiet. Usually he was talking through the movies, analyzing strategies that would have been better and other such stuff...but you chalked it up to him never having seen *Cabin in the Woods* before, which, in your opinion, is a crime.

“This is very cliche.” He said suddenly, gesturing to the screen. The creepy basement had just opened up, and they were perusing the items down there.

“So is, like, every Stephen King movie,” you snorted.

“Correction, Stephen King *created* the cliches. They were not cliches until he used them!”

“Nope, wrong, Alfred Hitchcock did that.”

“King popularized it!”

“Oh my God, you are so pretentious,” you snickered, elbowing him in the ribs. “C’mon, just watch! I told you, it’s like a commentary on modern horror flicks. Everything will be explained.”

He grumbled a bit, but settled back against the pillows once more, struggling to get comfortable before finally giving up and tossing his arm back over the pillows behind you.
That is...startlingly close to having his arm around you, and you remember the picture that Victor keeps sending you regularly as if to remind you that he ships it. And Kyle, his accusatory tone as he suggested you had a crush.

Involuntarily, you're blushing.

Damn. You really need to get laid if you're getting flustered over accidental contact from someone other people think you like.

The murderous family of redneck zombies are clawing their way out of the ground, and Papyrus is fully engaged despite his earlier complaints. Maybe you could...

You pulled your phone from your pocket stealthily, opened your text messages and scrolled down until you saw Do Not Text You Idiot scrawled across the name line of a conversation.

You know you shouldn't, but you open it. Camden may be an asshole, but he’s an asshole who’s always DTF, and you only tried to cut him off because you thought you had a relationship blooming...but since that guy walked out the door (“I barely ever see you anyway, you’re always at the hospital!”) you can justify this.

Aaaaaand you'd have plenty of time after Papyrus discharges. Several hours at least.

Your phone buzzed, startling you, and a message from Victor invaded your screen.

Victor: My BFF senses are tingling. Put down the phone!

(xxx): lol. What?

Victor: You were gonna text Camden, weren't you? Don't make me come to your work.

(xxx): Ew, no. Forget it.

Victor: mmmmmMmMMMMMMMM

Victor: I don't believe you...

And a gif of someone doing the “watching you” motion. You rolled your eyes and dismissed his messages, moving back over to Camden’s conversation...

...only to be assaulted by a suggestive picture of yourself, the last thing you had sent to him, to which he had responded with “over in 5”.

“Who are you texting?”

You squeaked and pressed your phone against your chest, looking up at Papyrus with a look of abject horror. Had he seen that?! He was pointedly looking away at the screen, and you can't tell if he's blushing or not, oh God, this is so fucked up, he might have seen you spread on the bed wearing nothing but a sheet and a smile...and a collar.

Fuck. FUCK. Abort mission. Abort! You quickly slammed the ‘close tabs’ button and slapped your phone down on the bedside table next to you.

He grunted slightly in response, and you relaxed a tiny bit. Okay, maybe he hadn't seen?

Jules and Curt are going at it in the forest when you look back up, and of course that would be what's happening right now. You're frozen beneath his arm, guilty and embarrassed for yourself, still wondering if he had seen it.

“So, uh, Papyrus…”

“Yes?” He responded, almost too quickly.

Shit. You can't ask if he saw it without giving away that you had something to hide.

“Uh. What are your plans when you get out? Anything special?” That's a safe topic. Right?

“I'm sure plans will find me when I get home,” he answered with a shrug.

“Oh. Okay.” There was a long pause. “No more gang stuff, though, right?”

He chuckled, and raised a brow at you. “Are we worried?”

“I just…!” You huffed, turning away. “I'm your nurse, so of course I'm concerned you're gonna get your ass shot again!”

“My ass is notoriously hard to shoot,” he said with a smirk. “They caught me off-guard because I was protecting people. This was a one time problem, I assure you.”

“Oh...good.” You breathed, not really loving the idea of him near-dusting in the ER waiting room again. “Wait! Not good! That doesn't mean you can just jump back into all that!”

“Please, I am not a babybones,” he scoffed, rolling his eyelights. “I realize that I am still in no condition to properly fight, if last night was worth measuring by.”

You stared at him, and he looked over with a surprisingly understanding expression.

“Tell me you won't go back to your…” you gestured vaguely at him. “...vigilante gang-banging.”

“Alright. I won't.”

“Bullshit,” you huffed, falling back against the pillows. “Do what you want, just don't lie to me.”

“Do you think everyone is out to lie to you, or am I a special case?” He scoffed, withdrawing his arm to fold them across his chest. “You act as if I have no honor.”

“No, I just know your type,” you mumbled, turning the TV up a little bit.

“My type ?” He glared over at you. “What the hell does that mean?”

“You know, the gang type. You come in, all banged up, and then I treat you,” you began, gesturing to his wound. “Then you pack up, give me all these pretty words about how I changed your view of the world, how you're gonna go straight, and then--”

You made an explosion motion with your hands.

“Bam! You're right back in here next month with a new injury and another gang tattoo.”
You've seen it so many times you could probably write a book. The type who, when pressed, will always go back to the danger of the streets as if nobody cares what happens to them.

Camden is one of those. And Silas. You think even Victor went a few rounds through the ringer in his teens, when he was still confused and pent-up. They take all that anger, all that...misdirected fear, and they hurt the people around them instead of channeling it into something healthier.

Granted, you do believe that Papyrus is different. None of his tattoos look to be gang tattoos, at least none that you recognize, and he didn't get shot over something stupid like territories or anything like that...no, he had done it because he was doing what the police refused to do, culling the assholes who would hurt people like Eliza and Angel. Setting people free.

Stirring up nothing but trouble, but still. As Victor said, his metaphorical heart was in the right place.

“Look. I get that you aren't gonna give up on whatever it is you're trying to do,” you said with a sigh. “Just don't lie to me about it, okay? I'm going to worry either way, and I'm gonna be mad as hell if I see you in here again, but…”

He chuckled a little at that. “Has anyone ever told you that you would make a good mother?”

You laughed, nervous and somewhat bitter. “Yeah, though I usually get ‘overbearing sister’ instead.”

His arms fell back to his sides, his hand resting on your knee slightly, reassuringly.

“I shall be careful. I can promise you that.”

“Yeah, well, words are just words,” you sighed. Even Eliza had said she'd be right back.

There was silence after that, and you watched the characters get picked off one by one in classic horror film fashion. After a while, the tension subsided and you fell into a comfortable banter over horror tropes. It was a while before he admitted the characters were smarter than average, and when Curt proposed jumping the canyon, he had nothing but praise.

“Now that is a survivor’s mindset,” he sniffed, smirking. “And I would do the same.”

“You think you'd be Curt?” You asked, amused, as the characters geared up to watch him attempt the jump.

“Of course! He’s strong, he’s smart, and he’s the hero here. He’s the only character who’s close to my greatness, hones--” He cut off, jaw snapping shut audibly when Curt smashed into the invisible barrier, and you couldn't control your laughter as he stared in shock at the screen.

“Oh, shit, weren't expecting that?” You snickered as he stuttered and seized the remote, rewinding and watching again.

“What...what was that?! That can't be it!” He shrieked, and there was pounding on the wall as Silas shouted something about being quiet. “Silence, pea-brain! I am mourning the premature death of the only good character in this movie!”

“Aw, c’mon, they're all great characters.”

He rolled his eyes, falling back against the pillows with a huff to watch the rest of it, mood soured for the next few minutes. You were fully engrossed in the action when he drew you from your
thoughts.

“You're worried I will do that.”

“Huh?” You looked back at him, confused.

He gestured to the screen. “That. You are worried I will be like him, until I hit a roadblock I didn’t see coming and get hurt.”

You pursed your lips, studying his focused expression. “Yeah, uh, I guess that’s a fairly good analogy.”

He nodded slowly, contemplation clear on his skull.

“It’s not a big deal,” you conceded, suddenly hyperaware that his hand was still resting on your leg. “You'll be back for PT anyway, and check-ups, so I guess I can pester you with my mom-ness then. If you aren't sick of me.”

“I've been sick of you since day one,” he snickered, playful smirk tugging at his teeth. “But that is true for most people, I suppose. Don't take it personally.”

“Pffft...brat.”

He blinked awake slowly, the dull ache in his pelvis forcing him from a surprisingly peaceful sleep. He supposed that's what he gets for trying to pleasure himself earlier.

He groaned, stretching slightly until a weight against his chest stopped his movement, and he looked down, irritated.

...oh.

It was you.

You had fallen asleep next to him, just like the night he forced you to rest, and you had his arm trapped underneath your shoulders where you were curling up to his chest. He had curled around you in return, one arm draped over your waist and attributing to the way you were smushed against him. He felt a tingle in his chest where your hand rested, and he chuckled to himself when he realized you were subconsciously healing him. How much of a workaholic must you be to heal in your sleep?

But he knows what it’s like to make your job your entire life. It was how it had been with the guard--spending his adolescence taking notes and training, bugging Undyne to fight him...then when he had finally joined he did hardly anything else but his duties, even surpassing Undyne in merits and achievements.

He wishes he could remember it all, but along with the messed up time flow of the underground comes centuries of memories flowing together in a muddled mess.

There was no Royal Guard anymore, not after Asgore surrendered himself for questioning. The former members had been granted diplomatic immunity for anything he might confess, since he insisted on taking the blame for them, and now they were free to...do what they can.

For Undyne, it had been professional fighting. The first monster member of the UFC, using none of her magic but just her brute strength to duplex people into submission. For Sans, he had moved
on to odd jobs and relative laziness, as expected, and moved in with that human to pay the bills... and now he had mated with her, and that's enough thinking about that.

The knights were security guards. Others chose law enforcement, or became bouncers... some joined gangs like him.

And Papyrus...

Papyrus had decided to try and make the pitiful surface world a little bit better, and perhaps Sans was right, it had been misguided. But the idiots in his gang, the Black Lotus, weren't bad people-- Darryl just wanted to put his sister through college, Christian had a sick mother, Gabriel intended to pay for his brother’s rehab... so despite the questionable morality of how they went about things, Papyrus had never felt like he was as much of a gangbanger as Sans accused him of being.

But, that would be how he ended up here.

...cradling a very tired, very overworked nurse who’s going to spend her already sparse spare time worrying about him. Where does he find these people? Or is it you that attracts trouble like him and Silas?

...he can't stand the idea of you worrying yourself sick over him. Maybe he can just... put his number in your phone? So you can check in if you're worried and see that he is fine?

It isn't much of a reach to snag your phone off the bedside table, thanks to his long arms, and though you shift and mumble, you don't wake-- which is good, because even though his intentions are innocent, he doesn't want to have to explain this.

Pffft. You don't even lock your phone, he observed as he swiped into a conversation with somebody named Victor. It looked as if he had been texting you periodically for the last few hours, even without you responding.

Victor: I swear, if you are texting him, I will walk my happy Mexican ass down to that hospital and beat ur phone like a pinata. Lemme even bring LA CHANCLA and I'll get real racist up in this shit.

Victor: You know nothing ever goes the way you want when you meet with him, you always say you're done and then you do this

Victor: Camden can suck my dick if he thinks he's getting in your pants again

Victor: Hello?! You can't ignore me, you know. I know all your most embarrassing stories and I WILL tell them to your skeleton boyfriend as revenge.

Papyrus frowned. Skeleton boyfriend? Does he mean him? But at first he had thought that the Victor person had seemed like a boyfriend... but the way he was talking implied some sort of ex or something that perhaps intended to harm you.

Camden... That sounded familiar, but he wasn't sure from where. He supposed it was probably just a common human name, but...

He glanced down at where you were snoring slightly and... decided to snoop.
He can't help it, he’s nosy by nature. And if you were being harassed, well, he's good at making
people back off and disappear--one of his most marketable qualities that had landed him in this
position. Perhaps he can put that to good use and pay you back for all that you have done.

Camden, Camden...he scrolled through your text conversations looking for the name, but it didn't
appear to be there. Seeing as how some people seem to have nicknames, he guessed it would be
difficult to--

Do Not Text You Idiot (1)

...well, that looks promising.

He glanced down at you, and then back at the little number one denoting an unread message from
an hour ago. The little preview showed him the unread message said something like: ...you can
always take a ride on this Italian stallion...

...eugh. Disgusting. He had once taken a class on how human reproduction worked, and while it
wasn't very different from how he has sex, it seemed a lot mushier and...with more fluids and
fleshy stuff and mess. Did he even want to know what an Italian stallion was? He thought it was a
horse? Oh, oh God, please erase that mental image…

He clicked into it without further hesitation, ready to see what he could about this guy so he could
find him later.

He gasped, and then slammed the hand holding the phone down into the mattress as his entire skull
heated up in a furious blush.

Whatever the rest of the asshole’s message had said, he didn't know nor care--he had, however,
been greeted with a... very suggestive picture of you.

Should he abort mission? No, you're still asleep, and this guy is obviously trying to goad you into
something...he steeled himself and picked up the phone.

He scrolled past it quickly, checking out previous messages--a lot of drunk texting, what seems like
lots of arguing...he felt his magic boil when the guy started calling you names for ignoring him, or
mocking you for being upset about something.

This guy was a piece of fucking work. Every time he booty called you, you had to reply or he
would call you a dumb slut. Every time you would text him first, he wouldn't answer for hours, and
when he did it was...dismissive and disgusting.

Trying his best not to scoff out loud, he scrolled back down with the intent of reading the newest
text...

Alright. It’s perfectly natural to...to stare a bit, right? He held his breath as he looked over your
form in the picture, clearly naked except for the sheet running between your legs and over your
breasts, and your cheeky smile...and the collar around your neck that read “SLUT” in curly
lettering.

Shit. SHIT. As Alphys would say--right in the kinks. He stared a bit longer, observing how, when
you aren't wearing scrubs or clothes three sizes too big, you have a body any female in their right
mind would be jealous of. And all that running around the hospital must do wonders for your legs,
because they are…

...he kind of wants to wear your thighs as earmuffs, and the second that thought crosses his mind,
he slams the lock button and tosses the phone away like it bit him.

You sighed and curled closer to his chest, and he squeaked slightly as the flush spread throughout his body, pooling in his lap.

...he shouldn't have looked at that picture for so long. Or at all, really. Or even picked up your phone to begin with.

And now he has you pressed against his side, his magic tugging insistently at his pajama pants as if to remind him of how he had failed to take care of it earlier. He can't slip away without you waking, he's reasonably certain, and he absolutely can't do anything about it here …

He used his magic to bring the phone back.

This time, he typed his number in and then replaced it to the bedside table, doing a simple breathing exercise as he went to calm his aching need. He isn't an animal, after all.

...Camden. He committed the name to memory, relaxing enough to lay his head back down, trying so hard not to picture you in his arms, dressed as you had been in the picture he had seen.

He’s just horny and angry. It doesn't mean anything.

...but he is still going to fuck up this prick if he ever gets the chance to meet him. Because he's a prick. The way that Papyrus finds you pleasant to be around and...more than moderately attractive for a human...has nothing to do with it.

...it isn't like he likes that you will continue to worry for him even when he is gone. It’s not like he's hoping you will call him and tell him how boring this place is without him. And so him beating up this Camden guy...it’s only because he hates people like that, not because he...

...not because he likes you very much, or maybe more than likes you. Not because he will miss you so much that screwing up this guy’s day will bring him a sense of closeness to you.

And definitely not because it makes him sick and angry, the thought of anybody else being this close to you, sleeping with you, doing dirty things to you...

No...no.

It isn't because he wants you for himself.

Definitely not.

... Ah, fuck.

Chapter End Notes

aw fuck is right. Ladies and gentlemen, we have liftoff!
Finally he starts to realize how he feels, even if he's only acknowledging the lust!
Chapter Summary

It's discharge day.
You lose a dear friend...and then another.
Sometimes you just need to talk to your dad, and nobody else will do.

Chapter Notes

Your guys' comments have been super entertaining! I really love reading through them!
Feel free to also visit me on my MsMK tumblr, where you can send me questions and imagines.
I also have an Art Tumblr that has my SFW art and information on art/writing commissions!

You were holding his hand when he passed.

It was beautiful, despite the tragedy--the roses overtook the entire bed and obscured his sleeping face, and you counted the blooms over and over again until you lost count and had to start over.

“Time of death...10:43 AM.” You recited quietly, and Kyle scribbled the information down as you clutched Jasper’s thorn-covered hand.

And then came the paperwork. The obligatory call to his next of kin, who once again didn't pick up the phone. You regrettably informed them they were needed for a will reading, blah blah blah…

“They didn't deserve him,” Kyle sighed, hand on your shoulder as you hung up the phone.
“Look...I can organize Papyrus’ paperwork so you can rest. I know that wasn't easy for you.”

“No, take a break,” you insisted. “You've been on since 11 last night. I'll do Papyrus in a few minutes.”

Kyle sucked in a breath, and you smiled as you could practically hear him wanting to make a joke about that...but it wasn't the time. He left without another word and you grabbed your phone, punching in a familiar speed dial and waiting.

Brrrrrrring.

Brrrrrrring.

Brrrr--

“Hey, Bumblebee. What’s up?”
“Hi, Dad,” you said quietly, smile turning up immediately. “Nothing much, I just...wanted to call and say hi. And that I love you.”

“Awww, love you, too, sweetie.” Your father sounded a little muffled, slightly drowsy--it was early for him, you knew, since he works nights, but you also knew he didn't care. “Everything okay?”

There was a pause.

“...did you lose a patient?”

You could feel the tears threatening to choke you, the tightness of your throat as you gripped your pen tighter, stalling in signing the papers in front of you.

“...yeah.”

“Oh...well, you know...uh...that happens, you can't blame yourself.” You smirked at how hard he was trying to be supportive--he isn't always that great at that stuff, but he tries.

“No, I know...he was terminal, so…”

“Ah. Makes it harder, almost, huh?”

“Yeah.” You sighed, leaning back in your chair. “The sad thing is, it was totally preventable and treatable. It was all because his kids didn't love him, but if we removed the flowers, it would remove his love for them, so he refused.”

“I...don't completely understand the condition, but...I can understand his point of view. You know...wishing to keep your love for your children, even if they don't come home.” He sighed, and you felt a twinge in your chest, where you had been certain once that flowers would sprout in Eliza’s absence--but you suppose she never stopped loving you, so the flowers never came.

“Yeah...anyway, I just wanted to check in, you know? Because...I miss you guys. I...I miss Eliza.”

“Me, too, Bumblebee. Every day.”

There isn't much more to say after that, so you idly chat about the weather and your younger brothers’ joint 18th birthday party coming up soon--you love them to death, you really do, but God, if you aren't jealous. And they're old enough now, they know what happened, and you think they're the only ones that know somewhat how you feel, being twins themselves.

You say you'll try, but the reality is that you would never be able to take enough time off from the hospital to go. You'd need the whole weekend so you could drive down, stick around...and they just aren't set up to do that much without you.

Dad idly mentions your own birthday coming up, but you decline any celebration. Same reason, you said, it's hard to take time off. You think he was only hoping that you would do something this year because he knows you've avoided it since you moved out.

When you hang up, your brain is buzzing with muddled thoughts, and you're so engrossed in signing the papers for both Jasper and Papyrus’ release that you space out a bit.

You lost a patient today, but another one is walking out alive because of you. He’s able to return to life normally because of your healing...

So why does it feel like you're losing him, too? You bit your lip, tears threatening again as you
remember how peacefully Jasper had smiled before he had bloomed into an elegant rosebush...maybe it was morbid, but you had saved a bloom to plant at home. It stared at you from it’s little pot, and you knew it was the best way to remember him by.

Aaaaaaaaand now you're crying. Really crying.

You buried your face in your hands, stifling the wails that tried to escape as you cried, mourning the loss of a dear friend as well as a life you could have saved, if only you had tried harder. Called more times. Convinced him to let you remove the roots.

If only you were stronger. Better. More efficient at healing.

*If only you had gone with her. If only you had been more insistent. If only, if only, if only…*

...it’s all your fault.

Papyrus fiddled with his scarf, seeking the comfort of it’s familiarity as he paced his small room, his box of belongings all packed up and waiting on the bed.

He had thought you would have come by now. It was nearly 11:30, and he was being released to Undyne at noon...would he get to see you before he left?

He took another lap around the room and stopped in the bathroom, adjusting his clothes for the umpteenth time. His favorite black shirt had been lost to the ether when he got here, ruined by the bullet, so Sans had brought him something clean from his apartment. Even though his brother was blind to matching things, he supposed he pulled it off, like everything--at least both the cuffed shorts and the sleeveless tee were distressed, so they somewhat matched.

...*Heart Breaker*. He snorted in amusement at the phrase on the tee. Of course his brother would pick something dumb like this. He fiddled with his bracelets, grateful that his brother hadn't taken the chance to make him wear something truly ridiculous.

He returned to pacing his room, increasingly nervous about not being able to see you before he left. He sighed and sat at the end of his bed, picking up the new copy of *IT* he had made Sans pick up as well. He really wanted to give it to you in person, and...say what exactly?

*I know I am about to leave but I got really hard thinking about you last night and--*

Eugh. No.

“We should go for drinks,” he mumbled to himself, turning the book over in his hands. “...even though you hardly leave the hospital and definitely don't drink because you're on call. Intelligent, Papyrus.”

He wasn't trying to ask you out on a date, just...something to thank you for everything and...well, maybe he was hoping to charm you into showing him that collar in person. He couldn't stop thinking about it, even after he had finally relieved himself in the shower this morning. Couldn't stop thinking about you, with a twist in his chest where he had been shot, wondering who would have this room when he left, who would take up your time. Maybe someone else would lay here, watching movies with you.

Why does the thought of you doing that with someone else bother him so much?! Yes, he's attracted to you, that much is clear, he has accepted that. You are very handsome for a human, and apparently you were very compatible in terms of...preferred pleasures. And he respected you, you
had earned that by saving his life and continuously caring for him despite how difficult he is.

Attraction and respect...hadn't he heard someone once say that those two together could lead to infatuation? A crush, maybe?

...no, impossible! The Great and Terrible Papyrus has never had a crush on anyone! He's fairly certain he isn't even capable of those sort of feelings. No, it must just be because he wants to be friends...with benefits if at all possible.

Which brings him back to how exactly he is supposed to propose that setup. Or make it clear that he doesn't want this to be the last he sees of you.

Granted, he will probably know what to say when he sees you...

...he glances at the clock with a frown.

If he ever sees you.

Fuck it. He isn't going to sit here like some waifish ingenoue, waiting for you to come sweeping in like this is some sort of romantic tragedy. He's an Alpha, dammit, and he knows how to pursue prey--er, partners.

He threw open his door and strode over to the nurse’s station, scanning for you. He doesn't see you...but your door is closed, which is unusual.

“I want to see the healer.”

“Well, we all want things, don't we?” Mabel said sternly, looking up at him over the rims of her glasses. “She's busy, sailor.”

“No, wait,” Kyle interjected, appearing from down the hall. “It’s okay, I think she needs a distraction. You can go on in.”

Mabel pressed her lips into a thin line of displeasure...but said nothing more as Kyle waved him off towards your office.

Pleased, he strode behind the counter and threw the door open.

“Nurse! I demand that you--” He stopped dead as you looked up at him in shock, tears staining your cheeks.

There was a long silence as the door slowly clicked shut behind him.

Then the tears began anew and you tried to choke back the sobs, creating a painful-sounding hiccup as you tried to desperately rub the tears away.

Shit.

What happened? Why are you crying? He isn't conceited enough to think it's because he's leaving, especially because he can tell it is much deeper, much more sorrowful than that.

A powerful protective instinct is rising within him, as it does whenever his female friends cry, but more persistent this time.

Do something, you idiot!
Shit. This is not his area of expertise. What the fuck is he supposed to do here?!

Get you to stop crying, that’s probably step one, so he stiffly sat in the chair next to yours and...hesitantly patted your shoulder.

“There...there?” He tried. “Everything will be okay?”

You laughed through a hiccup, still crying and sniffling. “Is...is that a question?”

“I'm terrible at this, so sue me!” he scoffed. “Can I fix it by breaking something or someone? Because if not, then I believe I am out of options.”

This had your sobs turning into a little giggle, and he felt very pleased with himself, smirking.

“No, it's not like that,” you sighed, reaching out to pull the small potted rose on your desk closer. It's white petals seemed to wink at him mischievously. “This rose used to be a good friend of mine down the hall.”

“The flower disease,” Papyrus said immediately, recalling an unfortunate case he had seen underground. “Could you not remove the roots?”

You shook your head. “Didn't want me to. Even though I begged him to let me...he died this morning.”

Oof. Well, now doesn't he feel like an asshole, thinking about himself and getting upset with you when you were dealing with so much.

Also, he's wearing a shirt that says *HEART BREAKER* when somebody you cared about literally just died of a broken heart. Classy.

But he's probably the only one thinking that hard about it.

“...I see.”

You were quiet for a moment, and he wondered what you were thinking. You sniffed, wiping away the last of your tears on the sleeve of your lab coat, before sighing heavily and looking up at him with a fixed smile...it’s the first time he had ever felt like your smile was fake.

“It’s dumb, I guess. You know, knowing how the underground was...you probably had your fair share of stuff like that. No need to have some squishy emotional human telling you about her little problems—”

“No, no,” he insisted, putting his hand up to stop you from getting up. “It isn't dumb. I...maybe I'm not the best with emotions or empathy but I would never think it was dumb. With LV comes...passivity. So much so that I have lost the ability to feel as strongly as you do about such things. Perhaps, in that respect, you have me beat...perhaps.”

“Aww, the big bad brat has a cuddly side,” you teased, even though you looked genuinely relieved as you patted his hand on your shoulder. “Um...let’s get you checked out, huh? I'm sure you're ready to get back out there.”

Not really. But he gets the hint that you're done talking about it and lets his hand drop.

Then you gathered the mess of paperwork in front of you, and he quickly stood with you and held the door open.
“What a gentleman,” you chuckled, almost mockingly.

“Which is funny, because I don't see a lady,” he huffed back.

You raised an eyebrow at him. “Careful, I'm not the one who looks like ancient Greek pottery.”

“Oh, so you admit that I'm a masterpiece.” He chuckled, hand fluttering up to press against his wound gently through the shirt, absently tracing the cracks you had referenced. Maybe they weren't healing completely, but they were smoother than before—as if your magic had sanded them down.

You just laughed as you handed him a pen, setting about tidying up his room, clearing it of the things he hadn't thought to pack, turning off the machines. He signed the papers, pretending he was focused on the way his name curved across the page…

…but honestly he was distracted. By you, by the way you hummed to yourself despite having been distraught less than five minutes ago. The signs of your distress were still present in your features, and he might have totally missed them if he hadn't seen you break down himself.

Do you do that often? Push everything down an cover it all up? Had you done it to him before and he hadn't noticed? He's usually a master at reading people, but you...you were immune to all that, with a flawless facade. Like you had shapeshifted into a completely different person.

...shapeshifter. That's right!

He dropped the pen and turned towards his box, fishing out the new copy of *IT*. This is the perfect time.

“Whatcha got there?” You asked, arms full of DVDs and other stuff that had collected off his counters.

“It’s for you,” he explained, holding it out to you. You dumped your load of stuff onto the sheets and took it with a surprised, delighted look on your face.

“A new copy?” You smiled, turning it over in your hands and admiring the hardback cover.

“Hardback, too. What's this for?”

“To…” *To thank you for everything.* “...replace the one I ruined.”

He sheepishly drew the bent copy from his box, holding that out to you as well. He had all but hidden it from you, worried you would be upset, but he did just give you a new one.

You definitely made a disgruntled face, tapping the cover of your new copy, eyebrow raised in a stern look. “And how did that happen?”

“...Last time I wrecked the room…” he mumbled, maintaining eye contact. “In my defense, a crazy doctor was trying to roofie me!”

You laughed, your disgruntled face disappearing as quickly as it had come. “Right, I remember...thanks for replacing it.”

“Of course, I told you, I have honor!”

Still, as you retrieved the bent copy from his hands, he sensed there was more to it, and he still felt bad.

“...was it special?” He asked, guilt lacing his tone.
You laughed nervously, tucking the battered copy atop the new one. Of course it was special—it was the one Eliza had bought you with her saved allowance, even though your father had expressly forbade you both from reading or watching scary things. But, it was already beat up and loved as it was...and it appeared to have been gently pressed back into place as best as he could...it “had character”, as your stepmother would say.

“Yeah, but I like it better this way.” He looked surprised, so you elaborated. “It’s the kind of character it only could have gotten from you, I think, so it’s special.”

“Pffft...how dumb and sentimental humans can be,” he chuckled, despite the dusting of deep vermilion on his skull.

He really was a medical marvel, you couldn't help but think. Even as much as you had been keeping track of his case, there was still so much that you didn't know about skeleton monsters. For instance...the blushing.

“What are you doing?” He grumbled, flushing even brighter as your hands cupped his cheekbones, feeling the warmth radiating off him.

“Fascinating…” you mumbled, lost in the moment and not even registering how weird this was. “Do you flush everywhere or just your face?”

“What?!” he squeaked, and you received your answer as the flush spread to the spots where his bones met, lighting up first his joints (shoulders, humerus, carpals) and then his vertebrae one by one, like a landing strip. “I am not blushing!”

“Pffft. That's adorable.”

“I am not adorable! I'm terrifying and awe-inspiring!” He hissed, smacking your hands away.

“You can be both,” you conceded, teasing. “Give me a break, I only have ten minutes left to use that waiver that says I can touch you wherever I want!”

Your turn to blush as he raised a brow at that.

“Oh? You want to touch me all over, then?” He purred, demeanor shifting dangerously fast. You blinked, taking half a step back in surprise before he grabbed your wrist.

“For science!” You gasped insistently, and he chuckled, a low noise that excited you more than it should have.

“Well, then, for science, I suppose?”

He brought your hand back to his face, forcing you to look him in the sockets. He was grinning knowingly as you pretended to be professional, even though your mind and heart were racing.

You tried to steer your thoughts away from dirty things. You don't know what possessed you to think about him blushing all over...aaaaalllll over...

“S...so, you can blush, obviously.”

“Obviously.”

He sounded incredibly amused as he leaned back, propping himself on the bed with his hands behind him. The movement forced you to move a little closer, standing between his legs to get a
closer look at the tiny scarlet freckles that dotted his skull.

“And, uhm...these freckles. Are they only present when you blush? Or are they always there?”

“Do you want them to be?” He asked as you brushed your fingers lightly over his cheeks to feel the shimmer of magic that created his blush.

“That's...I mean, they're cute, I guess,” you huffed, annoyed that he was sidestepping your questions.

“You guess?”

You rolled your eyes, palming his face and shoving him away slightly in annoyance. “Fine, they're cute. But that doesn't answer my question.”

He chuckled as he bounced back from your playful shove. “They are always there! It adds to my charm, don't you think? They are more prominent when I blush, though I rarely do.”

“Pfft...you blush all the time, big shot,” you teased, and he frowned.

“I do not! I am a very composed gentleman!”

You shook your head with a little giggle. “Nothing about you is gentle.”

“Yes, and I think you like that, don't you?”

It was said slowly, deliberately, like one might whisper in your ear at night, and whateverlovingfuck--

“Stop that,” you warned, face aflame as you pointedly avoided his gaze.

“Stop what?” There was that amused tone as he gently gripped your arms, preventing you from backing away. “I thought this was for science?”

Ooohhh boy, this is bad. Fuck. You had never once heard him talk like this, or use that sultry tone like he was trying to seduce you--spoiler alert, it was working.

You are definitely texting Camden when you get home. Screw the consequences, you are too needy to care.

Although, uh...there's a bed right here...and he does seem to be laying it on thick…

“What's the matter, nurse? I thought you were supposed to take care of me?” You dared to look into his eyes, and they were two vibrant flames that didn't even try to lie. “Or is something...distracting you?”

This was a risky move...but by the scarlet blush on your face it was a good one. Flirting, hell, he can flirt. It's easier than discussing feelings, and you had started it anyhow with your eagerness to touch him.

For science, you said, and he was dying to show you everything he could do so you could write that in your little medical journal.

Should he make a move? Right here in the hospital, you're likely to reject it, but at least his intentions would be clear. It would give him an excuse to ask you to call him. Step one in a four step plan: make the move, wait for you to respond, blow your mind...then friends with benefits and
everyone is happy. Except whoever Camden is, because his bones will be broken.

“Tell me, nurse...how do you put up with me?” He asked, pointedly dragging his fingers along your arms, enough to make you gasp almost imperceptibly. “Someone might be inclined to think that it isn't just patience, but rather...you see something in me, maybe? Something that you like?”

Your gaze didn't waver from his, and he watched your expression turn from confused and panicked to...delicious desire. Checkmate.

“Something that you want?” He purred, nearly growled, and you were following his grasp to lean in--

“PAPYRUS YOU SLUT LET'S GO!”

The door slammed open and you all but flew out of his arms as it bounced harshly off the wall from Undyne’s flying kick.

He blinked, confusion subsiding into frustration nearly immediately as he turned to level a glare on his best friend, who now stood in the door with a grocery bag in one hand and a spear in the other.

“C’mon, punk, we have nearly a month of training to catch up on!” She said, tossing him the bag which, upon inspection, held his armor and some other sparring gear. He growled quietly as he gripped the bag, irritation knocking at his temples. “He’s good to go, right, Nurse?”

“Yes! Yes! All good, too good, uh, very...very good.” You sputtered, fiddling with the knobs on the HoPe machine as if you hadn't already shut it off.

Begrudgingly, since the moment was royally ruined, he got up and shoved the rest of his stuff into his box, before shoving it into Undyne’s arms and leaning in to mutter in her ear.

“You will pay for that, sharkbait,” he growled, and her wide grin only grew wider.

“Bring it on, Don Juan,” she teased. “Go say goodbye to your girlfriend.”

“She's not my--” He stalled, and sighed. “I shouldn't even bother with you. Let's just leave, already. Can't wait to get out of this hellhole--”

“Papyrus?”

“Yes?”

Undyne snickered at how quickly he stopped in his tracks and swiveled around to look at you expectantly. So much for playing it cool like he can't wait to leave.

You shifted awkwardly, cheeks still tinged a slight pink as you held up a paper. “Uhm...you still have one more to sign?”

“Oh,” he said, visibly disappointed. “Yes...of course.”

He took the paper and you pointed out the various places to sign, and after he handed it back and turned to leave, he paused, turning back to you.

“I...Well. You have done a lot for me.” He stated, and though it sounded like he should add a thank you, he didn't.

“Yes, uhh, that's me, Maginurse extraordinaire,” you joked, rolling your eyes. “And, Papyrus?”
“Yes?” Ugh, he sounded so stupidly hopeful, he thought. Dammit, he wanted you to say you would miss him...you would, right?

“Don't forget to pick up your prescription on the way out. Take no more than two a day as needed for the pain.”

“Prescription. Right.” He coughed, shoving one hand into his pocket. “And you! Don't be working yourself sick. You're no good that way--I could have been out of this awful room a long time ago if you only properly rested yourself!”

You smirked at him, a cheeky smile that made him want to...he doesn't know what, but it would be very pleasant. “Okay, Mom.”

“Please, like you aren't the mother here.”

“Insufferable prick.”

“Workaholic.”

“Brat. Somebody ought to whip your ass into shape.”

“Is that an insult, or a proposition?”

You laughed again, hiding your face with your stack of papers. “Hey, maybe both. You'll never know.”

Chuckling, he stuck his hand out to shake yours, hoping to feel the warmth of your hand again before he left. “Well?”

You looked at his hand, and then surprised him by slapping it away and stepping forward to wrap your arms around his ribs.

He locked up, looking over at Undyne with shock on his skull, and she gave him a thumbs up.

He returned the hug slowly, gently, worried you might break, but found you were firm and warm as you squeezed him as tightly as you could without hurting his wound.

“Take care of yourself, boss,” you sighed as you reluctantly released him.

“...Yes. You as well, Nurse.”

You clutched the tattered collar of his shirt and pointed a stern finger at him. “And no more bullshit, or I will let you die next time!”

He chuckled, reaching up to muss up your hair on purpose, amused glint in his sockets. “Fight me yourself and we shall see.”

And then there was nothing else for him to do but to walk out of the room, the hospital, possibly your life, and you sunk into the mattress slowly, feeling how cold everything suddenly felt.

You usually miss all your long-term patients, but...for some reason...this was different.

...everything is different.

Chapter End Notes
Oh, gosh, flirty Boss is nigh impossible to resist. I'm STILL mad at Undyne for busting in, even though I wrote it.
Let's hope Nurse realizes why everything feels different so she can chase after him!
Chapter Summary

The time apart had been strange to say the least. Papyrus is definitely not missing you... ...and you are definitely making the wrong life choices. But hey, that's mostly the tequila's fault.

Chapter Notes

So sorry this has taken so long. Without the hospital setting, nurse is a very different character, and I needed some time to get to know her. That and I was having a little bit of writer's block. In any case, this chapter got too long and I ended up cutting it into two, still working on the next one. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Arms wide open

I stand alone

I'm no hero and I'm not made of stone
Right or wrong
I can hardly tell
I'm on the wrong side of heaven and the righteous side of hell

The water was nearly scalding hot as it washed away the sweat and dust of his morning spar with Undyne, his breathing heavy as it poured through the hole in his chest unhindered.

He didn't mind looking at it so much anymore, and as he ran his fingers over the smooth cracks, the pain was enough to remind him that he's still alive, and that he's here...on the surface, where he could make sure that what he did matters.

I heard from God today and she sounded just like me
What have I done and who have I become
I saw the devil today and he looked a lot like me
I looked away

There was a knocking at the door to the bathroom, and he hardly even looked up.
“Are you done playing your emo rock and reflecting on your many sins?” Undyne called through the door, sarcasm dripping in her tone. He didn't even bother telling her it wasn't emo rock—explaining to Undyne the intricacies of modern Alternative Rock like Five Finger Death Punch was like explaining the two-party democratic system to a cat. “Al ordered takeout for lunch and we’re gonna watch Attack on Titan.”

He groaned, leaving her unanswered as he leaned his head against the cold tile of their shower.

He had been staying with them for the last few days, partly because he wasn't supposed to be alone and partly because he needed to lay low until the news of him leaving the hospital died down—until then, his apartment was hot, and he could draw some unsavory types to him, and consequently to his neighbors as well...and maybe even to you. He didn't want what had happened to Angel to happen to you, too.

So here he was, in weeaboo central.

I'm not defending
Downward descending
Falling further and further away

He loves his friends, truly—he would not be the way he was today without Undyne’s training. Even after surpassing her and assuming the role of captain, she never once treated him like anything other than a good friend, even if he didn't quite return the sentiment. With no royal guard to stand between them here, their friendship was stronger than ever, and he was grateful for that. Even now, she was helping him heal by sparring with him, and even when he loses his temper, angry about his lack of mobility, she maintains a disarming sense of humor about it all.

Getting closer every day
I'm getting closer every day
To the end, to the end, the end of the end
I'm getting closer every day

It wasn't that he didn't want to be here.

He didn't want to be home either.

He just...he wasn't ready, and he took the moment to admit it to himself. He wasn't ready to leave a place where he was cared for, and safe. Safety is something he had not had a whole lot of in his life, and while a part of him craves the danger, he was relieved he was able to spend his initial healing time in relative peace.
So that's it. It isn't like he misses your nagging, or Kyle’s teasing. He just wishes he didn't have to watch his back all the time. He's just bitter.

Right or wrong

Bitterness that has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that you haven't called him at all since he left. Because he doesn't care if you do, he’ll probably see you at the hospital when he goes for PT anyway...except he's not going back, because he doesn't need it...but it’s not like it’s the end of the world.

He doesn't miss you.

I can hardly tell
I'm on the wrong side of heaven

...Damn.

And the righteous side of hell

You groaned into your pillow, squeezing your eyes shut even harder as you began to stir.

Don't open your eyes. If you don't look, it didn't happen. If you stay like this, you're just in your own bed at home, and Hobbes is going to start meowing at the door any second now.

Despite your warnings to yourself, you cracked an eye open...and immediately groaned again at the sight of your poor life choices sleeping next to you.

To be fair, it isn't your fault this time. You didn't text him, you were strong, you…

...you had worked nearly nonstop since Papyrus left, but the hospital had been dead as a doornail. Rested and idle, you searched for any reason to stick around and take your mind off of your growing need and the lascivious thoughts of your former charge, only to find there was nothing. Even the clinic had gone quiet enough for Kyle to handle practically on his own, and so the staff had insisted you take a well-earned break.

That well-earned break turned into some of the other nurses and interns convincing you to get all gussied up and go out to the club with them, and because Victor always says you need more female friends, you unwisely agreed. Sandy, a cardiology nurse, did your makeup and Becca, a medical intern, lent you a dress that you were certain you were a few years too old for, and after squeezing your curves into the lace atrocity, you did something simple with your hair...that they immediately redid, with more bobby pins than you cared to count. Seriously, you'll probably be finding bobby pins in your hair for weeks.

And of course they had picked The Nightingale, a club on the corner of third and sixth that was firmly in the territory of the Razorbacks, the shitty, blade-happy gang your shitty, blade-happy ex
belonged to.

You didn't blame them, though. The Nightingale was one of the only decent places in town, and despite being in the middle of Razorback territory, people were untouchable inside--it was a hotbed for transactions, according to your source, which was, of course, Camden himself. The blade-happy ex.

So, looking like hell on wheels, you walked right into the spiderweb, unwilling to spoil everyone's night just on the off chance that you can't control yourself.

Sure enough, the devil himself was there, dressed in silver and sitting at the bar like he knew how it would play out. He spotted you instantly, of course--he always knew where you were. He was a mage, too, a yellow soul like Eliza but...darker. Hers was pure honey and his was polished bronze, and where her power drew her to those in need, his drew him to those who are weak. Weak in alignment, weak in the mind, weak at heart…

...weak at the knees.

So he always knew you when you came in, with your demolished soul that shouldn't even function and your inability to refuse his snake eyes.

It hadn't taken much. He knew your poison--a tequila sunrise was at your table practically before you were. You remember staring directly at him in what you thought was defiance as you threw it back, challenging him as he sent you another, but he knows.

Tequila makes your clothes fall off.

And so here you are, in his bed, again, as if you hadn't ever left.

You wished he was less handsome in the morning light, so you could blame it on the dark smoky nightclub, but it just wasn't so. His chestnut hair was long enough on top to curl slightly, and it was currently tousled in just the right way. The blanket didn't hide his well-toned body, his strong shoulders, his rugged scars. It did nothing to save you from his perfectly planned stubble, his thick yet refined eyebrows, the tiny splash of freckles across his perfectly tanned skin...and if he were to open his eyes, you would see nothing but two deep pools of blue Caribbean, eyes you could get lost in...eyes you could drown in.

Eyes you have drowned in.

It really is too bad that he's a narcissistic asswipe when he opens that perfect mouth.

“Take a picture, it’ll last longer,” he mumbled, eyes cracking open like the sun over the hills. Blinding. You have to look away. “Maybe you'll stay away longer this time if you have an updated contact pic anyway...probably not, though.”

Ugh. See? Narcissistic asswipe.

“Shut up. There won't be a next time.” You plopped a pillow on his face and hop out of his bed, finding the lacy...thing...you had worn last night and struggling it up over your curves.

“That’s what you always say, princess,” he chuckled, and when you looked back, he's sitting up against the pillows with that smoldering stare, blankets nearly failing to cover his “weapon of choice”, as he so delicately called it last night.

“Well, this time I mean it.”
“Yeah, I doubt that,” he snorted. “Not unless you miraculously find somebody else who wants to bang you, because even though you’re smokin’, last I checked you’re ‘like they’re sister’, wasn’t it?”

You didn’t answer, stalking into the bathroom to assess the damage.

“Hey, you always come crawling back when you’re tired of being sister-zoned. Why don’t you just stay this time?” He asked, thankfully pulling on some boxer-briefs before following you in. “C’mon, I’m higher up in the gang now. I’m makin’ bank. I got this nice apartment, you won’t have to work at the hospital so much if I support you.”

“I want to work at the hospital,” you growled, trying to scrub at the tracks of mascara that were seemingly painted down your face. “I’m not gonna be some housewife taking care of your bachelor pad. I want to help people, but it isn’t like you’d understand that.”

“Yeah yeah, ‘my sense of justice is only for myself’, yada yada yada...heard it all before, sugartits,” he groaned, rolling his eyes. God, he was such a tool...and yet, when he reached around to wrap his arms around your waist and anchor you to his chest, you watched yourself blush shamefully.

Dammit.

“Oh, ho...looks like somebody might wanna go another round?” He purred, and you wish you could say it disgusted you.

“No, thanks,” you growled, giving up on your makeup and wrenching yourself from his arms. If you’re gonna walk of shame, why not go the whole bit, right? “I’ve had quite enough of your micropenis for one lifetime, thanks.”

“Fine, be that way,” he scoffed. “See if those losers at the hospital and those monster patients can make you feel as good as I did last night, and when you realize they can’t, I’ll be right here.”

You thought of Papyrus for a brief moment, and confidence filled you. You flipped him the bird as you left the room.

“Eat shit and die, Camden.”

“Eat me, slut! Oh, wait, you already did!” He called back, and then, as an afterthought as you reached the door. “And tell the neighbor to turn down their shitty music! It’s been nothing but Avenged Sevenfold and Green Day for three days straight!”

You slammed the door behind you and leaned against the warm wood with a sigh. The sunlight did nothing to affect the morning chill against your skin, and you realized this dress was a lot more revealing than you had originally thought last night. Grumbling, you adjusted the skirt as best you could and patted uselessly at your hair. You loathed the idea of meeting his neighbors like this, but you also knew you didn’t ever have to see them again...and their music was pretty loud for 10:30 in the morning.

At the risk of looking, at best, like a crackwhore trying to earn some extra cash, you turned to the neighbor’s apartment door and knocked.

“Hey, Pap, could you get that?” Undyne asked as Papyrus exited the bathroom, towel thrown around his bare shoulders. “It’s probably the food. Wallet’s on the counter.”

He rolled his eyelights, but trudged over to the door anyway, seeing as Undyne was literally bench-
pressing her girlfriend at the moment. He snagged the wallet in question, vaguely wondering if he
should bother to put a shirt on. He decided against it--it wasn't as if his impression on the pimply
teenager delivery kid truly mattered. He'd be fine in just his jeans.

The knocking persisted annoyingly, and he opened the door with a little too much force, startling
the human on the other side.

“Haven't you ever heard of patience?” He snapped. “Apparently it is a virtue that you don't…”

He paused, staring down at the form in front of him that was definitely not a pimply delivery kid.
In fact, they weren't a delivery person at all. They were, rather, a female in a very short, lacy dress
that showed more cleavage than he thought appropriate for the middle of the day. Seeing her heels
clutched in her hand and her makeup smudged all down her face, he gathered she was on what
humans amusingly called the “walk of shame”.

He chuckled, tapping the wallet against his skull. “Sorry, human, but this money isn't for your
particular services.”

“Oh, my God.” He watched as the human stood, mortified, staring at him, and then started
laughing, somewhat hysterical. “Ha, of course. Wow. Of course I would...of all the...Jesus Christ.”

It clicked.

God, with all the makeup, and the strangely messy, overdone hairdo, and the dress...he hadn't even
realized who he was looking at, but he knew that voice anywhere.

You laughed again, shifting uneasily on your bare feet as you covered your face with the hand not
holding your stilettos. “Yup. Just my luck, of course you're his loud neighbor, of course you'd
catch me looking like the dime whore I am today. Thanks, universe, way to add insult to injury.”

You pointed exasperatedly at the sky and sighed, before looking up at him again, miserable and
exhausted. What the hell happened to you? How did you end up at Undyne’s door? What did you
want from them, since you obviously hadn't known who lived here?

“...yeah. Sorry. I'll just go--”

“Wait!” He caught your wrist as you turned to leave, and you looked back at him, surprised. “I
have questions. The first being...do I need to hurt somebody? Or...call the police?”

You stared at him in confusion for a long moment before it dawned on you what he meant, and you
let out a short laugh with more mirth than before.

“No, God no. Cam’s an asshole but he's not a rapist.” You chuckled, shaking your head. “Nah, this
is just a combination of tequila and poor judgement.”

His eyes narrowed at the name you dropped. Cam. It wasn't a stretch to think you were talking
about Camden. Did you say he lived next door? He subconsciously took a step out onto the porch
to peer over at the accused door. There are only two apartments on each floor so it isn't any
mystery which one you meant.

How...convenient.

“Well, in any case, you should come inside and change out of this…” His eyes finally took a good
look at your dress, and realized that he was seeing a lot more of you than he was accustomed to.
His face grew warm as he thought of what it must have looked like to shimmy it up your hips and
pull the flimsy lace aside to reveal your generous breasts-- “... ‘Pretty Woman’ cosplay.”

“Har de har. I realize I look like a streetwalker, believe me, it wasn't my idea,” you huffed, hesitating slightly...before seemingly deciding it was a better option than walking around like that and stepping inside.

“And who’s idea was it, then?” He scoffed, closing the door behind you. “Richard Gere?”

“Nah. Becca and Sandy.”

Nurses from the hospital, though he can't for the life of him remember which ones. He hardly retained your name, let alone others. He stopped you, raising a brow. “And their plan was to get you kidnapped and murdered in an alley? The streets aren't safe right now.”

That was an understatement. Since he and Sans had single-handedly dismantled the most notorious gang in the city, the streets were getting increasingly more dangerous. Gang wars, turf wars especially, people fighting for who’s the next king of the hill. He had no trouble walking the streets, of course, but you...and in an outfit like that...it wouldn't be your fault of course but he would shudder to think of the horrible ways those animals might disrespect you.

His gang was different, of course, but if he tried telling you that you would probably laugh.

“I'm capable, but I appreciate the concern.” You said, depositing your shoes by the door.

“I wasn't concerned! I just think your companions should have used their heads a little more.” He scoffed, sliding the chain lock into place. He felt your eyes on him, and when he turned around you were reaching for his wound. He chuckled “You never stop being a nurse, do you?”

You stopped short of brushing it with your fingers.

“Shoot, uh...I sort of forgot we aren't at the hospital for a moment. Can I take a…” You paused, remembering yourself as his eyelights flicked down to your outfit. “Uhh...maybe I should get cleaned up first. And changed.”

“I don't know, this look is kind of growing on me,” he said, backing you up against the half-wall separating the foyer from the living room. You blinked and backpedaled until you couldn't anymore and…

Click!

Your jaw dropped open in protest when he snapped a picture of you, chuckling to himself as he backed away.

“Alright. I suppose you can change now.”

“Delete that!” You squeaked, grabbing for his phone. He held it easily out of your reach without even fully extending his arm, stepping back to avoid your swipes. “Papyrus!”

“No, I think I'll keep it. It'll make for a nice reminder of your walk of shame.”

You opened your mouth to say something sharp, when you heard familiar voices clamoring in the next room.

“Hey, Pap! How long’s it take to pay the delivery guy?” Undyne asked, appearing from what appeared to be the kitchen, just around the corner. She stopped dead when she saw you, and
Alphys mirrored her as she appeared directly after. “Woah. The nurse works for the Chinese place down the street?”

“No, dear, I think she was the one we were hearing with our angry neighbor last night,” Alphys muttered, though not quietly enough that you couldn't hear and turn bright red.

“Ooohhh, shit,” Undyne nodded, a sinister grin growing on her scaly face. “The one who kept yelling ‘harder, daddy’ and ‘slap me’?”

“What?!” You couldn't possibly get any redder, “I did not!”

Undyne laughed, loud and boisterous, and Alphys smiled a little smile as she chuckled behind her hand.

“I'm just messing with you, nerd!” Undyne snickered, crossing the room to throw an arm around you and steer you away from the door. “But it’s pretty funny watching you go all red like that. Why that loser though? He's such a jerk, and that's coming from me.”

“Why, indeed,” you mumbled to yourself as you allowed yourself to be led further into the house.

“Are you s-sure you don't want to stay for--for lunch?” Alphys pressed as you slid one of Undyne’s shirts over your head. It was tall on you, and sleeveless, but otherwise fit just like any other t-shirt you have at home, with some UFC logo on it.

“I can't, I have to be back at the hospital by two.”

She handed you the spandex exercise shorts and you slid them on as well, grateful your undergarments were at least cute and matching, even if they weren't super comfortable.

“Well, that's a few, uh, a few hours from now and…” Alphys trailed off, glancing at the door to the bedroom, where Papyrus was no doubt pretending not to care that you were there on the other side.

“...how is he?” You asked, recognizing her hesitance.

“C-coping. Barely, but he’s coping,” the drake sighed, sliding Becca’s dress onto a hanger. “Every day he becomes more m-mobile, but he also gets more fr-frustrated with his-his lack of control. And I think it c-causes more p-pain than he lets on.”

“Well, he’s an outpatient, so he can always come by--”

“He’s too damn proud for that,” Undyne scoffed, appearing from the attached bathroom with a small package of makeup wipes. “He'd rather die than admit he needs help, even from you.”

You pursed your lips as you took the wipes. That does sound like Papyrus. He didn't even really want your help in the hospital, when it was your job to do so.

If that's the case, then he might not ever heal correctly--if he keeps pushing himself too hard and too far, and ignoring the pain, and pretending he's fine, then his magic won't try to heal it and it might reopen the crack you sealed in his soul.

Stubborn idiot.

...well, with him out of the hospital you do have a bit more free time. Maybe you could make a house call or two? You wipe away the mascara that marks your poor decisions, leaving your cheeks stinging from the pressure required to scrub it off.
...You wondered what Eliza would want you to do. Sacrifice your free time for the surly skeleton who can't take care of himself? ‘What free time?’ Victor’s voice echoes in your head. ‘Even when you aren't there, you're always in hospital mode.’

“I’ll try and talk to him,” you muttered, disposing of the wipes and trying to pick bobby pins from your hair.

“Great! I'll go get him!” Undyne exclaimed, grabbing Alphys before you could protest and vacating the room.

Before long, a flustered and confused Papyrus was shoved into the room, red flannel shirt half-on, and the door slammed behind him.

“What the hell?!?” He growled, trying the door handle. It jiggled uselessly in his hand. “Undyne! Unlock this door!”

No reply.

He huffed in annoyance, throwing his hands up in defeat, scowl deepening. You couldn't help yourself—you started giggling madly, finding the whole situation ridiculous. This was the kind of excitement you had been missing since he left, and suddenly your chest ached so much that it almost physically hurt.

Push that thought down.

“Laugh it up, human,” he scoffed, then pausing his eyeroll to do a double-take. “What on earth are you wearing? You look like an extra from Juno.”

Your turn to roll your eyes. “Damn, and here I thought I couldn't look worse than Julia Roberts playing a prostitute.”

“You don't…” he sighed, running a hand over his skull. “You don't look bad, it just doesn't suit you. The exercise clothes.”

“I do, you know...Exercise. Sometimes.”

“Irrelevant. Here.”

He removes what he had apparently started to put on, draping the red flannel over your shoulders. You gave him a quizzical look, and he waved you on, crossing his arms.

You stuck your arms through the sleeves as best you could, but they dangled past your hands. You half-heartedly flipped the ends up so you could button it up, surprised at how his strange skeletal shape seemed to mirror your curves enough for a pretty decent fit, even if it was a little baggy.

“Much better. Now you don't look like quite the train wreck.”

You turned to look in the mirror, and you had to admit that it did look like something somebody would design for Forever 21. “But I still look like I'm taking a walk of shame,” you grumbled.

“Well, a walk away from a night with me isn't exactly a walk of shame,” he chuckled, his hand coming to rest on the mirror as he approached behind you, suddenly very close. You could feel his breath on your neck as he leaned down, his sockets twinkling in the reflection, mischievous. “In fact, I would be shocked to find that you could walk at all when I was done with you.”
Did he just... *kabedon* you?! Holy crap, he did! You wanted to laugh but you were too busy turning bright red at his suggestive tone. Luckily for you he didn't give you a chance to respond before he drew slightly closer, making eye contact with your reflection.

His free hand brushed your hair back over your shoulder, and it lingered on your throat for just a moment too long to be an accident...before he drew back with a smirk, moving to the side to lean against the wall next to the mirror.

Still shirtless.

“You look good in my shirt, maybe we should make it a habit.”

Camden said that to you once upon a time.

But...it sounded a lot more appealing coming from Papyrus.

God, what is wrong with you?

“Okay, let’s see that bullet wound,” you said quickly, and he chuckled knowingly as you pushed him over to the bed to sit.

“So ready to get me back in bed? Did that human just not do it for you?” He purred, grasping your arms as he sat to anchor you on the spot.

Okay, if before you had been unsure, you were certain he was flirting now. And unlike before, you didn't have a dry spell to excuse your positive reaction, but the other option scared you to admit.

These feelings of attraction...you weren't stupid. They had been growing since you met, and no matter how hard you tried to deny it, or ignore it, Kyle had been absolutely right.

You had a crush on him. A big, fat, whirlwind crush that made you want to grab him and re-enact *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 1, Scene 5.

And he was definitely trying to lead up to making a move, which you should probably go ahead and accept wholeheartedly now that he isn't your patient...after all...

The way your heart hammered as Papyrus looked down at you, still slightly taller even though he was sitting, and the way his warm bones were light against your arms, calculatedly delicate through the sleeves of his flannel...the scent of mahogany and cocoa was everywhere, on the shirt you wore, on him, on you, and...the way your breath caught as you leaned into his touch subtly, his sockets lighting up in a pleased twinkle...

It was all *new*. Exciting...

...terrifying.

There's a reason you keep going back to Cam, and he hit it on the head before you left--you were cursed. Cursed to only ever be “like my sister”. You had heard “Yeah maybe I might have thought about it when we met, but now it would just be weird” so many times that it physically hurt to think about even trying to be with anyone new, knowing that, inevitably, they would start to feel like maybe you should just be friends.

It wasn't something you wanted to live through again. Oh, God, especially with Papyrus--for some reason you wanted this to work so much worse than any other flame you had entertained, like you needed him so much more.
Hold me tight…

But you're scared.

Draw me closer…

But you can't do this again.

Kiss me passionately...

His grip tightened just slightly, and he pulled you slowly closer, leaning down as if to kiss you…

...and you panicked.

Chapter End Notes

Gosh darn it, nurse! First you sleep with your ex, then you let your anxiety get in the way of the moment!
Also, we get narcissistic ASSHAT Camden, and we-ship-it-so-hard Alphyne. And obscure movie references. And flirty Boss.
Don't forget to visit my tumblr and drop in with any questions, reactions, or to answer my ask memes. My inbox is hungry!
A Snake's Charm

Chapter Summary

Camden is a much bigger asshole than you know.

Chapter Notes

Whew! Okay, finally got done with this chapter, I'm pretty happy with it. It's leading great places, character development, more mysteries unraveled. I can't wait to unfold this story properly for you guys, I just get so impatient it gets hard to write! Check out my Tumblr to ask the characters questions, to give me imagines, to check out fanart, or just to say hi!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

He wheezed and lurched forward as you accidentally punched him in the sternum, his movement causing his head to knock into yours with a sharp crack! You squeaked and backpedaled as he released you, recovering quickly and diving in with your magic coating your hands so you can relieve the pain you had most definitely caused.

“Sorry! I’m sorry!” You managed to say as he exhaled in relief. “Oh, my God, I’m sorry. I’m just...you know, it’s reflex, for when my other patients try to make a move on me or something, I--”

His hand gripped one of your wrists, startling you into dispelling your magic.

“You talk far too much,” he growled. “And you think far too much as well.”

“Sorry, I'm--”

“And since when do you apologize?” He scoffed. “You never cared if you roughed me up before. You would have said 'well, that's what you get for being a brat!' or something equally asinine.”

He studied your face as your gaze fell to the floor, nervousness present in every inch of your body. Was this a side effect of going back to that asshole next door? Or just a reaction to being outside the comfort of the hospital? You've been more reserved than normal, even though it’s only the two of you here like every other time.

He shoved you back and you stumbled, surprised, as he stood from the bed.

You opened your mouth, and he knew you were about to apologize again.

“Don't apologize to me. You aren't an ant beneath my boot. A little bit of a whore, and a filthy human, yes, but beneath me you are not.” He growled, though there was a humor to his words, playfully shoving you again. Though he would certainly like you to be.

“Stop pushing me,” you grumbled, slapping his hand away.
He paused, a grin growing across his face as he realized you had set him up for his ultimate move.

“Make me,” he purred, hand darting out to grab your waist and drag you against him. You let out the most satisfying frustrated noise, and there it was, that fire in your eyes was back with a vengeance, and it nearly made him shiver with anticipation.

He wanted to kiss you right then and there, to throw you down and enjoy every inch of you as you struggled for dominance...he knows it would be so good, so sweet, so...passionate.

He wants to know what you look like when you fall apart at the seams.

One: Don't pick up the phone
You know he’s only callin’ cause he's drunk and alone

Two: don't let him in
You'll have to kick him out again

Three: don't be his friend
You know you'll end up in his bed in the mornin’
If you’re under him
You ain’t gettin’ over him

I got new rules, I count ‘em.

Just like that, the fire in your eyes was gone, and you gently pushed away from his chest, turning to the discarded dress to fish out your phone as the song continued to play.

He growled a little in frustration, hand running over his skull as you answered.

“What?” You grouched into the phone, a cold bite to your tone that was worse than anything you had ever directed at him. He could hear the man on the other end saying you had left your purse. You bit your lip, looking apprehensive. “Okay, I'll be back soon I guess. Yeah, I didn't go far. Well, fuck you, too, and no, that isn't an invitation.”

“Please tell me this isn't the same man you slept with last night,” he scoffed. You shot him a glare and didn't answer.

“No, just the TV. I said it was nothing, get off my ass!”

Papyrus narrowed his sockets at the way you pretended he wasn't there. As far as he knew, you weren't actually dating the guy, so why should he give a shit who you're with? And why lie about it?

You hung up, and immediately your phone buzzed, and he only saw the name Victor flash on the screen before you grimaced and silenced it. Whoever Victor was, he seemed to have a sort of sixth sense about you and this undesirable human. He would have to meet him at some point.
“I gotta go, thanks for everything,” you said quickly, gathering your things and striding towards the door.

“Where are you going?! He asked as you picked the lock on the doorknob with a stray bobby pin. He paused to watch, slightly impressed. “What the--how do you even know how to do that?”

“A lot of practice trying to get answers nobody wanted to talk about,” you grumbled as you swung it open. “I left my purse next door, so I'm gonna go get it before I go home.”

“I'm coming with you, then.”

You laughed as he followed you out into the living room, where Undyne and Alphys barely looked up from their anime and Chinese food.

“Hell no. I don't want him knowing you live here.”

He rolled his eyes. “I do not live here. You think I want to listen to these two bump uglies every night? I have my own apartment, thank you.”

“Whatever, you still aren't coming. I can handle Camden on my own.”

“He sounded like a prick. I bet he has a tiny one, to be snapping like that over the phone. Acting all lordly.”

“Papyrus. You just described yourself.”

“Yes, but my dick is far from small,” he mused, leaning against the doorjamb as you went to leave. “So I have an excuse.”

“Every guy says that,” you said, rolling your eyes even as you chuckled. “Sorry, pics or it didn't happen.”

“Oh, somebody wants pictures?” He purred, pushing the door closed as soon as you tried to open it.

“Papyrus, let me go,” you giggled. “I have to get my purse.”

“Stay, and maybe you won't need pictures,” he offered, voice a pleasing hum as he muttered near your ear, and you bit your lip.

How could he still want you after that mess you made of his attempted kiss in the bedroom? You feel awful about how badly you're screwing all this up, but you know it will only hurt worse in the end when he realizes he doesn't want you that way. He's more stubborn than other guys whose heartache you've tried to avoid, you'll give him that.

“...I'll come back for lunch, okay?” You tried, and he reluctantly allowed you to open the door. “Just...ten minutes. Ten minutes, and you can come get me.”

That was more than a fair amount of time, you could get in and out in half that time.

“Ten minutes,” he agreed, crossing his arms. “And if you are not back for lunch, I will send him pictures of my superior equipment.”

You grinned at the thought of Camden opening up a picture of whatever kind of monster dong Papyrus rocks, just the face he would make...priceless. But, you noticed, Papyrus had just found another way to get you to think about his dick.
“Keep it in your pants, Casanova,” you chuckled, giving him a little shove back into the apartment from where he had inched slightly outwards. “I'll be right back, save me some chow mein.”

And with that, you shut the door in his face, and his smile turned into a scowl immediately. He stalked into the living room, stopping momentarily to pause the anime his friends were watching.

“Hey--”

“Shhh!” He hissed, clambering over the loveseat to press his skull against the wall. “Don't make a sound.”

He heard a click, then the door swing open—you didn't knock, and it sounded like you had a key.

Suddenly there are two more ears pressed to the wall as Alphys and Undyne joined him. He muttered that he agreed to ten minutes, and they waited to see what would come of it.

“Cam?” You called, tucking the spare key back into your phone wallet. Jeez, if your purse didn't have your office keys in it you would say fuck it, he could have it.

“That was fast. You really didn't go far,” his voice called, seemingly from the kitchen.

“Yeah, s’what I said,” you grumbled, scanning the living room for the purse so you could snatch it up and get out of here.

Aha! You swiftly move over to the couch, grabbing it off the arm and double-checking for everything—wallet, keys, yup, that’s everything. You whirl around to escape, but you run right into Camden, who struggles not to spill the two cups of coffee in his hands. He backs up a step and looks over your outfit critically.

“Whose shirt is that?”

Shit. You forgot you were still wearing Papyrus’ shirt.

“A friend’s,” you sighed, trying to find a way around him. No use, he’s blocking the entryway. “I stopped by and they lent me some clothes to walk home in. Didn’t feel safe walking down the street in that dress, you know?”

“So why go to some other guy? Why not take one of mine?”

“Because I didn't want to have to return it to you,” you said bluntly, swinging your purse around in your hand. “…though clearly, I overlooked my purse in that plan.”

“Please, like you didn't leave it on purpose,” he chuckled. He raised the mugs in his hand. “Come on, coffee’s on. I'll overlook the shirt thing.”

You hesitated, and he took the opportunity to slide behind you and bump you with his chest, effectively herding you into sitting on the couch.

“I really can't stay…” you mumbled as he set the coffee cups down and slumped on the couch next to you, arm over your shoulder as if it was the most natural thing in the world. “I'm meeting some friends for lunch.”

“Looking like that?”
You scowled, and only partially because he had picked up on your white lie. “Yeah, not everybody’s a hardass about clothes like you.”

“I only say that because I know your out-to-lunch look, and you don’t let it mix with your walk of shame look.” He snorted, taking a sip of his coffee. “So what, you’re gonna go right back to that other guy? Give him his shirt back, with interest?”

“You said you’d let the shirt thing go,” you sighed, giving in and taking a sip of the coffee he made. It was weaker than you liked, but it still made your soul brighten just a tad. “But if you must know, then yeah, I have lunch plans with my friends who lent me clothes.”

“You think I don’t notice you skirting around pronouns? It’s a guy, right, but you don’t want me to know that.”

Damn, he’s so stupidly perceptive. “It’s none of your business.”

“But it is,” he insisted, and suddenly your hand was in his, and he was bringing your fingers up to kiss them. “Babe, we’ve been over this before. You’re stubborn, and that’s fine. But I hate seeing you get hurt like this, you know?”

His other hand is tucking your hair behind your ear, drawing your chin forward just slightly.

“He’s not interested, princess,” he says, his baby blue eyes leveling a stern look on you. “It always ends the same, huh? You get excited, and it works for a little while, and then it’s friendzone for you once again, and each time I think it kills you a little bit more. Can’t you see I just want you to be happy?”

Shit. He’s making sense. His greatest weapon--logic.

“If you want me to be happy, then--”

“Then I let you work, okay? You can keep working, and we can go back to how it used to be. No more worrying about where you are--”

“Where I am?” You scoffed. “Cam, who’s the gangster here?”

“I’m fine, babe, really. Look, I’m invaluable to them, okay? No more comin’ home riddled with knife wounds, they can’t afford to lose me…” He leaned back, drawing his knife from his pocket and flicking it open, twirling it distractedly. “And I can't afford to lose you. You keep me sane, Hazel--”

“Don’t call me that,” you snapped. Only your friends call you that. “You don’t get to call me that.”

Anger flared in his eyes as he flicked the knife open and kept twirling it. “Oh, but Victor can? And what about Kyle? And Silas? Yeah, don't think I haven't been checking up on you, baby, I know all about your little project with your old flame back at the hospital.”

“We were never a thing!”

He rolled his eyes. “Why do I not believe that?”

“Oh, I dunno, maybe because you're a jealous, controlling, psychopath?” You said. “Jesus, Cam, put the knife down.”

He snorted. “Why?”
“Because you know I don't like talking to you when you're playing with it!”

“Well, I don't like it when you come back to me smelling like some loser, so I guess we're both disappointed.”

You groaned, frustration knocking at your temples as you sunk your face into your hands. This was getting you absolutely nowhere except straight to the therapist’s office.

He flicked the knife closed and set it down, leaning back into the couch with a huff. “I just wanna take care of you, why won't you let me?”

“We have definitely been over this,” you said sternly. “There are far too many reasons to count, and I'm not having this argument again.”

You got up to go, but his hand caught your wrist and you tumbled into his lap, where he wrapped his arms around you tight in an affectionate hug.

“At least don't go back to this other guy, okay? You can play the long game, but he's only gonna hurt you, babe.”

You sighed, knowing he was right. “…and you're different, how?”

“C’mon, don't be that way.”

“I'm serious! How are you any different?”

“Because I love you, baby,” he cooed, directly into your ear, his breath sending shivers down your spine. “You know that, you know I do. I'm rough around the edges, but I love you, and you love me, too. You just don't want to admit it.”

You bit your lip, contemplating. You wouldn't exactly call this feeling love, but you wouldn't say it wasn't either. There's an emptiness in your soul where love used to live, and for those moments in his arms...he does fill that emptiness, just a bit.

“C’mon, just stay a little longer? Call your friends and tell them you'll be a little late,” he purred, hands slinking over your body to unbutton Papyrus’ shirt. “I'll convince you to stay with me. I'll show you how much I love you.”

Oh no, he's making sense again. Shit. You can hear your text tone going off, and you just know Victor is blowing up your phone. How he always knows, shit, you'll never know how he does that, but it's hard to concentrate when Cam's hands have undone the shirt and pushed up the tank top underneath, roaming over your stomach, the valley of your waist…

“O-okay, okay, I'll call them,” you squeaked, getting up and tearing yourself from his grasp to zoom over to your phone. You could see his smirk from the corner of your eye, knowing he had won.

You scroll through your phone for Alphys’ contact, cursing yourself for not remembering to put her name on it, and--

**GreatAndTerriblePapyrus**

…what? How long have you had Papyrus’ number? The first thing you did was make a mental note to fix the contact name.
You hit call before you could chicken out.

Riiiiiiing.

Riiiii-

“Hello?!”

He picked up so fast you were caught off guard, stuttering uselessly for a long moment while Cam chuckled in the background.

“Who is this?...nurse?”

“Yes, yeah, uh, it’s me.”

“Where the hell are you? It’s been more than ten minutes and I do not have the asshole’s number so I can show him mine is bigger.” There’s a note of humor in his tone, but also a sense of sincerity that reveals he might actually be worried.

“Haha, uh, yeah...I’m gonna have lunch here, so...maybe some other time?”

“What?” There was a shuffling noise, and some hushed voices. “...Do you need me to come get you?”

You glance over at Camden, who is spread out on the couch with his hands behind his head. He winks at you.

“...Yeah, that sounds great,” you replied, hoping it sounded like you were rescheduling. You didn’t want to set him off before reinforcements came, after all. “Maybe you could--”

There was a loud rapping on the front door immediately, making even you jump. What, was he actually waiting outside the door?!

Cam groaned, standing up. He swept a kiss onto your cheek as he walked by. “I'll get that, you just get cute. And hang up on the loser, already.”

You hung up obediently, but only because you had a strong feeling who was at the door. You quickly rebuttoned Papyrus’ shirt over your frame and snagged your purse from the coffee table.

“Who the hell are you?” Camden asked from the foyer, confirming your suspicions.

“Papyrus. Not that a grunt like you should need to know, but we can't all be bosses, I suppose.” Papyrus was saying as you peeked around the corner.

Both of their postures was tight, arms crossed as magic crackled between them. Papyrus had put a shirt on, at least, the heartbreaker one he wore out of the hospital. It showed off the plethora of tattoos on his arms...you hoped Camden wouldn't look too closely at them.

“What do you want? I'm busy, got a lady over, if you know what I mean.”

“That is precisely the problem,” Papyrus growled. “The nurse was to arrive at exactly 11:00, and it is now 11:10. I assume you can figure out that I am here to retrieve my guest?”

Spotting you, Papyrus smirked, an easy, confident smirk that looked a whole lot like the smug grin you imagined he was wearing when he got shot.
“Are you ready to go? The food is getting cold,” Papyrus added pointedly, so that Camden would turn around and see you, indeed ready to leave.

“Babe, what the hell...wait, this guy? Are you fucking serious?” Camden gestures to all of Papyrus. “This fucking guy? He’s a fucking skeleton! There’s nothing there!”

“Oh, there is definitely something there.” Papyrus chuckled, and Cam looked back at him, horrified. "Just thought I'd correct you.”

“Okay, that's enough bonding for one day,” you mumbled, zipping past Cam to try and shove Papyrus out the door. To your dismay, he didn't budge, giving Cam the opening to grip your arm and pull you back sharply.

“Really?” He hissed in your ear. “Listen, I know this guy, okay? You don’t like my extracurriculars? Look at his tattoos. I know you aren't stupid.”

“Ah, yes, I remember now,” Papyrus said suddenly, popping one fist into the other palm as he lit up with recognition. ‘Camden. The 'interrogator'. You run with the Razorbacks. I thought your name sounded familiar.”

“Do you know what they call this guy, Hazel?” he murmured in your ear, voice too low for Papyrus to hear. You grunted, trying to wrench your arm from his grip, not even bothering to correct the nickname. “The Executioner. His body count is higher than mine, by several times.”

“I suggest you unhand my nurse, now.” Papyrus said, voice eerily calm, but his eyes raging. Several sharp bones materialized, burning red and much more dangerous than anything he had ever pointed at you. “She saved my life, you see, and so I’ve grown quite attached to her. Perhaps a little overprotective. I’d hate to think you were doing something...uncouth.”

“Maybe she’s your nurse, but she's my girlfriend,” Camden snarled.

“Ex. Ex-girlfriend,” you clarified, earning a sharp tug on your arm. “Ow! Hello? Not a rag doll!”

“Unhand. My nurse.” His voice wasn't even a fake nice anymore, but rather a deep growl.

“Or what?” Cam scoffed, stepping in between you and the admittedly fearsome skeleton. Papyrus leaned in, and Cam pushed you back harshly so you couldn't hear what Papyrus whispered in his ear.

You watched in shock as your ex’s face went white as a sheet, before he backed up against the wall to let you pass unhindered. When Papyrus was sure you were safely behind him, he dismissed all the bones but one...loosing the last one to embed itself deep in the drywall a few inches above Cam’s head.

“Glad we understand each other. I hope we won't have any troubles in the future. Nurse,” he turned to you as Cam remained frozen against the wall. “Let us move along to lunch, hmm?”

He gripped your elbow gently, steering you away from your shocked ex, who only watched with disbelief as you disappeared into the next apartment over.

“What did you say to him?” You asked, genuinely impressed and more than a little curious as Papyrus shut the door, clicking the lock.

“Just told him something I knew about him, that I would tell you if he didn't comply,” Papyrus said
nonchalantly, enjoying your puzzled expression as you tried to figure out what you didn't know about your ill-advised lover.

Eventually you just laughed and shook your head. “Well, guess I can't ask too many questions. Thanks for the rescue, Boss.”

With that, you leaned up to place a soft kiss on his cheekbone, a small token of gratitude, but…

...your lips were so soft, and you smelled so good, like him and your own unique scent--like the woods after a thunderstorm. He suppressed a purr as you laughed again, nervously, turning to walk off in search of food.

His hand came up to press against his wound slightly, his grin falling as you disappeared around the bend to a cacophony of noises from his friends.

The pain was trivial, but enough of a reminder.

Camden had been there that night, the night he got shot. He remembered clearly, because he specifically wasn't a Hellhound--but rather, a patron at the outfit he put down that night. He remembers he was there to buy the virtue of kidnapped sisters and daughters, people who didn't want to give it to him but had no choice. He remembers because, of the 39 people present that night, he is the only one who made it out alive.

He remembers clearly, because how could he forget the face of the person who shot him?

Chapter End Notes

Damn, Camden is a grade A asshat, isn't he?
Also, I am 110% here for hero!Boss.
Chapter Summary

Emotions are running a little high for you today.
Silas shows his soft side.
You uh...you punch someone.

Chapter Notes

Whew, I am so sorry this took so long to get out! My work schedule changed and now I'm working about 10+ more hours a week, plus I have just been trying to trudge through this chapter for like, weeks.
Anyway, I really hope you enjoy this, and take a look at my tumblr for fight me! fanart and author updates and other silly things I do!

Papyrus paced Camden’s living room, impatiently waiting for him to get home from wherever it was he had gone so he could properly punish him for all his wrongdoings without your prying eyes to catch him in the act.

He was unimpressed by Camden’s security, or lack thereof--there were no cameras to see him pop open a window, nor were there any alarms to keep him from coming and going as he pleased. For somebody who claims to be an important person to his gang, there was a startling lack of the paranoia that comes with that sort of position.

Makes his job easier, he supposed.

He had brought his tools, and yet he wasn't sure exactly what he was going to do just yet. He had been coming up with plans for hours, but none of them seemed painful enough. Those who would buy the virtue of young women should be given unimaginable ailments, tortured until they are unable to feel any bit of pleasure any longer, castrated and left for dead--but he was convinced that if he did just that, you would inevitably find out, and when he had told you he would try to stay out of trouble he had made a promise he wasn't interested in breaking.

Still, he knew lots of good methods for getting information out of people, and if he could coax a confession to his crimes he might be able to do something useful with it…

He paused as he heard a key click in the lock, smiling to himself.

He'll have to improvise. It's showtime.

You sighed and dropped into your chair in your office, mentally and physically exhausted.

The hospital was a mad shuffle--a severe case of food poisoning at the mall meant an overload of
patients who had stuff coming out both ends, human and monster alike. You were supposed to go home last night, but that didn't happen, so now you had to text Victor and convince him that no, you didn't spend the night with Camden again.

But that wasn't really the source of your agitation.

No, *that* came from two bleach-blonde trust fund baby entitled adults that had showed up to hear what they had inherited from Jasper.

Can't answer your calls for months, but can drop everything once they smell money.

Disgusting.

Jade had her father’s eyes, but none of the kindness that had lived in them. She walked in like she owned the place, ordered you to bring her a latte and spent the entire (attempted) conversation on her phone, either texting or answering right in the middle of your sentence. Having dealt with her, you thought there's no way her brother could be worse, at least.

You had been wrong.

Jason was that specific frat boy type, except for the fact that he was easily in his forties with a small daughter named Esme and an young teen son named Aaron, who he ignored as if it were his actual job to do so. He had apparently brought their nanny with them, even though there was no actual need to have her there if he would just attempt to talk to them.

Despite their father’s absolute shitstain of a personality, Aaron and Esme were bright, curious children, and had been interested to learn more about the magitech around them. Kyle had happily escorted them and their nanny to the Children's ward so they could play some video games and learn more.

“Hey, Hazel?”

You blinked out of your reverie and glanced over at the intercom, where Silas was calling you. You thought he'd pester you more than he does, so you'd given him the button in lieu of Papyrus’ strong personality to fill your day.

So far he's only used it three times.

“Can you come here? I need ya.”

Silas has been...very lonely. Everyone's been lonely. Ever since Papyrus left, it's been cold and boring...or maybe it’s just you, and everyone is reacting to your mood.

You scamper to his room pretty quickly, hoping not to catch Jade’s eye as you go--you never did get her that latte, and you don't want to smack a bitch at work so the less you interact with her the better.

You clicked the door shut behind you with a sigh, turning to face Silas, who was surprisingly hobbling his way over to you.

“Look at you, doing the thing with the feet,” you teased, and he shrugged, pausing to roll his ankle slowly with a wince.

“Yeah, almost like I didn't almost get paralyzed from the waist down,” he retorted, reaching out to snag your hand and pull you towards the bed. “C’mon, come sit.”
“Coming, coming,” you chuckled, rolling your eyes as you helped him back to the bed. You took a seat next to him and he leaned over to pick up a bag off the ground. “Oh, no, Silas--”

“Just because time passes all wonky when you're in the hospital doesn't mean I don't know what day it is,” he said firmly, pushing the gift bag into your hands.

You bit your lip, staring down at the galaxy-themed bag, conflicted. “Silas, you...I know this is the first time we’ve been friends in a long time, but you should know how I feel about my birthday.”

“I know, I know...but you’ll like it, I promise.” He said softly, bumping your shoulder with his. “...Eliza wouldn't want you to mope around.”

That was very true. Eliza was always convinced that you should be happy all the time. Fake it till you make it, she always said.

You sighed and started pulling the tissue paper out, and Silas grinned, knowing he won. He leaned back and watched you silently as you pulled out a jewelry box.

You raised a brow at him, and he raised one back as best he could in spite of the scar damage. Well, you've got nothing to lose …

“Oh, my God,” you muttered as your fingers touched the gold chain, running lightly over gold heart-shaped locket. “Is this…?”

“You, found it up on the mountain a few years back.” He paused, looking sheepish. “I, uh, thought you'd never believe me if I told you I'd found it, though. And I was kind of an ass at the time, so I just shoved it in my mom's jewelry box and forgot about it...oh, no, nonono, no crying, jeez, you know I can't handle that!”

You laughed somewhat bitterly as you reached up to wipe away the offending tears. “Shut up! It's my birthday, I can cry if I want to!”

“Don't make me sing the song.”

“Oh, God. Please don't sing,” you laughed, admiring the necklace fondly.

The last time you had seen this necklace was a few weeks after Eliza disappeared. You had been convinced it was magic, and that it would lead to her matching locket necklace somewhere. You had fallen, and lost it in the tumble...Silas had been the one to find you, frantic and scared that his other best friend was missing now, too. You remember him crying at the edge of the cliff when you moved and responded, shouting the worst obscenities a thirteen-year-old could muster before running off the get an adult.

It was definitely too small to wear as a necklace anymore, so you looped it around your wrist a few times and clasped it like that, lingering on the latch, wondering if you're brave enough to see if her picture is still in there.

“Silas, I--”

“Wait! There's more in there.”

“What? Really?” You returned your attention to the bag, pursing your lips to keep from smiling as you pulled out two orange sodas and one grape. “You guys always were gross.”
You handed him the orange sodas, and he set one aside on the bedside table and opened the other, grinning at you as you opened your grape. It had been more than a decade since you had properly hung out with Silas, let alone drank sodas together. The artificial grape brought a wave of nostalgia as you remembered sitting with Eliza and Silas on the cliffside near your house nearly every weekend in the summers, enjoying your allotted singular sodas for the day amongst the two best friends you could have asked for.

The fact that he had even included a third one in honor of Eliza...it was almost as if you had the old Silas back, just for a moment, here, in this hospital room.

...it was almost too much. Almost.

“How are you...uh...” Silas mumbled, rubbing the back of his neck absently. “Are you gonna be okay?”

“Woah, he does have feelings,” you gasped dramatically, hand fluttering over your heart. He chuckled and elbowed you a little.

“Shut up.”

“But Si, you've been a dickhead for the last fifteen years, how else am I supposed to react to this sudden development? What happened?”

He rolled his eyes, but you saw his hand running over the scar tissue that ran from his chin to his hairline. “You know. Almost died.”

“Almost,” you reassured him, just a tad smug. “But you've almost died before.”

“I wouldn't put road rash or alcohol poisoning in the same category as what that skeleton did to me.” He frowned, but it didn't seem to be directed at Red. It seemed...more disappointed in himself. “But no, I...being here, with you, and your magic and stuff...maybe it isn't all so bad, you know?”

He cast his gaze to the ground, scuffing the floor with his socked foot and sending a stray pen skidding across the room.

“...maybe I'm sorry about how I treated you.” He mumbled, so quiet that you almost missed it.

“Maybe?” You asked, raising a brow as you took another sip.

He scoffed, annoyance crossing his features for a split second before he pointedly placed his hand over yours in between you.

“Yeah, I'm starting to realize that...that your magic is a part of you, just like your shitty taste in soda and your annoyingly accurate sarcasm.” He gibbed, smirking at you. “And uh, also that monsters aren't all bad. Some of them are nice...not skeletons, but uh, the bunny lady that comes by to give me my meals is pretty alright. And the cat at the coffee shop downstairs, he was pretty chill.”

“Look at you. Silas the Tolerant, Level 1 bard/fighter,” you joked, elbowing him gently.

He chuckled, tossing his empty soda in the trash. “Well I don't think I'd be like this if it weren't for you. Your kindness has...quite literally healed my soul. I'll never be able to repay you for all you've done for me so the best I can do is to at least try not to be an asshat. It's pretty difficult, you know, trying to pretend to be okay with how much you care about monsters after...”
You adjust to wrap your fingers around his hand on top of yours, squeezing reassuringly. “You 
were an asshat...but the important thing is that you realize that.”

“No, the important thing is that you gave me a chance at all, even after 15 years of asshattery,” he 
said, tone laced with humor as he squeezed your hand back. You snuck a glance over and smiled. 

He looked very handsome with that happy, shy smile on his face, in spite of the scars. He doesn't 
need to worry.

“Well, somebody has to be patient with you,” you sighed, releasing his hand to stand up and 
stretch, back popping with a sigh. You give him a fake stern look. “How else can we expect you to 
become an upstanding member of society?”

You punctuated your sarcasm by punching him in the shoulder lightly, and he pretended to sway. 

“Yeah, yeah, I'm a waste of space, I get it,” Silas chuckled, and you rolled your eyes. 

You've never thought that, even when he was a total ass all those years. Something deep inside you 
could never believe anyone was a waste of space--everyone can be good if only they had the right 
guidance.

Silas did all this for you, helping to remind you of who he once was. Even Camden had once been a 
romantic that promised you the stars, and had fought for the justice he believed in before it was 
twisted into something unrecognizable.

You thought about Papyrus, and the way he'd said he wanted to prove he wasn't a waste of 
existence, and the way he had defended you against the perceived threat of Camden’s charms, or 
the image of him rescuing those girls at the expense of being shot himself.

There's no bad people. Only bad choices.

“Can we just skip to the part where he leaves me all his money? I have a business meeting in New 
York City in six hours.”

Nevermind. 

There's definitely bad people.

The lawyer, John, a nervous man in his mid-40s with a hastily covered bald spot, flinched at Jade’s 
callous remark, stuttering in his recitation of Jasper's final statements, which were generally lovely 
words about his wishes for his family’s happiness.

“Yes, I...the assets. Of course.” He muttered, thumbing through the papers. You bit your tongue to 
hold back a scathing remark--kindness, you reminded yourself, is the better path to conquer all 
evils. “Yes, ah... to my children, Jade DeCarlo and Jason Abernathy, I leave accounts with 20 
million dollars each...”

“That's more like it,” Jade smirked, taking a sip of her overly expensive latte.

“Only twenty?” Jason scoffed, arms crossed.

“...to be split evenly between all my grandchildren on the occasion of their 18th birthdays.” John 
finished, smiling with false politeness. “It seems the accounts will be frozen until your children 
claim their parts.”
There was silence as you bit your lip to keep from laughing out loud--good on Jasper, doing what's right even after he's gone. The ensuing hilarity of their arguments with John threatened to break your mature-adult facade--you were dying to shove it in their faces.

“Keep reading! There must be more!” Jade accused, long, manicured nails tapping on the desk.

John shuffled some papers around.

“10 million to be split between several charities benefitting schools, monsters’ rights, and medical research...10 million to the cause of ending world hunger...10 million to the effort to reduce homelessness in the USA...and 50 million to Ebott Mercy for the express purpose of building a fully stocked MagiMedical ward, including a Maginurse training facility.”

Your jaw dropped as both of Jasper’s offspring swiveled around to look at you in abject horror.

50 MILLION DOLLARS?! That would accomplish the task described and singlehandedly hire and pay all new staffing for at least a decade! There could be private rooms, and you could revolutionize the way monster patients are handled by teaching your methods to every new maginurse through internships and residencies!

You covered your gaping mouth as tears welled up in your eyes. Jasper was a better man than anyone in this room would ever be, and he deserved so much more than the way things happened. With all of this new stuff he just donated, you could finally make a difference in the world of MagiMedicine. You could get it recognized, and build widespread systems--never again will a traveling monster have to suffer because the human doctors don't know how to treat them, or because they don't know what sedation does. Even monster mental health can benefit from this, which makes you think of Papyrus and his PTSD--just by extending your kindness to one lovely old man, you may have changed the world for him.

“That’s bullshit!” Jason shouts suddenly, slamming his fist on the desk. “All his money goes to charities, and his own children get nothing?!"

“We’re taking this to--” Jade started, then swiveled around to point at you, and you could see the ugliness of her soul reflecting in her eyes--envy. “We're taking this to court, and we’re taking this hospital down if we have to!”

“Ms. DeCarlo, you--”

“Hold on just a minute,” you hissed, cutting John off with a calm hand as you addressed the hellspawn in front of you. God, you can't even believe she came from Jasper. “You're going to try to fight this? You haven't seen your father in over a decade! I have phone logs proving how many times I called you while he was dying, and how many times you refused to come to his side!”

“What does it matter if I saw the old man or not?” Jade scoffed, glaring at you.

“It isn't like it makes us any less his blood,” Jason agreed. “We are entitled--”

“Yes, you are. You are entitled,” you seethed. “I have never, in my entire life, met anyone as entitled as the two of you! Do you know what Hanahaki’s disease is? What your father died from?”

There was silence as Jane pursed her lips, clearly embarrassed to admit she didn't know. Jason thought for a moment and shrugged.

“Something about flowers?” He offered.
“Oh, wow, gold star,” you snapped. “Hanahaki’s is a disease where flowers begin growing from your soul outward. You cough them up, they burst through your skin, your organs, your eyes, your ears—it begins when there is unrequited love, such as your two children whom you love more than anything ignoring you for over a decade.”

The look of confusion on Jade’s face wasn't nearly as satisfying as the look of horror on Jason’s. That's right, you feel bad for what you put your father through…

...cunt.

“If you take this to court,” you continued steadily, drawing yourself up to your full height. You're still shorter than Jade, but the effect was there. “I will be there. And I will have all of my notes, and all of my medical knowledge, and all of my firsthand experience, and I will get you put away for manslaughter. Do we understand each other, Ms. DeCarlo?”

Jason sat heavily in his chair, clearly contemplating the effect his children can have on his physical health. You could see him pull out his wallet and thumb through the pictures.

Jade slunk into her chair, defeated, and you heard John say your name, so you looked up at him, smiling once more.

“Yes, John?”

He handed you a paper from the pile...a deed?

“It says here that he left you his vacation house up in the forests of Mt. Ebott. 50 acres, 6 bedroom 6 bath and a guest house, on a private lake.”

...holy shit.

Not for the first time, you find yourself wishing that it wasn't the good people who get taken so soon.

Like Jasper...and Eliza.

Your locket glinted at you from your wrist, and the eyes of those in the room seemed to fade away as you clicked it open.

Her picture was still there, amber eyes the only mark that it wasn't your own smile shining back at you, and all at once, the feelings you had been keeping at bay welled up in your chest, too emotionally exhausted to prevent them.

The last thing you remember is Jade calling Jasper something you don't care to recall, and then you saw red.

“I still can't believe you hit her,” Kyle said, voice soft with reverence and awe.

You made a noise but didn't say anything, adjusting the ice pack on your face slightly to cup your cheek a tiny bit better. You can definitely believe it--what you can't believe is the wallop that waif packs in her tiny manicured fist. You chalk your bruised face up to the fact that you had literally never been in a fight and hadn't known that you could have pulled her hair.

“She was a bitch, though,” Kyle mentioned, unperturbed by your silence. “It's a good thing you're private practice. And that she wasn't a patient. And that there aren't any cameras in the will reading
office and her brother hates her just as much as you do and pretended not to see anything.”

You have to credit Jason for that—at least he appeared to feel some sort of guilt for how he treated his father, and he was more than happy to watch his sister get deservedly punched in the mouth.

You had just...snapped. You honestly blame Papyrus for rubbing off on you, or maybe Silas.

How could she look at the way her father died and tell herself it doesn't matter? How can somebody look at their own family and just pretend they don't exist or worse, wish death upon them? How can she take the death of family so lightly?

“People who don't value family don't deserve people like Jasper,” you said quietly, leaning a little bit more into him, his arm slung around your shoulders easily.

He looked over at you, observing how you were obviously more tired than normal. He had seen your face when you politely declined the other nurses’ offers to celebrate your birthday after work, and he knew why you had felt so strongly about Jasper and his...spawn.

You saw yourself, or maybe Eliza, in Jasper. You looked at his children and you saw somebody that didn't appreciate what they had while they had it, whereas you had no choice in whether or not you lost your sister.

Infuriating, sure…

...but it's more likely that it made you sad.

“Alright, gimme the phone.”

You looked up at him in confusion, lifting the ice from your cheek for a short moment. “What?”

“You're going home. You shouldn't have come today anyway, you know how you get this time of year...I can handle tonight, alright?”

You looked as if you might protest for a moment, but handed your phone over obediently. Even you knew that a nurse practitioner shouldn't be punching people.

“...Victor’s at work.” You mumbled, knowing that he had been going to call him. “And the drive to Dad’s is too far to come back tomorrow.”

Kyle hummed, squeezing you in for a side hug as he scrolled through your contacts.

“Don't worry, MP, I have just the friend to take care of you tonight.”

Chapter End Notes

Seems like we had an emotional impact on Jason...but I think I feel better about the physical impact we had on Jade. I can't wait for her to go to her business meeting with a black eye.

Also, GEE I WONDER WHO KYLE IS CALLING?!
**One Tequila, Two Tequila...**

Chapter Summary

Boss doesn't have the best coping mechanisms, but at least he's better company than Camden.

Chapter Notes

**FIRSTLY Y’ALL NEED TO GO CHECK OUT THIS WONDERFUL FANART BY MISS-ME-CHISPY**
That is all! Do not forget to drop by my tumblr, where I'm currently accepting imagines about Boss and Hazel to help with the writing of this fic!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Papyrus pulled into a 15 minute spot in front of Ebott Mercy, glad he had taken the time to get his hot rod cleaned and waxed thoroughly this morning. There's nothing more embarrassing than showing up in a dirty muscle car.

...not that he was hoping to impress you.

Okay, maybe he was, but only because he respects your opinion. And because he really wants to get inside your pants.

He hadn't been too happy to be pulled away from his...chat...with Camden. It had taken a good amount of time to get the proud human to accept that he was intimidated by him, so he had only just managed to secure him to a chair with rope around his wrists when his phone had gone off. If it hadn't been your ringtone that played, he might have simply ignored it...

...but the look on that bastard’s face when Papyrus got to tell him he was going to go pick you up, because you were emotional and in need of comfort? Absolutely priceless. He thinks it might count as torture all on its own.

He’d then buried the idiot’s knife in the arm of the chair he was tied to and wished him luck in releasing himself, leaving with a very convincing warning not to tell you of any of this. He'd have mind wiped him, but the man forgetting his existence would be much harder to explain.

So here he was, walking back into Ebott Mercy once more, but through the front door this time.

The hospital looks different from this perspective, he observed. It was brightly painted, a sweet, inviting lavender with white trim. The sign-in desk was less cluttered than the Nurses’ Station, with a woman he hadn’t met yet tapping away on the keys of a sleek black computer. The gift shop and attached coffee shop were bustling with family and friends of patients, both manned by the extremely unenthused Burgerpants...huh. He hadn't even realized BP worked here. The cat had obviously seen him, but was pretending to be very focused on the postcard rack in front of the register...probably remembering the last time they spoke, which was not a pleasant interaction.
Papyrus shrugged it off--his mood was high enough not to bother with the past right now. He strode up to the front desk, and the woman adjusted her round glasses, clearly surprised.

“Mr. Osseus! What are you doing back here? Alison is gone for the day, so I am afraid we can't get you in for PT…”

Ah, the eternal struggle of being recognized by somebody you definitely don't recognize. He leaned forward a bit and caught her nametag.

“Sarah…” He repeated dutifully, glancing up at her with an easy smirk. “I'm not here for that. I am picking up the Maginurse, at Kyle's request?”

“Yup, right here.”

Papyrus turned at the sound of Kyle’s voice, the redhead giving him a little wave as he came from down the hall. You trailed behind him, avoiding Papyrus' gaze...with an ice pack on your face.

“A'ight, MP, ice pack--” Kyle requested, and you sighed and handed it to him, revealing a large bruise just starting to purple on your cheekbone. “--and here's your phone. Don't come back until at least 10 tomorrow, and feel free to call if you need more time, okay?”

“I'll be fine,” you mumbled, still shying away from the way Papyrus was boring holes into you.

“Of course you will...because Papyrus will take care of you until Victor gets home. Right, Papyrus?”

“What happened to your face?” He blurted out, and Kyle blinked at him, and you groaned. “Did a patient hit you??”

“No, can we go now?” You pleaded quietly, walking past him and out the front door.

He looked back at Kyle, who stuck his hands in his scrubs pockets, clicking his tongue as he watched you leave with concern.

“She got in a fight,” he explained. “A disrespectful family member of a deceased patient that she was really close with.” Kyle chuckled, looking at him pointedly. “...but you should have seen the other chick.”

Papyrus laughed in spite of how little he believed you would ever get in a fistfight. “As long as she won!”

“Oh, MP never loses,” Kyle agreed, before growing serious and stopping him as he went to follow you. “Hey...she’s...in a pretty bad place right now. Today’s a hard day for a lot of reasons and...she’s really vulnerable. Don't take advantage of that, okay?”

Papyrus considered being offended, but...unlike when Silas tried the same shtick, Kyle seemed incredibly sincere and unaccusing.

“I wouldn't dream of it,” he reassured him.

The drive to your place was pretty quiet save for you giving him directions every now and then, and you didn't say much when you let him in the front door.

You disappeared into one of the rooms before Papyrus had even kicked his shoes off, and after waiting a few moments without you reappearing, he assumed it was alright to look around a little.
Your apartment was huge, and near-luxurious: he poked around a bit and observed at least four bedrooms, a living room nearly as big as his entire apartment, and a kitchen that he was honestly incredibly jealous of.

He decided when you came back out, he'd offer to make some food, if only to hear the sound of plates against the gorgeous marble countertops.

There were pictures lining the walls of you and various people--you and Kyle in your scrubs holding up your Maginurse Certification, you and a tanned human with heavily tattooed arms in several silly poses, and quite a few of you and two young men who were obviously twins, pictures that showed the three of you at varying ages, but none of you younger than a teen. He chuckled a bit at the crazy hair colors you used to sport, and the many different style changes you appeared to have gone through over the years.

These boys seem too far apart from you in age to be love interests, or close friends...maybe cousins? Or, judging by the identical crooked smiles, more likely brothers. You had never mentioned them, but then again, you hadn't exactly been up front about anything about you.

But, to be fair, neither had he.

He turned his attention back to the apartment, making a mental note to tease you about how much taller than you your younger brothers were. Just like him and Sans.

It wasn't as messy as he thought it might be, but he supposed that was the work of your roommate, who he had deduced was this Victor fellow he kept hearing about. Signs to your cohabitation were everywhere, from the men’s shoes by the door to the--

“Mrroooooowwwwww?”

He blinked and looked around in confusion, before finding the source of the noise at his feet, rubbing against his jeans and purring.

“My goodness, you must be the fattest cat I have ever seen,” he said, though there was no bite to it as he leaned in to give the creature affectionate head pats. He remembers the cat they used to have underground, a long time ago, and this one was just as fluffy and twice as affectionate. “Are you hungry?”

The cat meowed insistently, it’s tail popping up straight as it padded after him while he searched for the cat food in the cupboards.

“Don't listen to him, he's a con artist.”

Papyrus yelped as he whacked his head on the open cupboard in surprise, turning to see you had reemerged and were now snuggling the large cat as it purred at least five times louder than earlier.

“What?” He asked smartly, rubbing the back of his head as he finally straightened up.

“He's been fed, and he's on a diet because he's gettin’ pretty chubbers~” You cooed, nuzzling the feline softly as you did. Then you placed the cat on the counter and crossed your arms awkwardly. “Uhm...thanks for coming to get me. I’d say Kyle was being silly, calling you, but...I did punch somebody.”

“So I heard,” he chuckled, closing the cabinet. “Should I worry about you joining a gang?”

You laughed a little, and even though it sounded a little hollow, it was genuine. You raised your
hand and flexed your bruised knuckles. “Ah, no, I think my knuckles have had enough experience for one lifetime. Not to mention my face.”

Goodness, you must have terrible form if you bruised yourself up that bad, which he supposed isn't that surprising. It’s incredibly likely that you had never been in a fight before today. His eyelights flicked between your hand and your cheek briefly, a sense of something protective welling in his chest.

...Along with a sense of pride and deeper arousal at the idea of you knocking some woman's teeth out. He's learning a lot about himself since he acknowledged his lust for you.

He held his hand out. “May I?”

“Oh...sure?” You placed your hand in his, and it was so comically small comparatively that he actually chuckled before placing his other hand over it.

How do you heal again? Goodness, it’s been a long time. He thinks of as many happy thoughts as he can--seeing the sunset for the first time, the way he felt when reading a good book...the way he felt when you healed him, when your magic curled gently around his soul, when you laughed and called him a brat--

“Woah, impressive,” you mused, breaking him from his thoughts as you pulled your hand away to admire the severely lessened bruising. “You have a natural talent, Papyrus...why aren't you a healer?”

“Because I'm terribly impatient,” he answered honestly. “But for you...I suppose I can find the time to do at least this much.”

“Pffft...brat.” You teased, a semblance of a real smile returning to your face a bit.


“Shut up, she had it coming,” you giggled, pushing his hand away. “Anyway, uh, I'm alright now, if you want to leave. I won't make you stay, it's not like there's any paperwork saying you have to be here.”

He hummed thoughtfully, leaning nonchalantly against your counter, and you did your best to meet his scrutinizing gaze.

“Do you truly think I need paperwork to hang out with you?” He asked, tilting his head slightly in question. “Suppose I just like being out of Undyne's house for a bit, and want to watch a movie?”

“Well, I guess...I wouldn't say no?”

He pushed off the counter and clapped his hands together as if it were all decided. “Wonderful. I suppose you have no objections to me making dinner, then?”

You left Papyrus alone to make dinner, and you could hear him humming along to music from his phone from where you had flopped on the couch, still in your scrubs and too damn lazy to get up and change.

You flicked through the channels, and then through Netflix, exhausted and still aching despite Papyrus’ surprising talent for healing.
It was, admittedly, very nice to have him here, even though your brain was in overload about how
dumb you must look, having to get picked up from work for fistfighting a genderbent Donald
Trump.

You're happy he's here, but pissed at Kyle for calling him. You're already feeling like ass, and now
you have to feel like ass in front of your Big Fat Crush™ and you have to deal with the fact that
after today there's no way he'll ever want to sleep with you, because now, instead of the sarcastic
sexy nurse, you've graduated to unstable crazy friend that needs to be babysat.

A+, you grade yourself mournfully.

“You don't have half the ingredients I would normally use for cooking, so I made ravioli,” Papyrus
announced as he waltzed in with two plates. “I wish you'd had the means to make it from scratch,
but alas, frozen will have to do.”

It smells pretty good, and politely, you know you should eat it...but you're honestly not hungry.

“Thanks,” you said quietly as you pulled your legs up to make room for him on the couch. He
placed the plate on the coffee table and you made no move to grab it, but went ahead and gave him
your best smile anyway, even though it probably looked closer to a grimace.

Papyrus frowned the second you looked back at the TV, watching you idly flip through the Netflix
options. This won't do, not at all--he had you laughing back in the kitchen, but you'd gone right
back to moping about after.

Was it the conflict between your kind soul and what you did today? “Do no harm” and yet you've
punched somebody? Sometimes that can make people soul sick, but without pulling your soul out
or having Sans around to properly CHECK you, there's no way to tell if that's it.

It could be something else. Something that had made you volatile enough to fight to begin with. He
isn't stupid enough to think it's his absence, but it could very well be your recent hookup with
Douchebag Ex, if the way you had been acting that day was any indication.

He pulled a grimace as he realized it could also be your cycle--he'd had to go through all those
classes on human heats that weren't really heats, and the especially disturbing bits about female
reproductive parts were now flooding back to him.

...Heh. He'd have to keep it a well-protected secret that he had just mentally laughed at his own
silent pun.

In any case, you certainly didn't smell any different, and no more like blood than the tiny cut on
your knuckle provided.

Maybe the laughter was the mood swing, and this was the default?

How does he deal with this?

…

“You don’t have to go back until morning. Would you like a drink?” He asked, then paused. “… do
you drink?”

You snorted. “Yeah, on the rare occasion. There’s some of Muffet’s Spider Cider in the fridge, I
think.”
Ooof. He does not need to be staring at his ex’s face while he’s trying to comfort you. That’s a whole new level of strange.

“Not a fan,” he lied, turning to walk around the counter and island back to the cupboards. “Do you have anything else?”

“Some hard stuff and mixers in the top cabinet. Victor puts it there because he knows I’m short.”

Papyrus chuckled at the mental image of you trying to open said cabinet, which he opened with ease to survey the surprising variety you owned. “Pick your poison?”

“Anything except tequila,” you said with a moan, as if remembering the last time you had tequila. Then you made a half-laughing noise, and added: “Actually, sure, make it tequila.”

That sounds ominous...but he isn’t one to argue over drink choices so he pulls down the tequila, revealing a small set of bottles behind it that he inspected curiously.

Are these…? They are! He took one from it’s spot in the tiny cardboard bottle carrier and turned it over in his hand--GOOD VIBES, it read in big letters. “You have mood mixers!”

“Yeah, Victor got them for me for Christmas, because they’re magic...I think he just wanted to try them.” You said, voice getting closer as you plopped into a stool on the other side of the counter, resting your head on your arms as you watched him. “...why? You like those?”

“I suppose. They were popular underground,” he mused, pulling two glasses from the shelf and pouring double shots into both as he slid the mood mixers across the counter to you. “Choose.”

“What are they, like drugs?” You asked cautiously, flipping one of the bottles over to look at the ingredients with great scrutiny. “It just says ‘magic and watermelon flavoring’.”

“They aren’t drugs, they're mood stimulants. Like, eh...aphrodisiacs?” He shrugged, checking the fridge for...aha, orange juice and grenadine. Tequila sunrises, it is. Or, there's margarita mix...but is there a blender?

“Blender’s on top of the fridge,” you mumbled, not looking away from the bottles in your hands.

Had he said that out loud? Nyeh, no matter. He grabs the mentioned blender and plugs it in, dumping the drinks he had started in there and filling with the appropriate amount of mix and…

He turned to you expectantly, and you shrugged and held out the same green bottle he had initially picked up--GOOD VIBES. Darn, he’d hoped you would've picked the purple bottle: FEELIN’ FRISKY.

In any case he mixes a teaspoon in and sets the blender to blend, and within a few minutes the two of you are back on the couch with drinks in hand.

You tucked your feet up underneath you as he settled beside you, and took an experimental sip, gasping as the telltale tingle of magic travelled down your throat, warming you from the inside out until a giggle escaped your lips.

A sense of calm fell over you, the warmth spreading all the way to your fingertips and toes, and you felt...a lot better.

It wasn't like you didn't miss Eliza anymore, or recognize your feelings about today--it was more like you had decided to celebrate her instead, a shy smile working its way to your face.
Papyrus chuckled, catching your attention.

“You look better when you smile,” he mused, sipping his own margarita with a smug smirk on his face. You can't tell if the mood mixer was working on him, too, or if he's just naturally that smug.

“Not a fan of the wilting flower?” You asked, making a sad face. “How about bright and bubbly? Or smoldering temptress?”

He blinked at you in confusion, and your jaw dropped in realization.

“What?” He asked, annoyed at your shocked stare.

“You haven't seen Moulin Rouge!” You accused, sitting up quickly.

“Well, no,” he admitted. “Another horror movie?”

“Hardly!” You giggled, getting up and setting your drink down.

Huh, when had it become half full? Whatever, you can't focus on that when your scrubs top is so uncomfortable. It was okay to take it off, right? You're at home and you have a tank top underneath.

Yeah, it's probably fine.

Papyrus coughed and sputtered into his drink as you pulled the shirt over your head and tossed it to the floor, revealing a white tank top that was riding slightly too high on your hips and, when you turned around with the movie in hand, slightly too low on your breasts.

You popped it in, and then flopped back on the couch beside him, much closer than before.

“Get ready to hear some awful singing, because this is one movie that I definitely cannot stop myself from singing along to,” you warned, taking another sip of your drink and leaning back as you drew your legs up cross-legged. Your bent knee rested on his femur, and he hummed, pleased, before he could stop himself. When you looked up he quickly took another sip of his drink, letting the magic wash away his momentary doubts.

“Is this okay?” You asked, pressing your knee to his femur slightly to emphasize what you mean.

“Yes, sure, of course,” he manages, tossing one arm over the back of the couch, just half a foot shy from being around your shoulders. “It isn't like I could stop you from touching me how you like...paperwork or no paperwork.”

You laughed and he relaxed considerably. This was good. Your mood was lifting.

He dropped his arm from behind the couch to settle around your shoulders...and you adjusted and leaned into it as you pressed play.

He smirked as he took another long sip of his drink.

Yes. He can work with this.
Papyrus: I WOULD NEVER TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HER VULNERABLE STATE!
Also Papyrus: WHO WANTS MARGARITAAAAAASSSSS?!

....I am so sorely tempted to make that the summary.
As the movie went on, he hardly paid attention, instead refilling your glasses and focusing on how you pressed against his side. It felt like at the hospital again, and although he’d only known you for a month and a half, it felt like you had known each other your entire lives. There was something familiar about you, something pulling at his soul that he would never think about sober.

But after awhile he found himself absorbed in the story.

“Wait, is she sick?”

“Just watch!” You giggled, leaning past him to grab the remote and turn it up a bit.

By the very end, he was so invested that he hardly noticed how tightly he was clutching you in anticipation for the climax.

....

*What?*

“She *dies*?!” He asked, releasing you to grab the remote and rewind it. “What kind of movie does that?!”

“A bohemian one,” you mused, reaching for the remote but finding he pulled it out of your reach, one hand on your shoulder pushing you back to the couch like you were wrestling with one of your brothers.

“All your favorite movies have stupid endings!” He huffed, tossing the remote aside.

“Aww...does the big bad skeleton like a happy ending?” You practically purred, teasing and making him flush vermilion.

“No! I...just think that when two people are clearly meant to be, that they should get together in the end!” He tried to explain, and you giggled.

“Papyrus...that’s, like, the definition of a happy ending.”
“So sue me! I like happiness! I've had far too much grief in my life, I think I should be able to
enjoy happiness every now and again!” He grumbled, crossing his arms.

There was quiet as the credits rolled, and then you leaned over and grabbed the remote.

“Do you want to watch the Elephant Love Medley again?” You asked sweetly, and he felt his face
grow warmer as he avoided your eye.

“...perhaps.”

“Only if you sing along this time,” you prompted, and he rolled his eyelights.

“I don't know the lyrics after only one watch!” Lies. He remembers them perfectly, even through
the haze of margaritaville.

“Subtitles.” You said pointedly, rewinding.

Damn. You had him there.

Fine. You want him to sing a silly love song? He'll sing the best silly love song. He never does
anything halfway!

“Fine!” He said finally, sitting up straighter as you finished off your second drink and hit play.
Your timing was somewhat off, but he didn't mind starting a little late.

“Love is just a game.” You quoted, dramatically tossing your hair like Nicole Kidman.

Papyrus chuckled and grabbed your hand, surprising you with a suave kiss on the back of it.

“I was made for lovin’ you baby, you were made for lovin’ me~” He growled out, throwing in a
wink and watching with satisfaction as you turned beet red. Despite your blush, you did your best
to sing your part.

“The only way of loving me, baby, is to pay a lovely fee~”

You emphasized by pushing his hand away, only for him to snag you by the waist and pull you
closer, with the desperation he'd seen in the male lead.

“Just one night, give me just one night,” he murmured earnestly, tucking a stray hair behind your
ear as you giggled nervously.

You punched him in the shoulder, but there was no force to it. “There's no way, ‘cause you can’t
pay!”

“In the name of love...one night, in the name of love...” He crooned quietly, drawing closer. The
song continued in the background, but you only sat there, inches from his face and looking up at
him with stars in your eyes.

“You crazy fool...” You managed, softly. “I...won’t give in to you.”

“...You’re a terrible tease,” Papyrus growled out, ignoring his line and grabbing your waist to drag
you closer. You stuck your tongue out at him and he was so tempted to bite it. “Watch that tongue,
human, or I might bite it.”

You giggled and pushed away from him a bit, only to draw him up from the couch and twirl into
his arms.
“You, you will be mean!” You continued, laughing.

“What?” Papyrus asked, momentarily forgetting he was supposed to be singing something with you.

“And I, I'll drink all the time!” You purred, releasing him and snagging his glass from the table to drink the rest with a wink.

“We should be lovers,” Papyrus quoted, though there was so much more than mimicry to it.

“We...we can't do that,” you said, caught off guard by the honesty in his tone and stuttering in your recitation. With a smirk he pulled you in again with a twirl, one hand on your waist holding you tightly.

“We should be lovers, and that's a fact,” he purred, tipping your chin up. You seemed so caught up in the moment, in the flow of the scene that you didn't even notice the sincerity in his voice.

“Though nothing, could keep us together...we could steal time, just for one day, forever and ever...”

You had a wonderful voice, he couldn't help but think, as he spun you with a chuckle. If he could...he would steal time with you, right now, and take you underground and just be, for a week, and it would still be the same day here. What he would do to you in all that time...how he would ravish you...

...that’s all a bit affectionate for his taste. Must be the GOOD VIBES.

The feeling of your hands sliding over his cheekbones startled him from his thoughts, and he found you moving until the both of you fell to the couch, toppling drunkenly into a little pile and pressing against him in all your careful innocence, and he wondered how much of this innocent demeanor was a ploy.

“How wonderful life is...” you sang quietly. “Now you're in the world~”

His hands were on your hips, his smirk effectively wiped from his smug face as he stared at you, and you felt so...warm. Here, in his embrace, was so blissful for that moment as he felt himself begin to believe you meant those words.

And you did.

Those words weren't just words, or lyrics, or anything like that. You believed them to your core--life was so much better with him around, and not just more entertaining but better...wonderful.

...but nothing...can keep us together...

You wish you had the problem of dying of tuberculosis. It seemed a lot quicker and less painful than the knowledge that he might never see you that way.

You waited a beat for him to kiss you, to prove you wrong...

...but it never came.

With a laugh you pushed off his chest and picked up the empty glasses, humming along with the music as you swept around the counter.

Papyrus sat up slowly, feeling a nervous tingle in his chest as you sang the next lyrics to yourself in
the kitchen, drowned out by the whir of the blender as you made more margaritas.

...He felt like he had taken two steps forward and three steps back.

Somehow it all had led to...this.

You had come back with new drinks, and when his judgement grew cloudy, he said some things he wouldn't normally say, and now...

You sat in front of him, all ten of your shots still lined up in front of you, untouched. He, however, was downing his third one already, tipping it back quickly.

“You have not,” you giggled, leaning heavily on the coffee table.

“I have, too!” He scoffed, crossing his arms. “I have played for open mic nights at Grillby’s Surface Location, and at M...at a cafe.”

You pursed your lips, clearly disbelieving. You had kind of used “Never played guitar in front of a crowd” as a throwaway to get the game going, but apparently he’d done that--along with skydiving and playing croquet, which you aren't certain you believe either.

If you were more sober, you would offer Victor’s guitar to test it, but...

“Fine. Whatever, guess you'll have to prove it one day!” You giggled, glancing at your watch. Had he really been here for four hours? It seems like way less than that...but then again, you suppose it’s good that the amount of booze you've consumed has been over such a large amount of time.

“Anyway, your turn.”

“Hmm…” he feigned thinking, though you think he had had his planned a while ago. “Never have I ever...punched someone in the face--”

“Liar!” You interjected.

“--at a hospital,” he finished with a smirk, and you hummed, displeased by the accurate addition, knocking back one of your shots.

“Mmm….you can't target like that!”

“But why not? Should I not use my knowledge of you to discover more things I want to know?” He asked, quirking a brow. “Is that not the point of the game?”

“Fine! Never have I ever been shot!”

He chuckled and took his fourth shot. “Never have I ever regretted sleeping with someone.”

You groaned, caught, and took your second shot. “This is so not fair.”

“May I ask, why do you even sleep with him if you hate it that much?” Papyrus asked slowly, tapping the empty shot glass against his skull thoughtfully. “Surely there must be any number of others that are more pleasant options?”

*Like me?* He couldn't help but think.

“Yeah, if I could get laid any other way I definitely would,” you mumbled. “But nope. Whatever, it doesn't matter.”
He raised a brow, but observed keenly that you didn't want to elaborate--he can respect that. He has plenty of time to coax the truth out of you, after all.

“Never have I ever…” you frowned, looking at him thoughtfully as if trying to decode him using only your stare. “Kissed a monster.”

He chuckled, drinking the next shot slowly, his eyes never leaving you, calculating his next move.

“...I can fix that.”

You sputtered and choked on the sip of water you were taking, feeling your face warm spectacularly, much to his obvious enjoyment.

He tapped his cheekbone, leaning in with half-lidded sockets. “Go on.”

...well, fuck it. You're just drunk enough for this.

He watched you scoot over from your side of the table, closing his sockets with a hum as your lips gently pressed against his cheekbone...and when you moved away, he captured your wrist.

“Wait. I just remembered--you kissed my cheek the other day,” he pointed out. “And so I hardly think that counts. You owe me two shots for lying...or one real kiss to make it true.”

Did...that even make sense? You're sure it does, at least to two incredibly drunk people.

You giggled and punched his shoulder, reaching for your shots and downing two more to spite his teasing. “Your turn, mastermind.”

“Why thank you, I'm so glad you noticed,” he chuckled. “Let me see...never have I ever...as an adult, been shorter than my brother.”

Your jaw dropped and he laughed outright at your shock, poorly covering his laugh with one hand.

“How did you know that?” You gasped after downing your fifth shot, pushing the rest away to indicate you were finished.

“Simple observation. You have many pictures of you with two twin humans, from many stages of life. They are clearly younger than you, and the similarities in your features indicate at least one shared parent,” he shrugged, snagging your water glass and taking a long drink. “Simple enough for somebody like me, whose job was observation and building complex puzzles. I've worked with less before.”

“Wow…” you said quietly, face deadly serious. “You're, like...smart.”

He slammed the cup down, annoyed. “Nyeh?! Like you didn't think I was?!?”

You sputtered out a giggle and your hand flew up to stifle it. “No, no! I mean, I know you're good at, like, sudoku and crossword puzzles, but...this is different, you know? Useful stuff.”

“Well,” he smirked, chest puffing out as he sat up straight. “I suppose I am naturally gifted. How else do you think I tracked down that trafficking ring? I didn't do it with a phone tree.”

He was definitely basking in your awe, as drunkenly earned as it was. He hadn't realized it until now, but he supposed he had been actively seeking your approval since the very beginning, and the impressed look on your face was...satisfying beyond belief.
“If I give you more pictures, could you do it again?” You asked suddenly. “Like, could I see what you can tell me about me?”

Papyrus raised a brow in interest. You actually wanted him to snoop around? He's nosy by nature, so there's no way he'll say no, but this is a very rare chance to look closely at you, so he'll have to be thorough.

“Of course,” he shrugged, heaving himself to sit up on the couch. “Am I limited to pictures, or can I use information I can see elsewhere or have already stored from knowing you?”

“Anything you know or can see from here is fair game,” you said, a determined look crossing your face as you pulled open a drawer on the coffee table and drew a photo album from it. “Here.”

He took it, his mind already going at a million miles per hour.

Start with the obvious, right? What does he already know?

You’re a nurse. A maginurse, specifically, and still attending school on the side in your spare time if the books on the kitchen table were any indication. That means you’re probably aiming for a doctorate. He thinks it’s a waste, honestly--you could probably earn a doctorate through experience alone, being such a rare profession as yours, so long as you wrote enough papers with your meticulous notes.

You have a green soul of kindness, thus the healing magic. Your humour leans towards biting sarcasm and genuine wit, a fact that please him greatly--no, stop that, no thinking dirty thoughts about you calling him names in bed! Ugh, he's too drunk to fight it, so he allows his mind to wander for juuuuuust a moment...

Alright, back to work. No need to pop a boner right now.

...what would you even do if he did?

No! Focus!

You have two brothers, twins. You’ve mentioned your father before, so he knows he’s still alive--no idea about the mother, but that could come in with the pictures. You’re the oldest, though your mannerisms lean more towards a middle child, or at least one that's always had siblings--perhaps another sibling in the picture he has yet to learn about? File that one away for later.

He opened the photo album, met immediately with a picture that was also hanging in the hall--you and your brothers, you looking to be about 14 or 15 and them approximately 7 or 8, although they could have simply been big or small for their age. You were wearing all black, with hilariously colored hair--it looked like you had an accident at the hair dye factory. The rest of the pictures for the next three or four pages shared similarly extreme, yet wildly varying styles, with one exception: your hair was never natural.

Something about your natural appearance didn’t please you...which is silly, because you’re gorgeous.

Hmm...long sleeves in many of these pictures, and if not, wristbands or long gloves. Possible self-harm? His eyelights glanced over to you momentarily, trained to zoom in on the same kind of scars that marred his brother’s bones--sure enough, very light, incredibly faded scars criss-crossed there, barely noticeable.

...There’s no pictures older than the first ones, where you’re in your early teens. Some of your
brothers as babies, but none of you then or as a baby yourself. Adopted? No, he’d already decided you looked too similar to the boys. Some sort of childhood trauma related to those years? It would explain the aversion to your natural appearance as well as the self-harm.

...He felt uncomfortable all of a sudden. He felt like...like maybe he’s learning things he isn’t meant to know.

...But you had asked?

He continues on.

“You were a dancer?”

“Briefly. How’d you know?”

He points to the picture in question. “Trophies in the background. Division age is too old for your brothers, and the condition is too new to be a parent’s.”

You let out a low whistle. “That all you got?”

He chuckled, choosing to bite his tongue about all he had gleaned so far. He pinched your nose and you shirked away, giggling. “Patience, human. I believe it’s a secondary trait of yours, so use it.”

He flipped to the next set of pictures. You had ditched the edgy styles, and your hair was the color it is now, but he gets the feeling that isn’t natural either. You are still uncomfortable with your natural appearance, it seemed. In these pictures you almost always look tired, and in some he can clearly see the medical texts and articles you’re reading. So you started pre-med early? You can’t be more than 16 here…

“You started college early? Why?” He asked, raising a brow.

You shrugged. “So much to learn in so little time. I buckled down and got it done as night classes to get a head start.”

“That isn’t surprising in the least,” he chuckled. “It must have been exhausting.”

He did the same, when training for the guard.

The next few pages were various pictures of family events--Christmas, the twins’ birthdays, vacations...hmm. None of your birthdays?

His hand paused on one picture of Christmas morning, where you were lighting a candle on the mantle. It was oddly placed...not in the middle of the mantle, but rather in between a picture of you and a picture of one of the twins. When he turned the page and saw the setup better in another picture, he froze, realization hitting him slowly, like a crashing wave.

Above the mantle is a picture of who he assumed were your parents, and below it, three pictures, one of each child...but they were spaced oddly, like there should be a fourth picture between you and your brother, and that was where the candle was.

You lost a sibling.

And...not just any sibling. He knows twins usually run in the family, and if he was right, he has an idea why you dislike your natural appearance so much.

“What’s wrong?” You asked, but he hardly heard you. The blanks were filling in on their own, and
he couldn’t control it--

You were already volatile today, but it wasn’t Camden. Kyle had hinted that you’re always volatile on this day, that you are...vulnerable. Either today is the day they died, or…

...there’s no pictures of your birthdays. There’s no pictures of your twin. Whatever happened, it was so traumatic that you could hardly think of your sibling without harming yourself, and the best option would have been to cut them out and reintroduce pictures and things slowly, like lighting a candle for them, until you got used to it…

“Papyrus?” You asked, and he felt your weight on his arm as you leaned over, concerned.

“Oh, I just…” He avoided your gaze. Does he tell you? Well, he’s far too drunk to lie, and if you catch him in his lie it would only be worse.

You were surprised when he turned, placing the photo album on the table and gripping your arm gently, a strange softness in his eyes you had never seen as he pulled you in for a hug, which you returned confusedly. It wasn’t that comfortable to be smushed against his collarbone, but he adjusted until you relaxed.

“...I am...sorry for your loss,” he said quietly. “I cannot imagine...how you must feel, on today of all days. I am pretty ass at comfort but--”

Your broken sob startled even you, and cut him off sharply as you buried your face in his shirt to try and stifle the rest, clutching him tightly.

He could tell all of that from just pictures? That you’d lost Eliza? It didn’t even matter how, you decided, too drunk to hold back the tears that the GOOD VIBES had only barely contained for these long few hours, and his strong grip around your shoulders and waist was all the reassurance you needed to finally let it go.

You didn’t even answer him when he asked distracting questions, didn’t even register when he turned Moulin Rouge back on as background noise. He stayed perfectly still beneath you otherwise, save for his fingers carding gently through your hair, not asking you to stop or telling you to suck it up like you might have expected, but rather just...being there, with you.

You were far too tired to tell him to go home, and far too drunk to care that you were drifting off on top of him. Maybe you could play it all off in the morning, but right now…

...you need him.

Chapter End Notes

So, a little teasing, a little fluff, some heartfelt conversation and...
Can Papyrus really be the person she needs? He's definitely earned some points tonight...
Song is Elephant Love Medley from Moulin Rouge, I suggest listening for the full effect, it's really quite moving!
Chapter Summary

Sometimes things don't work out the way you think they will.
Sometimes the worst will happen, no matter how calculated your risks were.

Chapter Notes

I have a really hard time getting into the current chapters because all I can think about are the upcoming ones I'm super excited to write! AUGH!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ugh…

His head hurts. A lot. Whose brilliant idea was it to drink two margaritas and then do shots last night?

...oh yeah. It was his.

Papyrus groaned quietly, opening his sockets blearily to see the mess that was the living room. The coffee table was cluttered with two abandoned glasses with dregs of margarita, twenty different novelty shot glasses (half of them still full) and two plates of picked-over ravioli, which Hobbes was currently crouched over, licking and purring as he ate what you hadn’t.

...eh. He won’t stop him. After all, he noticed, you were still tucked against his side, and he didn’t fancy letting you go to chastise your cat, not when you were tangled up with him, face slightly smushed and sleeping so soundly. He pulled the blanket up a little further to cover your bare shoulder, vaguely trying to remember if there was a blanket here last night, to no avail.

Slowly, as he woke up a bit more, he remembered last night more clearly.

Drinking, singing, everything was going great...and then...he suppressed a shudder as he remembered all he had gleaned from your pictures. It seemed you had lost your sibling rather young, but old enough for it to practically destroy you. You had done a good job of picking up the pieces, but the signs were obvious--overworked, constantly busying yourself, biting sarcasm to cover up true emotions, continuously making poor choices in the love department for fear that you can’t do better...all signs of trauma-induced lifestyle patterns.

He knows, because he displays all the same ones.

It seems you’re more alike than he had initially observed, and that...made him incredibly sad. You are far too good and kind to go through all the horrible things you have, whereas he deserved his clapback.

He feels the terrible urge to make sure nothing bad ever happens to you again, and he can't quite
tell where it stems from, but who is he to question his instincts? They had gotten him out of some pretty nasty scrapes before, and what his instincts had failed to help with, you had been there.

And you were here now, he realized once more. Pressed against him, one arm tossed around his spine lazily and the other very close to the inside of his ribs, drawing another muffled groan when you twitched and stretched a little, brushing the sensitive bones.

Ah, you're healing in your sleep again, he can see the spark of green beneath your eyelid, mere centimeters from the ugly bruise that had formed on your cheek. He sighed and pulled you closer, using this whole thing as an excuse to just hold someone for a bit. How long since he had properly done that? Too long, apparently, because every tiny movement as you cuddled closer to him made him tremble slightly...or maybe it's just you.

The arm thrown around his spine moves suddenly, and he contains a squeal as it drags along his sensitive vertebrae...so you can scratch your nose and furrow your brow momentarily, before laying it to rest on his sternum, where he notices, not for the first time, the beautiful gold locket wrapped around your wrist.

A funny place for a locket, and he had never seen it on you before...a present, maybe? Since yesterday was your birthday? It’s very old, though, he observes, and despite it’s recent cleaning attempts it’s obvious it had been left to the elements for quite some time. There appeared to have been an engraving at some point, but it had long since worn off.

Funny...he feels like he's seen this locket somewhere before. It's possible he'd seen one like it fall into the dump in Waterfall or something, he supposed.

...his head hurts too much to think on this so hard. Instead he tucked his head back down and scrunched his legs up to fit the couch better, adjusting to hold you a bit tighter and less uncomfortably...

You didn't wake, so he just released the breath he had apparently been holding and closed his eyes, willing himself to go back to sleep and sleep off this damned headache...

The sound and smell of sizzling bacon roused him from his sleep, and his hands twitched as he brought them to his chest, meeting only warm, cracked bone through thin cotton. For a moment he panicked, sitting bolt upright and looking around for you, expecting to see his home underground.

But of course, it was only your living room, on the surface. He groaned quietly and clutched his head, throbbing from the quick movement. Two years, six months, and 25 days. No, 26 days. That's how long he'd been on the surface. He recounted the number several times in his head until he was certain of it.

He sat up and looked around, reaching out for the fresh glass of water present on the newly cleared coffee table. Had you done all this with a hangover like this? Or were you one of those lucky assholes who doesn’t get hungover?

As he thought it, a plate of bacon and eggs clinked against the coffee table, and he looked up in surprise at the unfamiliar human serving him.

“So you're Papyrus, huh?” The man said, taking a seat next to him. His hair was a washed-out faded lavender color, shaved on the side and long on the top. There was decorative shaving but nothing gang-related, and his arms were covered in tattoos but nothing he had seen on the streets before. “Gotta say, it’s nice to finally meet you. You hear a lot about someone and you get them all
built up in your head, but nothing beats meeting them in person. I'm Victor.”

He held one hand out, and Papyrus slowly looked down at it, grasping it firmly and turning it to inspect the ring on his finger. He recognized the symbol, but it wasn't a gang sign--it was the symbol of a local music group, a siren looping around the band.

He gave a firm shake and released his hand. “Papyrus. As you clearly know.”

So this was the roommate with the impeccable sense of timing. He seemed nice enough, though he couldn't do snap judgements like Sans could. It's likely his soul is a variation of kindness, for him to have a sixth sense of his friends as he does--perhaps Diligence? Or Courtesy? Or perhaps he's completely off and it's a variation of bravery and determination, such as Vigilance?

In any case he seemed to have judged Papyrus not a threat, which he appreciated. A good judge of character is always admirable.

“Where is the nurse?” He asked, looking around as if just now noticing you weren't here.

“Shower. I insisted. She smelled like a liquor store.” Victor sighed and leaned back as Papyrus politely took the plate, picking at the eggs and finding himself impressed with the taste--at least somebody in your house can cook, so he doesn't need to worry about your eating habits all the time.

“Yes, I suppose that is my fault,” Papyrus chuckled. “She appeared to need a drink, but apparently it spiraled quite quickly.”

“She's had worse,” Victor said with a shrug. “...at least she was here with you instead of...well, I'm glad you were able to be here for here when I couldn't. You seem like a genuinely good person.”

“Genuine? Of course. Good?” Papyrus smirked as he took another bite. “I suppose the jury is still out on that.”

“Hazel certainly seems to think you're a good person,” Victor said casually, smirking at him. “...and I suppose that's the only opinion that matters, isn't it?”

Papyrus coughed, having shoved the fork too far into his mouth in shock, face lighting up a brilliant vermilion as he quickly set the plate down.

“No, I...her opinion is important, of course, but I hardly think she's the only one…”

_The only one that matters._

“Ah, you're probably right,” Victor shrugged. “S'not like the two of you are, like...a thing.”

He opened his mouth to protest, but promptly shut it with a slight _click._

... _Are you_ a thing? Does he want you to be a thing? He certainly finds you attractive, that much he knows. Emotionally, you've unearthed a softer side of him he'd rather not admit. But that doesn't make you two an item, or even a prospective one--so far it's fairly one-sided.

Silas' words echoed in his mind, and he clenched his fists momentarily. Were you only friends out of pity? Had he really read all those signs incorrectly, been duped by the soft touch of your healing magic and the kindness you had shown him? Or did you see him as some sort of project, a brat that needs taming, a gangbanger that needs saving? Did you think you were doing a service of some sort, trying to lead him to go legit, like Sans? You didn't seem the type, but then again...he hardly knows you but for what he'd learned last night. You don't share your thoughts with him, and you
don't talk about yourself. The few times he's seen you break, it was complete accident.

For all he knew you could truly be that girl you are with Camden, at heart. Meek, nervous, and nothing like the powerful woman he had grown to respect. Perhaps you put on a face and a voice to fool him, to make him think you're tough, to make him think...that you could be good for him.

“But, then, when Hazel wants something, she never outright asks for it,” Victor said suddenly, drawing him from his thoughts as he stood and took Papyrus’ plate. “Too often I feel she thinks it’s too much to ask for her to be happy. So who even knows?”

He moved fast, and with purpose, as if expecting Papyrus to chase him, and...damn his curiosity.

“Wait!” Papyrus called out, standing suddenly as Victor rounded the counter into the kitchen. The human responded with a raised brow as he set his plate in the sink.

Papyrus shifted his weight, crossing his arms. Here was a person who knew you very well. Here was a person who distrusted Camden and wished for your happiness. Perhaps he could learn something?

“I won't say that I wish to be...a thing,” he said slowly, eyeing Victor’s amused face. “Romance isn't my cup of tea but I do think I'm a better option for stress relief than that knife-happy manipulator.”

“Well, most people would be,” Victor snorted. “But, go on.”

Papyrus narrowed his sockets at him, trying desperately to find an ounce of distaste in his soul for this human...but to no avail. He reminds him of his brother, but toned down a bit.

“...Anyway. I have thus far been unsuccessful in my attempts to subtly flaunt my attraction, and I--”

“Oh, see, that's your problem.”

“...What?”

Victor threw a dish towel over his shoulder and ran a hand through his lavender locks, pulling the longer top part of his hair into a wolf’s tail and out of his face. “Your problem is you're being subtle. She's far too dense and self-deprecating to catch on.”

“I don't understand.” Papyrus said slowly, trying to envision a version of you where you were anything other than an ass-kicking bitch by default.

He couldn't conjure any images other than momentary lapses in your usual behaviors, such as after sleeping with Camden or after the death of your friend. The idea that you think yourself unworthy of what you want is pretty silly indeed, considering you will go out of your way to remind people that you are more than capable of getting those results. You've never taken shit from him or Silas, and you've never once been slack in your duty to the hospital. You even punched that bitch in the face yesterday!

“Just try being more overt,” Victor shrugged, turning on the water and rinsing the plate. “Worse case scenario, she tells you straight up she isn't interested and you both move on, right? So just ask her out and see what happens.”

“That...I...” God, he could feel his skull heating up. He had accidentally grown too candid too quickly...he needed to do some damage control before somebody thinks he has actual feelings for you...which, of course, he doesn't.
He scoffed and looked away, trying to backpedal.

“You're assuming things! Why the hell would I want to date her?!”

“Ouch, tell me how you really feel.”

Papyrus jumped and turned to see you meander in through a door down the hall, hair damp as you fluffed it with the towel around your neck.

“No, I…” he trailed off, unsure of how to save himself here, and you rolled your eyes.

“Save it, Don Juan,” you teased, tossing the wet towel at him. “It's not like I'm offended.”

Victor's eyes flicked between you and Papyrus, tension coiling thick in the air despite the teasing tone in your voice. Not offended? Yeah right. He knows you better than that.

He can see it in your posture as the two of you start to tease each other, Papyrus joking about how he could never date his nurse and you joking that he's too boneheaded anyway. You appear as relaxed as ever, a carefully constructed exterior that took him years to unpack...but years he's had, and he can hear the unease in your laugh, and see the slight angle of your shoulders.

Everything you're always telling yourself just got confirmed, and Victor found himself fighting a frown.

This just got...a whole mess more complicated.

Damn. Tsunderes make everything so fucking hard.

Papyrus glanced over at you in the passenger seat once more, wondering if he should break the silence.

Does he bring up what happened this morning? Does he bring up what happened last night? You seemed so...closed off. Like you were shutting him out even more than usual.

“Don't you want to ask?”

He jumped slightly, tapping the brakes to slow the car down for a stop sign. “What?”

You didn't look up from where your gaze was trained out the window, but you shrugged in response. “Dunno. Guess I thought you had questions?”

“I certainly do,” he said carefully, gripping the wheel as he waved another driver across the intersection. “But it's also none of my business if you do not want to share. I...understand the idea of difficult memories. There are many I have that I have repressed from even myself.”

“I suppose I guessed that much,” you mused, eyes following a streetlight until it was out of your field of vision. “...I don’t talk about my family much. Especially in front of patients.”

“I noticed,” he chuckled. “You don’t talk much about yourself at all, as a matter of fact. Makes you quite the mystery.”

“Am I?” You wondered aloud, turning to scrutinize him. “Considering how much you could see about me just from looking at pictures?”

“Pictures tell stories. You cannot hide the facts from the moment of each one, but in everyday life...”
such insight is fleeting,” he explained, moving through the intersection a little slower than necessary. Was the hospital really this close? “I can look at a picture as long as I wish, but the rare moments of true emotion on a person’s face...those go by so quickly, and I...I am not so quick.”

“Is that why you took a picture of me when I showed up at Undyne’s?” You asked, surprising him. He let out a small laugh.

“Ha! No, no. That was purely for fun. And to mess with you.”

Although, now that you mentioned it, he’d have to take a second look and see what he could see.

“You’re terrible,” you giggled, giving him a playful shove. He absorbed it, removing his hand from the wheel so it didn’t move with him. “But, uh...if you wanna know, I guess I owe you a little explanation to go with what you guessed.”

“Well, I’m all ears. Figuratively, of course. I don’t have ears.”

You sputtered out a laugh at that, and he found a small smirk growing on his face. He had thought for sure saying he didn’t want to date you would have made things awkward, but luckily it seems nothing has changed. You saw him the same as always...

...his smirk twitched as he realized that probably meant you never even considered it.

Why does that...bother him so much? The idea that you never saw him the way he does you, not even an inkling of the mutual sexual energy he swore he felt? Certainly it’s weird for him to misread somebody that badly, but this...disappointment...in his chest...

The hospital appeared as he rounded the corner, and he watched you sort of...deflate a bit as he parked.

“What’s the matter?” He asked, genuinely concerned.

You’re actually sad to reach the hospital? Was he perhaps reading things correctly after all, and you don’t want the conversation to end? Perhaps there’s a chance he could replace that awful prick after all...

“Oh, uh, nothing, I just...” You pursed your lips. “I was kind of...looking forward to talking about it. Getting it off my chest?”

Hopefully like your shirt would be later.

“Dinner, then? On your break, or if you get off tonight. Or tomorrow,” he said, turning the car off.

“Dinner?” You said, honest surprise crossing your face. “Like...together? Because you want to?”

“Well, I don’t generally do things I don’t want to do. You know that much,” he chuckled. “...You do know that you don’t have to punch somebody in the face to see me, right? I have a phone.”

“Really?” You asked, raising a brow. “You wouldn’t be annoyed by your nurse calling you all the time?”

“If you make house calls, then I guess I won’t have to worry about going back to the hospital to bother you. It’s just so much more convenient this way, you know,” he said with a smirk, reaching over and patting your head affectionately. “Besides, I’m never too busy to take a call from you, should you need me.”
“Wow...thank you,” you said, reaching over as his hand left your head to grab it and squeeze it. “I...really...thank you.”

“Anytime,” he said confidently, squeezing your hand back, before releasing you to open the door and climb out.

You paused halfway out the car, and then crawled back over the seat to give him a quick kiss on the cheek.

He fought back a triumphant smirk--so he truly hadn’t imagined the tension between the two of you! Your kiss lingered on his cheekbone as you pulled away hesitantly, and he rolled his eyes in an effort to remain calm.

He can do this, with you, he truly can.

“...You’re a really great friend, Papyrus.”

...Ah, fuck.

Chapter End Notes

F-F-F-Friendzoned!
I swear I can already hear nurse's version of this, just like "yup u were right haha
HAHAHA IT DOESN'T HURT ok it does it hurts a lot ugh why am i like this"
Ballad of a Beta

Chapter Summary

You're kicking yourself a little more than necessary, even though everyone insists you still have a chance. When dinner rolls around, and Papyrus isn't feeling well, at least you can hide behind your work and take care of him.

Chapter Notes

Surprise! I didn't even know I would finish this chapter today! Maybe the inspo is finally flowing here?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You're so stupid.

God.

How could you be so dumb?

You nervously tapped your pen on your clipboard, trying to think about bed 16 and their low blood pressure instead of Papyrus, but you can't. You can't focus on anything but how much of an idiot you are.

You had thought, maybe, for a fraction of a second...that it was possible. You had thought, after he held you all night through your tears and genuinely comforted you...after all the heartfelt drunken mumbling...after the thick sexual tension you swore you felt when singing with him…

Like an idiot, you had actually thought he might want you.

But of course, he had to spit the words like they were poison in his mouth, had to balk at Victor for even suggesting he might want to date you. He had to remind you that you're just his nurse, and the only reason he hangs out with you is probably because he feels like he owes you something.

...Although he seemed genuine when offering to listen over dinner, so maybe it wasn't a total loss. But, you thought, stomach twisting familiarly...it’s just like you thought. The gentle head pat, the soft concern, as if you were siblings.

You're definitely cursed. You're going to die alone, because your broken soul doesn't have room for anything other than the type of connection it lost and won't let you move on.

...Maybe you should get another cat. Hell, you could get two cats. Who's stopping you? Not like Victor would mind, and not like you're trying to impress anyone anymore. Just become the crazy cat lady you know you're destined to be, just give in to smelling like tuna eternally.

“Oh shit, making up cat names, never a good sign,” Kyle chuckled, drawing your attention to where he stood in the doorway of your office. “Victor texted me about this morning...you alright?”

“Yeah, why wouldn't I be?” You mumbled, turning your attention to the papers in front of you again, frowning at the little doodles of cats you'd been absentmindedly drawing.

“Because you're too dense to realize he didn't mean it, and you're likely to take it personally?” Kyle offered, dropping into the open seat beside you.

“I don't care that he doesn't want to date me, but thanks for trying,” you snorted, gathering your papers and clipboard as you scribbled down the dosage of midodrine your low blood pressure patient needs. “There's more important things to do, anyway. Has anyone figured out how to use the money Jasper left the hospital?”

“Already on it, Ms-Change-the-subject. It went straight to our usual contractors, who began work on blueprints earlier this morning. They said they want you involved, since it's gonna be your wars, so I have their info if you need it.”

“Great, I'll talk to them on my lunch--” You paused. “Er, no, uh, I mean, tomorrow. I'll call them tomorrow.”

Kyle raised his brow. “Why? Not planning on working through your break, are you?”

“No, uh, I have plans. Just, uh. Dinner.” You mumbled Papyrus’ name as you rushed past, hoping that he wouldn’t quite hear it, but of course he did because he followed you out.

“Oh? Ooohhh?! You have a dinner date?”

“It isn't a date.”

“Is he paying?”

“What? No. He doesn't have a job,” you pointed out. “Even if he did he still can't work for a little while. No, I'll pay.”

“Ah, but you'll pay for his too? Then it's a date.”

“No, I--” you stammered and nearly ran into a cleaning cart. “Shit, sorry Cadence.”

The custodian merely raised her brow at you with a smirk, moving around you. You turned to Kyle, whose grin was so smug you could almost taste the salt bubbling beneath your skin.

“It's not a date.”

“So what are you wearing?” He asked, and it made you pause.

...well, you can't go in your scrubs. What if he wants to go somewhere nice? Plus by then your scrubs might be soiled. You have a few outfits in your locker, or maybe you could run home and change? You do have a nice red blouse that you think he might like. It's flattering and not too ostentatious…

“Yeah, it's a date if you're thinking that hard about it, silly.” Kyle tweaked your nose and you scoffed, blushing. He's wrong, but there's no point in arguing with him. “My lunch is first, so I'll go to your place and Victor and I can pick something out for you to wear.”

“Oh, like hell that's happening,” you hissed, taking half a step towards Silas’ room. “I am telling...
you, don't you dare get into that matchmaker mode! It isn't a date!”

He chuckled, and you discreetly flipped him off from behind your clipboard before stepping into Silas’ room.

“Hazel!” Silas cried, flying up from the pillows and looking like he would bolt over to you.

“Ah!” You made a scolding noise, pointing sternly, and he frowned, settling back down. “Better.”

“Are you okay?” He asked when you approached. “The redhead said you went home early last night because you punched someone.”

“I'm fine, I was just...you know.” You shrugged it off, putting your stethoscope in so you could listen to his heartbeat. “Just another day in the life of an emotional train wreck. But it's fine.”

“...I don't think you're a train wreck,” Silas muttered softly, gripping your arm gently. “I mean, if you're a train wreck then I'm just...literal trash.”

“Stop that, no you aren't,” you sighed, patting his shoulder softly.

He seemed appeased by that, and laid back to let you finish checking his vitals.

He was doing really well, which was, of course, great news.

When you've healed him, will he be good? Will he stay out of the bullshit? You feel as though you've touched his heart enough to make at least a small difference...

But you can't help but feel like when he leaves, you'll be even emptier than you feel right now.

You sighed, pushing your bangs out of your face as you stared at your reflection in the mirror, phone to your ear as you tried to ring Papyrus.

You didn't look too eager, you hoped. The last thing you wanted was to seem desperate, or to gain a pity fuck. Somehow Victor and Kyle had heard your prayers and selected something casual enough.

You sighed as you reached his voicemail, hanging up instead of leaving a message. Maybe he really was only offering to be nice.

...or maybe he went and got himself shot again.

You hesitated, halfway to setting the phone down. It's a possibility, of course, especially with him. And he's never not answered your calls before.

You tapped the bathroom counter, pursing your lips. How nosy are you allowed to be, as his doctor? ...as his friend?

You picked up your phone and called again.

This time it gave half a ring before he picked up.

“HELLO?”

You jumped a bit and held the phone away from your ear, surprised by the volume he put behind that. “Uh...hi?”
“WHAT IS IT?” He asked, as you slowly drew the phone back. “I am...eh...BUSY.”

“Oh, uh...nevermind, then, I guess,” you mumbled into the phone, and even though he wasn't there in person you tried not to look too disappointed. “Just...checking in.”

There was silence on the other end for a moment, and then a low curse. “...Dinner.”

“Yeah, but, if you're in busy I--”

“No, I--” There was a frustrated grunt on his end. “I am...indisposed. I do want to have dinner, but I'm a bit...under the weather.”

“You got sick within ten hours?” You asked, furrowing your brow. “Papyrus, that doesn't sound good, especially with your wound and lowered HP. Do you need me to make a house call?”

“NO!”

You winced and held the phone away again, frowning as he struggled to find a reason not to have you come over.

“Sorry, I...no, I don't want to inconvenience you.”

“It isn't an inconvenience to do my job,” you pointed out.

“You're on your break, aren't you?”

“So I bring dinner over and relax a bit. It doesn't have to be a formal visit,” you chuckled, slipping out of the bathroom to grab your purse from your office. You fished out your keys, glad you left your car here when Papyrus brought you home last night. “Indian still okay?”

“I'm perfectly fine! I don't need you to--”

“Papyrus, I'm your nurse, and you're sick, and if you were about to lie to me and say you don't want me to take care of you then I will call you out on it.”

There was silence on the other end and you stifled a laugh as you shouldered your way past the office door, stalking through the halls with a little more bounce in your step than usual. Kyle winked at you as you passed and you stuck your tongue out at him defiantly.

“I'm not at Undyne's anymore, so there!” Papyrus tried with a huff.

“Pfft. Brat. Don't worry, I have your home address. You are at home, right?”

“...No?”

“That's a yes, then.”

“Fuck.”

You giggled as you waved to the receptionist on your way out, scanning the parking lot for your car.

“Sorry, Boss. You should know by now that nothing will stop me from taking care of you.”

Papyrus groaned and tossed the phone away as you hung up, leaning back in his bed with a weary
look around his studio.

It was, quite frankly, a mess.

He hadn't meant for it to be, really. He had planned on cleaning when he got here, after dropping you off. He had even stopped by his neighbor’s apartment, a sharp-toned old lady with a mean Shihtzu and a higher alcohol tolerance than anyone else he knew. Granny always worried about him, which was nice, and she also had an arsenal of cleaning supplies so he could adequately entertain you tonight despite the cramped room.

At that point, he’d still had a good few hours before your break--but now, he had approximately 45 minutes for you to get food and be here.

He glanced over to the blood splattered haphazardly around, arms crossed as he watched the gang members who had jumped him upon arrival attempt to pick each other up.

“Do you realize how stupid you all are?” He asked, tone heavy with impatience. “Not only did I have to kick all your weak tailbones, but now I have 45 minutes to pretend that I did not do that thing.”

He reached down and heaved one of them up, shoving him into the arms of another who had wisely surrendered after Papyrus’ impressive display.

“Because heaven forbid I do anything too strenuous, oh no, especially if the nurse is coming. She’ll have my head to know I’m using magic with my HP the way it is,” he grumbled, mostly to himself as he stalked over to the kitchen and grabbed the bucket of cleaning supplies. “WELL? GET OUT BEFORE I MAKE YOU HELP!”

The final outburst spurred the seven men to limp quickly away and out the door, with Papyrus’ disapproving stare hard at their backs.

With the slam of the door behind the last one, he turned on his heel slowly to glare at Camden, hands and feet bound as he sat on his lazy chair.

“You have incredible luck, and it irks me,” Papyrus hissed, reaching one sharp claw over to snap the zip ties off his hands, then his ankles. Camden rigidly released his stance, wisely not daring to move beneath the stony gaze he was receiving.

“What the hell are you?” He asked, vitriol lacing his tone. “Nobody is that fuckin’ fast, especially not against seven armed professional gang members in a tiny shithole apartment!”

“Yes, but it’s my shithole apartment, and I believe you humans call that homefield advantage.” Papyrus snarked, a smirk twitching at the corners of his mouth. “As for what I am, the answer is simple: better than you, of course.”

Papyrus placed a hand on the chair, leaning down as Camden leaned back, trying not to let him close the distance.

“I am stronger than you. I am faster than you. I am funnier than you. I am sexier than you,” Papyrus muttered next to his ear. “And I am, above all else, an Alpha to your weak, scared little beta. That feeling like you want to run when you see me? That reluctance to text her even with undeniable evidence of my misdeeds? The fear that I will take her away from you?”

Papyrus scoffed, slapping him lightly as he drew himself up.
“You might have been the top of the food chain before, thinking that being a Mage-Alpha makes you the best. But the nurse is also a Mage-Alpha, so you should know there is more to it than that—and while before you went relatively unchallenged, now you must face the facts.”

“Yeah?” Camden laughed, a quiver to his voice that he regretted instantly. “What fucking facts?”

“The fact that there's only one true Alpha in this equation,” he chuckled. “And injured as I am, that happens to be me. So unless you want the same treatment as your ‘professionals’ here, I strongly suggest you leave me the hell alone before I am forced to show you exactly where you belong.”

With that, he reared up one foot, slamming it down on the chair mere centimeters from Camden’s crotch, causing the human to startle and squeak.

“Do I make myself clear, you insect?”

Camden swallowed hard, and Papyrus felt almost sorry for the asshole. “…crystal.”

“Good. Now get the hell out, I have a lot of work to do.”

Camden sighed in relief as Papyrus removed his foot and turned away to pick up the bucket of cleaning supplies once more, muttering to himself. Heart hammering against his ribs, Cam slid from the chair and made a beeline for the door.

He had severely underestimated this guy. He's still weak from the gunshot wound, and he took down the best of the Razorbacks without even breaking a sweat, and followed by talking to you on the phone as if he had done nothing but go for a light jog all day.

Not only that, but there was this...musky scent rolling off of him in waves, and it scared him. It made Camden afraid to be in this room. He had no idea what all this alpha-beta-whatever junk was that the skeleton had been talking about, but one thing was abundantly clear--

As long as this guy is around, Camden doesn't stand a goddamned chance.

Chapter End Notes

Damn straight you don't, fucker.
Is this the last of Camden? Probably not. But at least he knows he ain't shit.
You stared up at the small apartment building in front of you with thinly veiled horror, taking it all in slowly.

“No wonder he got shot,” you mutter to yourself, looking around at the blood-spattered staircase, the collection of discarded needles beneath them, the cracked, peeling paint. You don't usually judge a neighborhood, knowing most people don't have the means to upkeep it, but this…

...this was difficult to be kind about. You made a mental note to donate to the complex next paycheck--hopefully you can help clean up a bit for those who can't afford it themselves.

At the very least, there was one very nicely painted door, the small corner of the porch it belonged to covered in planter boxes and vibrant flowers. As if somebody felt like they might as well make an effort, since nobody else was.

You stepped carefully up the steps, hoisting the groceries higher up in your arms. You hoped to God you haven't forgotten how to make curried chicken, because you kind of wanted to impress him. Just a bit.

The nicely decorated apartment was Papyrus’ neighbor, and in the open window sat a very well-groomed, very fat Shihtzu that gave you a slight glance before wagging its mop of a tail and snuffling, and you couldn't help but shift your groceries to one arm and reach out to let him sniff your hand before scratching him gently behind the ears.

“Lazy old boy, he loves head scratches.”

You jumped at the sudden appearance of an old lady behind him, barely a head taller than the window sill.

“Oh, I...I'm sorry, I should have asked,” you said sheepishly.

She waved a hand dismissively.

“No worries, dear.” She looked at you a long moment. “Say, you wouldn't happen to be that nurse from Ebott Mercy, would you?”
“Oh, uh, yeah, actually,” you said, reaching your hand through to shake hers as you introduced yourself. “How’d you know?”

“That boy next door, making me worry being gone so long,” the woman said, shaking her head in annoyance. “He got shot, that stupid idiot, and not even a phone call for poor Granny! I made him tell me everything when he came home this afternoon. He told me you might stop by, asked for my cleaning supplies.”

She chuckled as if she knew a secret, and you found yourself smiling.

“Funny thing, I ran across his brother the other day. Didn't get much chance to talk, but you can tell they are brothers, we’ll put it that way,” Granny said finally.

“Yeah, they are definitely a lot more alike than they like to think,” you said with a laugh.

“In any case, dear, I'm sure he is waiting for you,” she said sweetly. “Here, be sure and bring these cookies to that dimwit for me, would you?”

You accepted the Tupperware easily, mouth already watering from the heavenly fresh-baked-cookies smell wafting from it. “Thank you!”

“No, my dear, thank you,” she said firmly, looking at you from over her spectacles. “For saving that bonehead’s life. I can see that his time with you has already done him well, so please continue to help him if you can.”

“Of course I will,” you promised, before bidding goodbye and stepping off towards Papyrus’ door.

Huh. It sure sounds like he spent a lot of time talking about you to Granny. You can't help but grin like an idiot a little bit--even if it’s platonic, it's nice to know you're on his mind.

You give the door a solid knock with your elbow, and you hear a slight crash and a mumbled curse. You wait for a long few moments before--

The door flew open and Papyrus leaned casually in the doorway.

“You’re late,” he scolded, smirking.

“Sorry, got distracted talking to Granny on accident.” You shrugged, gesturing with the Tupperware. “Oh, these are for you. From her.”

“Well, I certainly hope she said nice things about me,” he mumbled, eyes flicking over to her closed door. He stepped aside to allow you to pass, closing the door behind you, and then, when it didn't latch, slammed it once again until it clicked.

The first thing you noticed was the smell of perfumed cleaner. The second thing you noticed was that it looked like nobody lived here. It reminded you of those model homes people stage at apartment complexes. You chalked it up to him being gone so long, and probably having cleaned what he could when he came home today.

It was a lot smaller than you imagined. For some reason, you always thought that he would live in a much bigger apartment, with guest rooms and a large kitchen...but then again, he doesn't have a job, unless you count gang activity.

“Do you have a big saucepan?” You asked, setting the groceries down on the chipped counter. He opened a tall cabinet and produced one. “Oh, awesome.”
He had all the spices you didn't, which was good because that had been a bit of a gamble. After a few minutes of fiddling with it, he finally kicked the stove and it clicked and lit the gas with a startling burst of flame.

“...It’s a bit testy,” he explained, frowning as if annoyed.

You watched him closely, a scrutiny you hadn't placed on him since he left the hospital. His brow was furrowed as he smacked the old stove again to light the second burner, a frustrated huff as his eyelights darted to check on you.

You gave him your best unbothered smile, and he smiled wryly in return. He looked really embarrassed, and you didn't fault him. Knowing how he was, this was probably a nightmare, looking like he can't afford someplace decent. Really, his landlord should have replaced this thing a long time ago--in fact, since he pays rent, the landlord should be taking care of a lot of things around here that they clearly aren't.

How much does he pay? You've heard some horrible stories about monsters getting charged outrageous prices by bigoted landlords. You couldn't be surprised if that was what was happening here, too, with the state this place is in. You did the math while you cooked, the cost of the neighborhood, the cost of a studio this size in relation to the gang activity in the area...you think it should be somewhere around $700/month, which would be believable for somebody with no job outside gang activity.


“About two thousand.” He said casually, making you stop in your tracks and gape at him.

“How much does he pay? You've heard some horrible stories about monsters getting charged outrageous prices by bigoted landlords. You wouldn't be surprised if that was what was happening here, too, with the state this place is in. You did the math while you cooked, the cost of the neighborhood, the cost of a studio this size in relation to the gang activity in the area...you think it should be somewhere around $700/month, which would be believable for somebody with no job outside gang activity.


“Two thousand a month?” You stressed, disbelief heavy in your tone.

“Yes, is that a problem?” He asked, furrowing his brow at you. “I can afford that much at least, I am not--”

“No, Papyrus,” you said sternly, holding up your hand. “That is far too much. If this were uptown, I might understand, but literally nobody in this complex is paying that much, I guarantee it.”

He stared at you blankly, and you sighed.

“Sorry, that's uh...I’m being rude. The point is, they're overcharging you and you should talk to them. Chicken?”

You cut off the conversation by offering him a taste of the curry chicken from the spoon, and it was just the distraction the both of you needed. He smirked and leaned down, taking a bite as you held it and you felt your face heat up in a blush. Damn, get it together, it’s just a bite of food. Why are you so flustered?

“You're turn,” he said, casually wrapping an arm around your waist and snagging the spoon to turn the remaining piece of chicken on you.

Isn't he supposed to be sick? He's a little too smooth for somebody who's supposed to be sick.

You decided against protesting, knowing that all that would come out was a weak sputter, so you just took a bite, face growing warm. It's just the heat of the stove, that's all...

“Ah, missed a bit,” he practically purred, gently grasping your face and using his thumb to wipe away a drop of curry slowly, and your breath caught as you backed up against the counter.
There was silence for a long moment as you bumped against the edge of the counter, looking up at him with wide eyes as he studied you, his gaze curious and predatory.

You felt your hand come up to rest on his chest, and you told yourself it was so you could push him away, but you knew you had no intention of doing that. He was teasing you, because he knows you like him, that had to be it. How cruel, when he's so close, and your breath so shallow, and his hand is tipping your face up. It's cruel, you think, for him to play you like a fiddle, and even crueler for you to let him.

He smells like mahogany and chocolate again, that familiar scent that pulls at your heart. He smells like childhood, and innocence, but also like power and a hint of something else. You opened your mouth to protest, but nothing came out as the hand on your lower back drew you closer.

...if you pursed your lips, you could kiss him...

There was a loud, obnoxious knock on the door, and the both of you froze in place, expressions matching in confusion for a long moment before the knock came again, and Papyrus’ face fell to a scowl, pushing off the counter and away from you to stomp out of the kitchen and to the door.

He was so close! Perhaps it was a bit dirty to catch you off-guard that way, to trap you...but whether you knew it or not, he had seen you leaning into it, had seen the look in your eye--perhaps he was enchanted to see what he wished, but what he had seen was a sweet rosy blush and sparkling eyes, and receptive body language.

He tossed the door open mid-knock with a scowl…

...and immediately groaned at the sight of the three idiots on his doorstep.

He missed out on a kiss for this?

He was about to growl out a reprimand his fellow gang members for interrupting, but stopped the moment the metallic sting of the scent of blood waved over him, and Gabriel swayed between the other two, their hands grasping at his coat even as he fell directly into Papyrus’ arms, and the tall skeleton quickly followed to the floor gracefully, laying him out across his knee.

His eyes flicked over his friend’s form, keenly observing his paled complexion, the many nicks and scratches, and the bloodied rag over his hand that remained firmly pressed against his ribs.

“What the hell?!” He asked, glancing back and adjusting to scoot further out the door, out of your line of sight. “What are you idiots doing here? He needs a hospital!”

“He won't make it to a hospital, Boss,” Christian explained, pushing his frizzy, dirty blonde locks out of his face. His shirt was stained crimson with Gabriel’s blood. “You were closer, an’ we heard you came home today—”

“And what would you have done if that was not true?” He hissed, flicking him in the head. “And you know I’m not the best at heal...wait.”

He turned to call out to you, but found you already there, standing a few feet away with a curious look on your face.

When he moved enough to reveal his wounded friend, you gasped, and for a moment he shamefully thought you would run--

Until you got that serious look on your face, a hint of irritation and squared shoulders that told him
to tread lightly with you. He felt a wave of calm energy flow forth from where you stood, and his head was suddenly clearer, void of panic.

“What the hell are you waiting for?” You said sharply, snapping all of them out of the shocked stupor you had induced. “Get him inside!”

Chapter End Notes

Nurse mode: ACTIVATED.
(Smol cliffhanger I am so sorry)
You could never let somebody die right before your eyes, not without at least trying to save them.

* is for gore, not smut, sorry :P
Gore warning: wounds, graphic descriptions of impromptu surgery (softened by magic healing)

“You, get some blankets! You, a pot of water!”

Christian and Darryl obeyed without thinking, Darryl taking off towards the bathroom and linen closet, and Christian stumbling to his feet and racing into the kitchen as Papyrus gathered Gabriel in his arms and kicked the door closed, closing the distance between the two of you.

“Nurse, I--”

You shushed him urgently, and he snapped his jaw shut obediently as he adjusted to bring Gabriel to your level. You were quick to slide a hand over his form, coated in magic, examining him with a furrowed brow. You clicked your tongue, as if he was supposed to understand that, and put your other hand over his eyes.

His breathing slowed alarmingly, and his eyelids stopped fluttering.

“What did you do?” Darryl asked accusingly, dropping the requested blankets at your feet, fists balling and moving threateningly towards you--

--only to bounce off Papyrus’ back as he stepped in between the two of you swiftly.

“Darryl, you are my compatriot, but the next time you raise your hand to my nurse will be the last time you ever have a hand,” Papyrus hissed, glaring harshly over his shoulder as Darryl staggered back.

“...Nurse?” He mumbled, rubbing his nose gingerly.

“Blankets!” You sighed impatiently, snapping your fingers. “I’ve only given him a light anaesthetic, we need to lay him down properly!”

“The pink one,” Papyrus supplied, gesturing to Darryl with a flick of his skull. Darryl moved clumsily, and smoothed the blanket with shaking hands, and Papyrus gently laid his friend out for you, pausing only to check his pulse for himself...weak, but still there.
“What happened?” You asked, and when Darryl only stared at the blood seeping into the blanket, you snapped urgently again. “Focus! What happened? What kind of wound?”

“Knife,” he managed, as Christian came hurrying back into the room with the water pot.

“The water...and I took your dinner off the heat…” The blond said quietly, holding the pot out to you.

You accepted it and set it down, swirling your hand while still staring at Darryl. Your hand tapped the side of the pot, and steam rose from the water, instantly sanitized.

“A knife. What kind of knife? How big?”

Christian cleared his throat to grab your attention, and then pulled out a lump of fabric from his pocket. You took it before Papyrus could stop you, unwrapping it to reveal a butterfly knife covered in crimson.

“You removed it?” You asked accusingly, glaring at Christian, who shrank beneath your gaze.

“N-no, ma’am, Gabe did,” he squeaked, eyes falling to the floor. “We tried to stop him, honest!”

“And what was your name?” You asked, your tone significantly more disarming as you laid a gentle hand on his arm and he kneeled next to you.

“Chri...Christian.” He stuttered, tugging nervously at his shirt.

“Christian. I need you to do something for me, okay?” He nodded, and you smiled at him with a softness Papyrus had never seen grace your face. “Christian, sweetie, I need a straw. Preferably a big one they use for milkshakes. I think I saw that Papyrus has some on top of his fridge?”

You looked over at Papyrus, and he nodded, and Christian immediately went to grab them.

“What about me?” Papyrus asked, slightly irritated. Not about how...especially nice...you had been to Christian, no, because that would be petty, but...well, because you haven’t told him to help yet!

...Alright, so maybe he was a little bitter about you being sweet to Christian.

“You’re doing just fine,” you insisted, waving him away as you rewrapped the knife and set it down. “I’m going to need those healing hands of yours in a second, so I need you to just hang tight.”

“You need my healing skills?” He snorted in disbelief. “And I suppose next you’ll tell me I need you to teach me how to punch?”

“Shut up, I’m busy here,” you snapped, and he suppressed a smile--this was much more like the nurse he had grown used to.

“What’s the verdict?” Darryl asked, and when you looked up, he appeared to blush a bit, mumbling. “Uh...nurse.”

“Collapsed lung,” you answered, dipping your hands into the scalding water. You flinched, and Papyrus straightened suddenly, very aware of your insistence on causing yourself injury if it helps others. You shook it off, though, and pretty soon you had removed Gabriel's hand and the folded up cloth pressed against the wound to examine it more closely.

Darryl made a noise between a sharp breath and a gag, looking away instantly. Christian
wordlessly handed you the straw, having somehow snuck in, his eyes wide at the sight of the wound.

Papyrus watched with awe as you went to work, grateful he doesn’t have all this fleshy business like Gabe does--his wound had been much cleaner and less disgusting. He recognized the signature of your magic by now even if he couldn’t see it, and he watched curiously as you slid the fat straw into the hole, sliding it between his ribs. The gentle pull of your magic made Gabe’s chest rise and fall a few times, your brow furrowed in concentration.

“What does the straw do?” Christian asked quietly.

Papyrus started to shush him like you had requested. “She’s bu--”

“It helps funnel air into the collapsed lung,” you explained, and Papyrus blinked. Hadn’t you told him to shut up? “Once he’s breathing, I can start to sew him up, figuratively. Papyrus.”

He looked up at the sound of his name, and you could see a general air of thinly veiled annoyance on his face.

“Don’t give me that look,” you hissed, reaching over and grabbing his hand and placing it at the base of the straw. He didn’t even blink at the blood, but you didn’t expect him to.

He did, however, allow a fleeting look of worry cross his skull, so fast you think you’re the only one who saw it.

Damn, you’re using your commanding nurse voice like he’s Kyle. You feel kind of bad--this is his friend, and he isn’t a professional. There’s no way you can expect him to know procedure.

“Focus on keeping a seal around the straw. Please.” You requested, putting a slightly sweeter tone to it, and he relaxed and obeyed, his magic tingling against your hand and creating the requested seal.

You withdrew your hands to press one flat against the man’s chest, the other on his cheek.

“His name is…Gabe?” You asked.

Papyrus nodded. “Gabriel Romano.”

“Mr. Romano?” You cooed softly as his breathing evened out beneath your hand, your magic curling gently around his soul and coaxing it to respond.

There was silence for a long moment, save for the blood pumping in your ears. As his breathing stuttered, yours caught, and you held it…

Gabe’s eyelids fluttered as if in REM sleep, and then, after a long moment, he opened his eyes slowly. Unfocused brown eyes gently drew to meet your hazel, and within that moment, you watched life return to them.

That was your favorite part of this job.

“Can you hear me?” You asked softly, and he nodded slowly. “Do you know your name? Can you tell me that?”

“Gabriel,” he muttered softly, voice a deep rasp. His words came slowly as he breathed through the straw unknowingly. “…I’m dead?”
You chuckled slightly, pressing flat against his chest to keep him from moving. “What gave you that idea?”

“Because all I can see...is an angel...above me,” he gasped softly, catching you off-guard.

You blinked, and bit your lip to stifle your laugh. Papyrus chuckled on the other side of him, but Gabriel didn't look away from you.

“No, Mr. Romano. I'm only a nurse, not an angel,” you said, brushing your hand up to push his hair from his face. “You are very much alive, thanks to your friends.”

He blinked, and finally registered his surroundings with a groan. “...so Boss knows...I got stabbed?”

“I'm currently healing a seal around a straw in your chest,” Papyrus snorted. “I'd say I more than know.”

Gabe started to speak, and you shushed him.

“No, no...rest your voice. You have a punctured lung. Until I get this healed up I'm afraid you'll have to keep your words to yourself, alright? This won't hurt, so stay still.”

Gabriel wheezed in pain as you moved Papyrus’ hand and gently removed the straw, flooding the wound with soft encouragement to heal.

“Yes, she's terrible at gauging how much something will hurt, might as well get used to it,” Papyrus chuckled. “...are you alright, nurse?”

You blinked and furrowed your brow, trying to stretch your magic. Damn, you should have known how close to your limits you were--it had been a long day at the hospital, and you had counted on this time to rest up from your emotional drainage last night.

“I can do this,” you reassured him. Yeah, maybe you'll pass out after, but--

Suddenly Papyrus’ hand was on top of yours, and energy surged through your body, his magic supplying a lifeline to yours and helping you stretch the extra few seconds to close the wound.

His magic curled up your arm, circling in your chest, filling you with warmth and making you close your eyes against the tug in your chest...translating into your own energy and swirling back down to finish the job.

As the magic dissipated, neither of you moved for a long moment, your eyes planted firmly on where his hand curled gently around yours.

“You're so stubborn,” he sighed finally, as you began to blink and sway. His hand left yours to steady your shoulder. “Really, what good are you as a nurse if you pass out? You need to give yourself a break.”

“I was on a break, and then your friend showed up about to die,” you grumbled in return, avoiding his eye as you slapped his hand away and steadied yourself. “Which reminds me--”

You turned and shoved a finger accusingly at Christian and Darryl, who looked both bewildered at what they just witnessed as well as sheepish to be scolded.

“Let me guess, you're part of Papyrus’ gang?”
Darryl leaned back and laughed nervously. “I don't know what you're--”

“We are,” Christian blurted. “We're from the Black Lotus.”

“Dude,” Darryl hissed and Christian gave him a desperate look and gestured to you.

“She just closed up Gabe’s wound and brought him back from the dead, I think we should be honest!” Christian said, exasperated. "We're fucking lucky she was here, D!"

“Besides, she already knows what I do,” Papyrus said, eyeing you as Gabriel breathed softly between you. “And...what I've done. She saved my life when I was shot...I trust her.”

Darryl pressed his lips into a thin line of obvious displeasure, knowing he's outvoted, and fell silent.

You sighed, demeanor softened by Papyrus saying he trusts you, but you still raised a brow at him as you turned to help Gabriel sit up. “There we go. Papyrus, can you help him to the bed for a moment?”

“Rather help him to a shower,” the skeleton muttered underneath his breath as he hauled Gabriel to his feet. The man swayed and fell forward against him, and Papyrus sighed, annoyed, as he led him to the bed. “What did you even do to get stabbed, anyhow?”

“Didn't do...nothin’...” Gabriel rasped as he sat. “Razorbacks jumped us.”

“Yeah, we were just on our way to see you because we heard you were home,” Darryl said as he and Christian stood. “An’ these real roughed-up assholes came along an’ saw us, got all mad and we scuffled.”

Razorbacks? You bit your lip and looked down. That's Camden's gang...did Papyrus threatening him put a mark on his friends? If you hadn't been there, Gabriel might certainly have died--there's no reasonable way Papyrus would have known what to do for this particular case, and no amount of natural talent can make up for lack or practice and knowledge.

It's possible it was all a freak accident, and that Camden had nothing to do with it...but it's pretty unlikely. In the end, this is all your fault--it's your job to at least make sure Gabriel makes a full recovery and that nobody gets hurt again.

"Are you alright?” Christian asked you, as Darryl moved past the both of you to check in with Gabriel. "You look pale."

"I'm fine," you huffed, pushing off the floor and standing, turning towards where Gabriel was sitting.

But when you stopped turning, the world didn't, and you found yourself reeling as the floor rushed to meet you.

And everything went black.

Chapter End Notes

Dammit Nurse, we all knew this would happen at some point. You can't deplete your
magic like that!
Feel free to ask me stuff about this fic on my Tumblr! I love talking about my stories and characters!
Papyrus only saw you sway from the corner of his eye, and before he could react, Christian was buckling beneath your unexpected weight.

Papyrus crossed the room in one long stride to relieve Christian by gathering you himself. “Ugh, what did I say about passing out? That bleeding heart will be the death of you.”

“What's...wrong with her?” Gabriel asked, concern heavy in his tone as Papyrus adjusted to carry you properly.

“Just overexerted herself because she's a damned workaholic,” Papyrus tsked, and Gabriel scooted slightly so he could sit as well, settling you against the pillows and his chest. “Though I suppose I can't have asked her to leave you alone, either, so there's nothing to be done.”

“Boss, I wasn't...careful enough,” Gabe said softly, hand raising to trace the scar on his chest left from the procedure, shirt half-torn off and bloody. “M’sorry.”

“You should be! What were you all thinking, showing up here? What if I hadn't been here?” Papyrus asked pointedly. “What if she hadn't been here?”

He glanced down at you with a frown. What if he hadn't noticed the hiccups in your magic? What if he hadn't seen the strain in your form as you tried to force your magic to stretch? You might have done it, but at the expense of possibly losing some life force, or even your powers!

“I got lucky,” Gabriel chuckled lightly, wincing at the rib movement. “She's a goddamned angel. A saint.”

"She is talented, and overly kind,” Papyrus scoffed. “I hardly think that qualifies a saint, but...she is special.”

He didn't see them exchange glances, he was too busy studying your face to see if you were harmed
beyond exhaustion. When you wake, he's going to kick your ass for using this much magic... huh. What a turn of events.

“Damn, and I thought I was in love,” Gabriel sighed, flopping back onto the bed. “But I guess, uh, I'm a little late to slide into this girl’s DMs.”

“What?” Papyrus asked, confusion crossing his features. “What in hell does that mean?”

“Means it's obvious you have dibs on her,” Darryl explained, crossing his arms. “C’mon, Boss, it's written all over your face. Ya care for the dame. An’ we ain't about to get in between that.”

“You call interrupting what might have been our first kiss not getting in between this? I might be in bed if you hadn't nearly gotten yourself killed, but no, you had to go and make her pass the fuck out,” Papyrus grumbled, though there was no bite to his words. The others chuckled a bit to hear him pretend to be upset.

And Papyrus sighed, running a hand over his skull.

“Well, you might as well get comfortable, and tell me everything. There's food on the stove, make sure Gabriel gets some and set aside a plate for the nurse. It's likely she enchanted it with her healing magic as she cooked, even if it was subconsciously.”

You blinked awake, cold and covered in flower petals.

Just like every time you fell down here.

You groaned and rolled over, glaring at the buttercups beneath your hands as you pushed yourself up, wondering why you always dreamt about this cave. You glanced around, stretching until your joints popped pleasantly, and then held your hands out expectantly for your only companion, whenever he so chose to join you.

Time stretched on as you waited, just you, this strange place, and the red and black door you had never seen before that you were afraid to look at. The caves howled your breath back to you, and you felt the hope drain from your chest as it became clear that you were very, very alone.

“Flowey?” You called out sweetly. “It’s just me, I won't hurt you.”

And you waited…

*But no-one came*

You startled awake, shooting up only to find an arm draped firmly around your shoulder that anchored you down, and you squeaked in distress before the arm moved, releasing you.

Four pairs of eyes regarded you in mild shock as you blinked sleep away, looking around and registering your surroundings blearily.

Nobody moved as the gears turned in your head, from your place practically in Papyrus’ lap to…

You gasped and swiveled around to look at Gabriel, who had a half-eaten plate of curry chicken and rice in his hands.

He blushed beneath your stare.
“Gabriel. You're okay?” You asked. “Any trouble breathing?”

A sharp nudge from Papyrus had you turning to glare at the skeleton still loosely holding you.

“How about, ‘thank you for not letting me crack my skull on the hardwood when I knocked myself out with overexertion’?” He asked accusingly, and you pursed your lips, displeased. “Honestly, you're impossible. The first thing you do after waking up from literally working yourself unconscious is try to work some more!”

“Well, excuse me if I'm worried about your friend who almost died less than…” you trailed off, unsure of the time. “…how long ago?”

“About an hour. He's fine,” Papyrus insisted, placing a large hand on your head and pushing slightly as if to scold you. “You, on the other hand, are barely able to sit up.”

You huffed, pushing his hand off your head. “Well, normally I have Kevin for support, and a ton of professional medical equipment. Because I was here, I had to use a lot more magic to make it work, because despite promising you'd stay out of trouble, you clearly haven't seen fit to keep your nose out of gang wars!”

“I had nothing to do with this!” He paused, and amended: “Alright, I had very little to do with this.”

You rolled your eyes. “Ah, very little, the words every girl wants to hear.”

“Excuse me?!” He hissed, sockets flashing with rage. “I'll have you know--”

“If I may interject?”

The both of you turned to look up at Christian in shock, as if both just now remembering you had an audience to your squabble.

“Ma’am, if I can just point out...Boss has been AWOL since he got shot,” Christian explained calmly, voice hardly louder than a mutter. “We tried to visit him in the hospital but they said we weren't on the visitors’ contract, and he didn't contact us when he got out. The only reason we came is because somebody said they saw him talking to Granny this afternoon, so we were hoping against hope that he was home.”

You frowned slightly, scrutinizing Christian’s face for any signs of a lie. “...Really?”

“Yeah, been a fuckin’ pain in the ass navigatin’ this clash without ‘im,” Darryl snorted. “I'd be mad about it if I hadn't heard he got shot.”

“There, you see?” Papyrus huffed, crossing his arms. “You said not to lie to you, and I haven't.”

You sighed and pressed your fingertips to your temples, trying to relieve some of the pressure building beneath the skin. This was just one big headache...but it had been lucky that you were here, and that they had thought to go to Papyrus instead of the hospital.

“Alright, fine, I'm sorry, okay?” You sighed, tone a little more petulant than necessary.

Papyrus chuckled, and you glared at him as if to ask what was so funny.

“I'm sorry, it's just that, these guys...they think you're so nice and wonderful. And now you're apologizing?” He chuckled again before grabbing your shoulder and pulling you back to his chest. “Clearly you need more sleep, so you can go back to being the mean nurse that pestered me for...”
over a month. Actually, nearly three months now.”

“Shut up! I'm nice!” You grunted, exasperated, as you tried to release yourself from his grip.
“Augh! You're such a brat!”

He chuckled and held fast, ignoring your struggles as he regarded his friends. “Alright, well, you all are welcome to stay if you wish, but I think Gabriel should probably still go to Ebott Mercy. Right, nurse?”

You paused your attempts to dislodge and glanced over at Gabriel, still pale and breathing slightly ragged.

“...yeah. You might need a blood transfusion, or at least to have a respiratory expert check you over. Just say I sent you and they'll know who to talk to.” You said as Papyrus finally released you to allow you to check over your patient.

You gently pinched his wrist, feeling his pulse--strong, a good sign. And then you moved to check his eyes--dilated, a sign of physical trauma. They'll probably go back to normal in a while, but he should definitely see someone to check the rhythm of his breathing. “I can just go with--”

“Oh, no, you don't,” Papyrus scolds, placing his hand firmly on your head. “I've already called you out for the evening with Kyle, you are going to rest. No more hospital tonight unless there is an actual emergency.”

“What?” You furrowed your brow in disapproval, challenging him with a glare. “Papyrus, I'm fine.”

“Yes, because everybody passes the fuck out as a sign of being totally fine,” he snorted, mussing your hair and retracting his hand to cross his arms.

“What, you're worried about me now?” You scoffed, mirroring his posture.

“And why not? I owe you my life, the least I can do is make sure you don't take years off of yours with dangerous magic usage,” he huffed. “And what if you had used too much and lost your powers? What then?”

You bit your lip and drew back beneath his stare. That can happen? Losing your powers? You can't even imagine being without them...what would you even do with yourself?

“Goodness, here we sit arguing about rest and you're still covered in blood,” he sighed, hoisting you off his lap and onto your feet surprisingly carefully despite the petulant shove he punctuated the action with. “I will send these idiots on their way, you go find something to wear. My closet is in the bathroom.”

“Oh, so now I'm staying the night? You cheeky fucker,” you giggled, sticking your tongue out at him as you obediently stepped off towards the bathroom.

“O-only because if I don't watch you, you'll go straight back to the hospital!” He claimed, face a bright vermilion as he crossed his arms. You gave him a wave over your shoulder as the door shut behind you...

...and your knees immediately buckled as you caught yourself on the sink.

God, you ache all over. You'd been putting on a face and he was still worried anyway, but as you made your way over to sit on the closed toilet seat, you withheld a whimper at the way your
muscles protested every movement. It was a strange feeling, not unlike what you had experienced after long days in a row at the hospital without significant rest. Magic exhaustion.

Deep breath. You're a nurse. You've worked through worse. And you still need to check up on Papyrus’ wound, since you know it hurts him more than he says. You can't be complacent.

After a moment of focusing, you felt your magic slowly warm your body, and your soul entered recovery mode, and you sighed, cradling your head in your hands.

Get it together. Get it together. Get it together.

You've always powered through everything, but lately you've felt so drained. You don't know if it's the circumstances of your life piling on top of each other or if it’s Papyrus who’s tiring you out, but...part of you is glad he's making you slow down. Heaven knows you'd never do it yourself.

Alright. Clothes.

You stood, feeling a bit better, if a little magic-sick. That would go away once recovery mode was done. You turned to look in the mirror and cringed.

He was right, you looked like a murder scene. Your blouse may be red, but the blood was much more saturated and still stood out against it. You would probably have to dispose of these clothes and the blanket in the hospital's hazardous linens dump.

Damn, it’s all over the knees of your jeans where you'd been kneeling, too. And you really liked these ones.

You sighed and stripped them off, happy the blood at least didn't seep through to your undergarments. You liked this bra, and didn't really want to go get a new one.

Then you washed the blood from your hands and arms, as best as you could with only a bar of soap and no hand towel.

The closet was small, but full. If there's one thing that Papyrus clearly cares about, it's clothes--which is good, since you need those right now. You rifled through for a moment, chuckling a bit at some of the graphic crop tops. You tried to imagine him wearing a crop top, and somehow...it suits him. You don't see any bottoms that'll fit you so the crop tops are out of the question…

You noticed a familiar shirt--the one he wore out of the hospital that day, with HEARTBREAKER emblazoned on the front. It’s a bit nostalgic (has it been two months already?) and made you smile as you slip it on, falling about halfway down your thighs. Your curves make it hug just a tiny bit, giving you a sort of rocker-chick vibe that you actually kind of like--you flashed back to your punk phase for a hot second and couldn't help but grin.

Not bad. You're lucky he's so darn tall and all his regular length shirts are tunic sized on your tiny form. In any case it'll have to do until you can convince him to let you go home.

With a knock, the door creaked open, and Papyrus poked his head in, hand over his sockets.

“Are you decent?”

“As decent as I'll get I guess,” you joked, and he dropped his hand, surveying your choice with a smug grin.

“Mmm. Acceptable.”
“Okay, Lemongrab,” you released, earning a confused brow. You probably should have expected he's never seen Adventure Time. “Nevermind. ‘Scuse me.”

He chuckled and held the door for you. “I had Sans pop in and take the others to the hospital, so Gabriel shall be cared for soon. Now would you relax? For a moment?”

A loud noise startled you as you entered the living room, and when you looked around and couldn't see anything, you looked up at Papyrus to find he was completely unphased.

“It’s only a gunshot. It’s a couple streets away,” he explained, shrugging as if it meant nothing.

“Really? Gunshots don't even make you flinch? You've been shot, Papyrus.”

“Yes, and?” He raised a brow, smirking cheekily as he puffed up. “I lived, didn't I?”

“And why is that?” You asked, frowning and crossing your arms. “Your reckless behavior, or by the hard work of the nurse you say works too hard?”

He scoffed, crossing over to move into the kitchen. “Yes, your point has been taken, but as you can see I am clearly fine. I'm more than capable of protecting myself.”

“How paid rent while you were gone?” You asked, eyes wandering over the overdue bill on the counter. Overpriced and clearly merciless when tacking on the late fees...you don't like this guy. “I can help you clear this up, I make more than I know what to do with any--”

Suddenly a plate of curry chicken and rice obscured your view, and you looked up into his pointedly annoyed face.

“I'm fine.” He seethed, clearly frustrated. “I don't need your pity, I've had quite enough of that under your thumb back at the hospital.”

“And I don't need your sass, and yet here we are,” you huffed, crossing your arms. “Why is it so hard to accept help?”

“I'm a big boy, nurse. I don't need a babysitter.”

“I'm not trying to babysit you I--” You paused and sighed, tapping your forehead with irritation as you sat on the stool in front of the plate. “Look, arguing won't get us anywhere. This place sucks--don't you dare interrupt me--this place sucks, the landlord’s clearly racist, and you don't have a job right now. None of this is going to work out on top of the medical bills.”

“What's your point?” He snapped, clearly embarrassed by the conversation. “You think I can't set one racist straight? You think I can't get a job?”

You looked at his face closely for a long moment, all the anger and frustration clearly living in his furrowed brow. His emotional state was incredibly unstable here--the added stress of bills and the shitty landlord are only going to stack, and suppress his magic’s natural healing ability.

It's as you feared--he will never heal completely like this. Your heart ached at the thought of him dusting quietly, alone in the dark, because he was too stubborn or foolish to call you.

You reached over the counter and laid your hand over his gently, drawing his glare to settle on you. You smiled as softly as you could, and saw him relax, melting like snow on the first day of Spring.

“It isn't that I think you can't,” you said quietly. “It's that you shouldn't have to. You have enough
good friends that you don't need to do this alone.”

“Oh? Like the three stooges that bungled in here earlier, one nearly dead?” He scoffed, though he blushed slightly at the sentiment. “Or my previous subordinate, who already has a life of her own? Or how about my brother, all tucked in beside his little datemate, ready to get married and have kids and leave me behind?”

He pulled his hand away and turned around, crossing his arms and leaning back against the counter. He felt the tears threatening his sockets and was determined not to let them out, not in front of you. Everyone he cares about is either reckless or has their own life and doesn't need him—why bother being constantly stressed and left out? It's better to be distant. Emotions are for the weak.

He doesn't remember why, but he remembers deciding that a long time ago.

“...No thank you. I'm better off on my own anyhow. I always have been.”

Hearing no response, he looked up curiously to see you padding gently around the counter, approaching slowly. Your stupid kindness was showing in your eyes, such gorgeous flecks of green on brown sugar. He understands, suddenly, why Silas always called you Hazel. How are you able to disarm him with a single look? It must be the magic.

“That sounds pretty lonely,” you said, leaning on the counter next to him. “You sure you don't want any company? At all?”

“I want you,” he mumbled before he could think, skull heating up before the words had even properly left his mouth. He turned to point at the door. “I mean, eh, I want you out! Get out! Unless you're going to lay down and rest you can get out of my sight with all this existential bullshit!”

“Okay, okay! I'll rest!” You insisted, hands up in a placating manner. You rested them on his chest and he relaxed instantly, frowning at his body’s reaction to your touch.

Damn, he really needs you. This is bad. How is he supposed to convince you of how powerful and self-sufficient he is if he can't even stand his ground?

“Truly?” He asked, sockets narrowing to scrutinize your face for a lie.

“Of course I will,” you said. “...at home. But only if you come with me.”

“I...well, you clearly need a babysitter to make you rest, so obviously,” he scoffed, crossing his arms.

“No, Papyrus, I mean permanently.”

“...what?” He raised a brow despite the flutter of excitement in his chest.

“I mean, I have more rooms than I'll ever use,” you said with a shrug. “I have a ton of groceries and money I'll never spend because I'm always working. I won't charge you, and when you get a job and stuff you can move out if you want to. Or stay. It, uh, really doesn't matter...but having you there will be easier because I can always check your healing process, and if you do get your stupid ass shot again at least you can just go home, right? And Victor really liked you and--”

You mumbled through a few more half-hearted excuses while he gaped at you, half-wondering about your true motives and...half-flattered, honestly.
He didn't think you cared this much and...it’s nice to have somebody care about you, he decided.

“...Alright,” he answered.

You stopped suddenly, looking up at him with a completely bewildered expression.

“What the hell’s that look for?!” He griped, squeezing your face. “You offered!”

“I wasn't expecting you to say yes!” You said, voice muffled from the face squish.

“So what, the offer doesn't stand?”

“Of course it does!” You growled, smacking his hand away. “I'm nice, you know!”

“Alright, fine!” He scoffed back.

“Fine!”

A silence fell over the kitchen as you both stared at each other, a quiet cough from you breaking it as you turned to walk back to your plate and he turned to pretend to be busy with dishes. You picked at your food for a few minutes before he spoke again.

“I... don’t need to, you know,” he mumbled. “I can take care of myself. I'm...I’ll only do it because it'll make it easier to keep you from working yourself to death, and once this stupid hole in my chest is healed and I can work I'll be out of your hair.”

You giggled. “Okay. But just so you know, I don't...like... mind you being...in my hair. You're not a complete asshole.”

He chuckled, tossing the last pot in the sink. “Oh, only partial asshole, good. And here I was worried you liked me.”

Chapter End Notes

Ahhh these two are starting to squabble so much. I love these whump, both pretending they're fine when they're totally not.
Come Live in My Heart and Pay No Rent

Chapter Summary

Moving day has come, and you're none too happy about Papyrus' condition.

Chapter Notes

Gosh, sorry for the long absence, y'all! Quite a few things have been going on with me, between money troubles and commissions and writer's block. I wanted to write this so badly but only about a sentence at a time would come out. But hey! Check out some AU/future/companion pieces for this story in my kinktober collection: The Jealousy Game and Hello, Nurse! They helped serve as a way to satiate my urge to skip all the story and get straight to these two together haha. If you're interested in donating to support me or commissioning me, or just wanna talk about my works, you can find me on Tumblr here!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“moving?”

“Yes, Sans, please keep up with the conversation,” Papyrus sighed, stretching out a long length of packing tape to tape up the next box. “I'm out at the end of the week so I wanted to...I don't know. Update you.”

The sharpie squeaked as he scrawled CLOTHES across the box, effortlessly stacking it atop the others. He hardly used blue magic, but for things like moving it was essential to getting things done efficiently.

“what, yer like...checkin’ in? what are ya, twelve?” Sans chuckled on the other end. “move or don't. not even sure i know where ya live now.”

“Augh! Whatever,” Papyrus scoffed. “I don't know why I even bother with you anymore.”

“wait, wait, no, pap...” Sans paused and sighed, the scrape of phalanges against skull evident through the phone. “what's the new address?”

Triumphant, Papyrus smirked as he recited your address, floating a few more items from his closet into the nearest box. Sans whistled on the other end.

“swanky digs, boss. i, uh, don't gotta remind ya not to be pullin’ your stupid tricks fer it, do i? i figure since ya got shot ya have some sense”

“Please, Sans, I am not a babybones. I'm not moving because of illicit funds, if that's what you're asking. I am moving because this landlord is a racist who grossly overcharges me...and besides, I won't be paying rent over there anyhow. It's the nurse’s place, I'm only staying because she's a workaholic worrywart that can't take care of herself.”
There was silence on the other end for a long moment, and Papyrus stopped puttering to listen harder, wondering if the connection was bad.

“...seriously?”

“What the fuck is that supposed to mean?”

“no, no, uh...that’s great, boss. just caught me off guard. gettin’ all domestic on me.”

“Really? I am getting domestic on you?” Papyrus frowned, and he hoped his brother felt it on the other end. “I sincerely hope that was another one of your terrible jokes.”

“sure, boss. whateva floats yer boat. oh, while we’re on the topic, what’s yer nurse’s number? i get the feelin’ we’ll be talkin’ more from now on.”

Papyrus made a face as he recited your number hesitantly, then said a terse goodbye and hung up, sighing as he tossed the phone onto the stripped bed. So much for fixing the relationship with his brother...but then, he supposed one couldn't expect things to change over one call.

He looked around, counting the boxes stacked on every surface. He listed things in his head, and crossed his arms, wondering how everything he owned could really fit in only nine boxes. He supposed he had let Sans take the furniture and most of the living room things...he had never been much for television. Stretching his one small bedroom into an entire apartment, combined with lack of interest with shopping…

Hmm...there should be ten boxes. Where did he put that keepsake box?

He knelt down to peer beneath the bed, and sure enough, the small shoebox was there, battered and dusty but still there. He slid it out and gently patted the dust away. He should really get a sturdier box...but Sans had fished this one out for him because it was black and red, and somehow, he couldn't bring himself to get rid of it.

He carefully removed the lid to peer inside, smirking just a tiny bit as his fingers fell on the childlike drawings laying across the top: him, small as a snowpoff, with Sans looking cocky and their father with crossed arms bitching at them about something or other. Probably because Sans was wearing a tank top in the snow. He wasn't sure if he had been thinking that thoroughly when he drew it, though.

These drawings are all that's left of his father, and even Sans doesn't know they're here. As far as he knows, Papyrus doesn't even remember Gaster...but he does. He definitely does. His memory is...spotty...but it’s there.

He realizes he is a lot like his father when it comes to emotions, a fact he thinks Sans might resent him for. Gaster wasn't incredibly affectionate, though he's certain that the man truly did love them...perhaps he only had a father like himself who was just as bad at affection. He wasn't a baby when Gaster died, but he was young--in his years, it had been the better part of two centuries. He was still a pigheaded youth vying for a spot in the guard...and he had never related to that version of him more than this moment.

He set the papers aside carefully and pulled the box into his lap, curious now as to what he'd packed himself that was so important. This was the only box that had initially come to the surface with him, his most important things.

On top were his medals, settled neatly in a velvet lined shadowbox designed especially for them. He pulled it out slowly, already categorizing them as he looked.
Red Wings, for faithfulness to the throne. The royal symbol was nestled between them as if to remind him of that oath he took--protect and serve.

A shiny copper circle, for bravery in battle. He received that one for defending Undyne when she lost her eye...even if he hadn't won the battle. It was his first medal earned, back when he was still new and fresh and full of ideals. He had refused to fight once the human had surrendered, only to be knocked out with a heavy wallop to his blind side when he knelt to CHECK them.

Various years of service pins...10 years...25...50...a century. Each a slim bar of increasingly more precious metals.

And his Captain’s pin, ironically a skull with a crown. It used to make him so proud that he would spend hours buffing it out every other night until it gleamed.

Now it just made him feel slightly ill.

The Great and Terrible Papyrus.

He sighed and leaned against the bed. Who is he kidding? There isn't anything Great or Terrible about him at all anymore. Lost his rank as captain when the guard was disbanded, lost his brother when he realized he didn't have to stick around and deal with his shit anymore...lost his way, his vision for this life--when Frisk had challenged everything he knew and broken him down to his basest insecurities right there in the snow underground.

He had his ideas for making the world a better place...as misguided as he was, he's certain that was how he always was. He wasn't born with cruelty simmering beneath the surface, and he should have been stronger. Maybe if he had an ounce of self-control, he would still be able to count Sans as a friend instead of a tired sibling who begrudgingly helps him clean up his messes.

...maybe he'd know what to do about you.

Well, he's clearly dwelled on those feelings quite enough. He set the medals on the nightstand and continued digging through the box. There's something he needs in here, and he can't remember why or what. He pulls out a few battered VHS tapes he and Sans used to watch on repeat, an old grocery list that was the only thing left of Gaster's handwriting, the disembodied head of a stuffed dog Sans had won him at some sort of festival when they were kids. He chuckled as he set that one down, remembering how Sans had promptly ripped the head off to be a dick, but Papyrus, always the rebel, said he liked it better that way because it was unique now.

And a velvet box. He brushed his hand over the velvet, pondering. What's even in there? It's been there for decades, since he joined the guard. Some sort of trainee medal he forgot about?

Hmm...not likely. How had he never opened this to figure this out?

His hand hesitated for some reason, something pulling at the corners of his mind.

He jumped as his phone blared your ringtone, and with a grumble he carefully replaced the contents of the box and secured the lid, groping for the phone with one hand.

“Can I help you?”

“I have to get back to work, but Victor is home today so there’s no reason you can’t move the rest of your stuff in, too,” you said, barely looking up from where you were tying your shoes in the entryway.
Papyrus glanced over at his pile of boxes and decided not to tell you he didn't have more stuff.

“Very well. And which room am I moving the rest of my stuff into?”

With a tired exhale, you drew yourself up and smiled at him, pushing your hair from your face.

“That's the dilemma. I have two spares, but one is my office and the other is...not open.” He raised a brow at your wording, but apparently you didn't see fit to elaborate, and instead gestured to the main bedroom. “I'm almost never here anyway, so...if it's okay, you can stay in my room until I clear out the office. I'm really sorry, with all that's going on with the new wing I just didn't get the chance to clear it.”

Your hand hesitated on the knob, and you looked pointedly at him as he bumped you, having started to follow with his keepsakes box.

“What?” He huffed, impatient.

“No snooping in my beeswax, okay?” You accused, pointing at him.

“Me? Snooping?” He snorted, chuckling. “I don't know where you get this twisted vision you have of me.”

“Probably from the several months that I've known you and how intensely transparent you can be,” you teased, shoving his arm a little, playfully. “I mean, you trust me, right? So I trust you.”

With that, you pushed open the door and gestured for him to go ahead, and he tried not to make it obvious that he was analyzing every inch of what he could see.

The first of which was, of course, paperwork. It was all over your bed, your desk, and even tacked to the walls--medical addendums, bills that required correcting, scribbled notes on Monster anatomy with surprisingly good sketches to accompany them.

“We've been thinking of me in bed, have we?” He chuckled, picking up an impressive sketch of what he could only assume was his chest and spine, what with the hole and spiderweb of cracks in the sternum and the scribbled notes about his healing process.

“I said no snooping,” you huffed, blushing as you snatched the notes away from him.

“Is it really snooping if it's right where I am to lay my head?” He asked, brow raised. “Anyway, I thought you had an office? Why is all this here?”

“...The office is worse,” you admitted sheepishly, depositing the notes on the desk. “I can't help where I am when things come to mind.”

Honestly, everything about this space screams a genius in their prime...but he'll be damned if he says that out loud.

He glanced at where you were gathering the papers from the bed and floor, and his eye was then drawn to the rumpled sheets, the overflowing hamper, the collection of cups on the other bedside table...and a collection of socks that appeared to have been made a makeshift bed by Hobbes, who was purring away across it.

“Well, I'll be cleaning, and you can't stop me,” he sighed, setting his box on the bedside table. “Otherwise, I'll go insane.”
You frowned at him, and he crossed his arms...and you seemed to decide it wasn't worth arguing about.

“Will you be home tonight?” He asked, changing the subject. “I would like to cook for the house since I'm not paying to stay here.”

“Oh, uh, no?” You said with an apologetic smile. “I have a scheduled induction for labor with a bunny monster tonight. She's having triplets and I'm the only one who can deliver them the way they are. And, uh, in the morning I have clinic hours and a few appointments, then two surgeries in the afternoon and evening and--”

He held up a hand to stop you. “Please, I get the message. Busy.”

“Yeah...sorry.” You deflated a bit at that, finally depositing your armful of papers onto your desk. “I wanted to move you here so I'd have a better chance of tracking your progress but I guess it's no better than before.”

“On the contrary. There are no rats here.” He chuckled. His wounded pride was slowly starting to heal over since he had started packing up, and now that he was here with his things it was easier to see that hellhole for what it was.

“But, uh, I guess I should do your checkup now, before I'm gone on a triple shift?” You asked, holding your hands out in question.

“I'm fine, but if it will give you peace of mind then I--ouch! Fuck!” He cursed and stumbled back as you pressed your hand to his chest, not expecting the deep pain that blossomed from the wound.

“Papyrus?” You asked, catching him and helping him backpedal to the bed, where he went down like a sack of potatoes. “Goodness...this is worse than I thought. You've been acting so cool and macho--why didn't you tell me your pain levels were this high?”

“Because they weren't!” He wheezed, spine tingling as you unbuttoned his shirt and your fingers traced the cracks. “Not until you touched it!”

“That would be me disarming your body's natural painkiller, it seems,” you hummed, concentrating. “…you've been fighting.”

“What?”

“You've been fighting! Your body is displaying signs of fight or flight responses metabolizing the magic to strengthen your weakened area.” You glared at him sternly. “You haven't been taking it easy.”

“I train with Undyne! It isn't that unusual! My body is used to that.”

“Not with a literal hole in your chest! Papyrus, you could dust at this rate!”

He paused, the tone of your voice catching him off-guard. There was the usual doctorly concern, but there was also a fear to your words and in your expression that made him want to shudder.

“I'm not that easy to kill,” he scoffed, looking away.

“But you can still be hurt, and I don't want that either, you whump!”

“What?”
You rolled your eyes. “Nevermind. Look, just let me heal you a little before I go.”

“You mean let you waste magic on me before you go on a 3-day work binge? Because you're so good at managing magic exhaustion?” He slapped your hand away. “No, thank you, I'm a grown monster and I won't be responsible for you passing out again.”

“Gah! You're incorrigible, you know that?” You hissed, hands darting out to try and lay hands on him again. He deftly blocked, gripping both wrists as you leaned in, putting one knee on the bed in an attempt to get some leverage. “Let. Me. Heal. You!”

“No means no!”

“Yeah, well, you aren't in the hospital anymore so guess what? I don't have to be gentle!”

Oh, God, he hopes you aren't gentle.

Papyrus shrieked as you toppled him, planting your knees on either side of him and straddling his waist as you continued to struggle against his grip.

You twisted and grabbed his wrists, pinning them to the bed.

“Ha! Gotcha!”

“Do you really?” He purred, making you blink and lean back, face heating up as you realized you had literally climbed on top of him and pinned him to the bed. “How do you know this wasn't my goal...nurse?”

His knee came up beneath your butt and gently bumped you, causing you to fall forward. You let go of his wrists to catch yourself, and quick as a flash he snagged you by the waist and dragged you down on top of him.

You huffed even as you blushed, and he found himself thinking that red suits you. He hoped that living with you brought more opportunities to tease you, even if it never went anywhere. Truth is, you're probably the closest thing to a real friend that he's had since...well, for a long time.

“What, couldn't wait to get me on top of you?” You asked, drawing him from his thoughts. His hands slid down to settle on your waist (oh, he liked that) as you sat up on top of him (oh...he really liked that) and smirked down at his bewildered face. “What kind of stunt are you trying to pull here, Boss?”

He felt his magic reacting, flushing his skull and joints as you scooted to straddle his hips, and your gentle fingers came to caress his cheekbone.

“What are you--”

“Aww...there's those cute freckles. No need to be shy, it's obvious what you wanted.”

His jaw snapped shut as the warmth from your hand spread spectacularly through his face. Is this for real? Are you...flirting with him? Is this you making a move? Your hand trailed down the side of his face to trace his neck and collarbone, and then finally the cracked sternum, your touch feather-light and setting him on fire.

“And what are you going to do about it?” He asked, breathless for a moment as your fingers brushed his ribs.
“I'm gonna give you what you need,” you said, before flattening your hand against his sternum. He whimpered, half with pleasure and pain and half with defeated realization of what was to come, as your magic curled inside his bones and settled in his wound, and his sockets grew heavy with the need to rest.

“You fucking...tease...” he groaned, before everything went black.

Chapter End Notes

Darn, so close! Who's teasing who, now? It seems to be a pretty even game at this point...
Sometimes We Have Nice Things

Chapter Summary

Sometimes things just go your way, even if you can't help but feel that it's the calm before the storm.

Chapter Notes

Thank you all so much for all the comments and asks about last chapter! If I didn't answer you, just know that I did read it and I appreciated every word! This chapter is some feel-good, filler type stuff.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Your hair's growing fast,” you remarked, fluffing Silas’ downy curls in emphasis. He rolled his eyes and leaned away as best he could.

“Don't patronize me, I look awful.”

You smirked, your magic dancing over his skin lightly to double-check his progress. “Hmm...I know a certain cat monster that doesn't seem to think so…”

In a flash, his face was flushed and he looked away quickly. “I...dunno what you mean.”

“Oh? So I'm just imagining all the hundreds of times I've seen you downstairs in the coffee shop, chatting up BP?” You asked, raising a brow as you withdrew your hand. “I'm totally making up the way he wrote his number on the side of your cup this morning?”

Silas slapped the offending coffee cup into the trash as if that would prevent you from having already seen it.

“We're just friends,” he mumbled, standing quickly. “Can I finish my paperwork now? I have things to do today.”

“You'll be discharged when I say you are, Silas Werscher,” you tutted, before gripping his hand and pulling him in for a hug. He stiffened, but slowly returned it, with more force than expected as he clutched you close. You giggled and leaned into it. “Oof, okay, Hulk, don't use all that newfound strength in one place.”

“Shut up, brat,” he grumbled. “M'being nice for once so don't fuck it up for me.”

“I better see a lot more nice, and a lot less of you in this hospital,” you scolded as he released you. “Unless it's at PT or in the coffee shop with BP, I don't want to see you here again, you absolute dongle.”

“Are you...fake swearing at me?” He chuckled, punching you lightly in the shoulder. “You're really bad at that.”
“Don’t make me real swear at you!” You threatened playfully, before smiling sincerely. Silas shifted, a bit sheepish beneath your gaze. “...I’m glad you’re okay, Silas.”

“You, too,” he sighed, drumming his fingers through the messy auburn curls. “...I’m glad we had this chance. I know I’ve...I don’t deserve your forgiveness, but I’m glad ya decided t’give it to me anyway. Nerd.”

“Oh my God. Just leave,” you giggled, scooping his cup from the trash and pushing it into his hands as you ushered him from the room. “And don’t forget to text BP tonight. None of that 3-day bullshit, he’s too anxious for that.”

“Just friends,” he stressed, turning and flicking your nose, resulting in a frustrated huff from you. “You know, like you and that angry skeleton guy.”

You frowned at him, eyes narrowing as he chuckled, using his free hand to grab the basket full of his things his mom had packed up for him.

“Oh, wait, you're forgetting something,” you said, and he paused. You clicked your pen and grabbed his hand, writing your number on the back. “In case you forget how to be nice and need a tutor. Try not to ghost me again.”

“I won’t, I promise,” he said with a grin, scarred face lighting up as he tousled your hair a bit. “Don’t think I can ever escape ya, in the end. Might as well let it happen.”

“Painkiller prescription is downstairs, but seriously call me if it gets bad.”

“Sure.”

“Try to walk at least a mile every day, even if it’s five steps at a time.”

“Mmm...not so sure.”

“Silas...”

He chuckled and leaned forward to punch your arm lightly. “Relax, I gotcha. I know what t’do. And you let me know if you need me to beat someone’s ass for ya, though I’m sure m’not the first to offer.”

“You aren’t, but the sentiment is appreciated, even if I don't agree with the idea of you beating people up.” You paused, and after a long moment decided to add: “And, uh, stay clear of the Razorbacks, okay? They’ve been targeting people around me because...well, because my ex is a jealous asshole and no, I won’t elaborate. Just watch out because he mentioned you by name.”

Silas squinted at you, as if trying to see through you, and hummed in distaste. “What kinda shit’re you gettin’ yourself into? An’ here I thought you were, like...straight-laced.”

“Being good often brings me trouble,” you muttered under your breath as you pushed him gently out the door. “Okay, I gotta go, I need to check on the triplets that were born last night.”

That and if you don’t text Papyrus back soon you think he might show up at the hospital in person.

After what seemed like ages, Silas finally had his paperwork done.

With a last goodbye you took off towards the children’s and Maternity ward, consciously checking your magic levels--one of the triplets had been born very weak, and would need constant vigilant
healing for a few days. This would be the worst time to overexert yourself and drain your magic.

“Hello, Bonnie, how are we doing this morning?” You asked sweetly, and the bunny monster laughed tiredly at you.

“Oh, you know, dear...sore and tired.” She said, humor in her voice as she gazed lovingly at the bassinet beside her, where the two boys lay snuggled on either side of their weaker sister, something you had suggested for their bonding.

“Such is motherhood, as they say,” you chuckled, picking up the chart. “Are there any more concerns for the boys?”

“Oh no, they’re big and healthy!” Bonnie said quickly. “Benjamin says he’s never seen a healthier boy, but that may be a father’s rose-colored glasses.”

You walked over quietly, waving your hand and letting your magic tell you their stats. “No, he’s right. They’re doing very well! Even your daughter is leagues ahead of where she was last night.”

“Oh, thank goodness,” she sighed, laying her hand on the bassinet. “I’ve never been more terrified in my life than when she wouldn’t breathe. I kept thinking I would lose one of my first babies! I don’t know what we would have done if we hadn’t had you.”

“Oh, I’m not all that amazing,” you chuckled. Carefully, you pried the little girl from her brothers’ embrace, placing her against your chest to be closer to your soul. She let out the tiniest hiccup as your magic warmed your chest to transfer to her. “With the positive bonding I’m seeing, I’d say her brothers are her real saviors.”

“You’re too modest,” said a smooth male voice, and you turned to see Bonnie’s bonded mate, Benjamin, his fur a soft rusty brown where Bonnie’s was milky white. He handed Bonnie a little cup of water, tired eyes smiling up at you as his ears twitched. “We know that she was completely gone for a minute there...the redheaded nurse told us how hard you fought for her. Thank you.”

“Ah, well...you know, I’m passionate about children in general, and saving lives, but...to be honest, I had another reason for wanting to save her.” You gestured to her brothers, who had curled into each other and were twitching sleepily. “I’m a twin myself, you know. I know how strong that connection can be. I...I lost my sister, and I’d give anything to make sure no bonded sibling ever has to feel that pain again.”

The baby on your chest stretched and yawned, her HP significantly healthier than before, and you turned and handed her to Bonnie, who smiled up at you as she held her.

“Oh, darling, I’m sorry you had to go through that,” Bonnie cooed. “If it helps, you’re doing a wonderful job. I’m certain your sister is very proud of you.”

Ben patted your shoulder reassuringly, and you smiled, a sense of pride growing in your soul. Eliza would be proud of you. You know she would.

You just smiled and changed the subject, checking on first Bonnie, and then Ben, making sure their souls were flowing properly now that the weight of building three tiny babies was lifted from them. Ben had a little flooding, but that was easily remedied with a good exercise routine to expend the energy on.

Just the last few things to check on, and then you can leave them to their lunch.
“Nurse, there’s something else,” Bonnie mentioned, and you paused your routine checks to look up to where they’d been whispering in a conspiratorial manner.

“Yes?” You asked, pushing your reading glasses up on your nose.

“We’ve had a little trouble agreeing on names,” Ben said sheepishly. “I wanted Beckett and Leon, and she wants Baxter and Percival. But there’s one name that we both agree on.”

“We’d simply love to name our daughter after you,” Bonnie explained, snuggling her little girl as she snuffled in her sleep. “Could we have your first name?”

“Oh! Uh...I...really?” You flustered, feeling your face burn. “Uhm, well, nobody really uses my real name. They call me Hazel most of the time.”

“Hazel and Baxter and Beckett!” Bonnie said, clearly pleased. “I love those names together! Benjamin?”

Ben chuckled and kissed his mate's ear softly. “It does have a nice ring to it.”

As they chattered about middle names, you couldn't help but grin to yourself.

This. This little family right in front of you.

This is why you do what you do. They're able to laugh and smile and hold their children, and...you're able to save someone. Maybe not everyone, like Jasper, but most of them--Papyrus, Silas, and now, little Hazel.

By the time you duck out to make your rounds, there's definitely a happy tear or two in your eyes.

It's well past sundown when you drop into the chair in your office. The triplets are sleeping soundly, Silas has texted you that he's home safe, the clinic is empty and the ER has only a sprained wrist and one repeat hypochondriac guest.

You check your magic...again. You've been obsessive about it since Boss told you you could lose it if you pushed yourself too hard. But you're worrying for nothing--yes, it's a bit low, and you should rest...but it isn't near the lowest you've had and you know you have another 12 hours or so in you.

Just as you're thinking it, the phone rings, and seeing Red's number on the screen you furrow your brow in suspicion, but of course pick it up--it could be something to do with Angel, or maybe even Papyrus.

“Mr. Sans? Is everything alright?” You asked, and even you could hear the deep concern in your voice.

“yeah, hey, listen...you got room for an appointment tomorrow mornin’?” He asked.

“Of course, I could make room in the clinic. What's this about?” You pulled a pad of paper over to you to scribble out a suggested time or two. You're usually not too busy before 10, so maybe a 9:30? “You're feeling alright, aren't you? Something I should be prepared for?”

“actually...it's about angel.”

Chapter End Notes
Hmmm...what's going on with Angel?
And what's going on with Silas and Burgerpants??
Bad Press

Chapter Summary

You've never been fond of reporters...now you're even less so.
On the other hand, you get a very rare chance!

Chapter Notes

Some plot building and sweet stuff, plus some more badass Mama Bear Hazel since everyone likes her so much!
Thank you everyone again for all the kudos and comments, they really mean a lot to me❤

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The heavens were testing you.

Your eye twitched as your name went out on the speaker once more, and you were elbows deep in magic as you tried very carefully to remove a metastasized tumor from the patient in front of you. If you can pull out this main piece, your magic will travel and work on targeting the other satellites, hopefully making the young woman much more responsive to radiation treatments.

This surgery was supposed to be last night, but the woman had shown up directly after eating at a restaurant, despite being told not to eat for 12 hours before. Not wanting to risk food in her lungs, you couldn't attach a respirator for fear of inciting vomiting and so had had to postpone until morning.

Now you're 20 minutes behind schedule, and if Angel is as punctual as you think she is, she's probably already waiting.

With a grimace, you deposited the main tumor in the tray and Kevin stepped up beside you. Using your guiding hand, the combined magic settled an emerald glow that traveled through the patient's veins momentarily, fading after a long moment...and together, the two of you sewed her up as if there had never been an incision.

“That's awesome, Kevin, you did great,” you reassured him, and from behind his surgical mask you could see him smile sheepishly. “Really. You're very talented and I'm lucky to have you here.”

“...thank you,” he said quietly, and with a last smile you exited quickly to wash off.

“Excuse me!”

You blinked and stepped back, causing Kevin to bump into you with a surprised noise. You shot a glare at the source of the shock, a weedy looking man with a camera around his neck and a recorder in his hand.
“Are you the Magimedical Nurse Practioner? The only one in the county? The first in a hospital and top of her class?” He asked, moving a little closer than necessary and holding out the recorder.

“That would be me, though I have a name,” you said, arm creeping out to your side, feeling a little protective of Kevin behind you. This guy made you itch just looking at him, and you felt that all his flattery was just an attempt to disarm you.

“Lincoln Testimonial Press. Is it true that there's a human here in the hospital who's pregnant with a hybrid baby?” He asked, shoving the recorder back to you.

“Even if there was, there's something called Doctor-Patient confidentiality...something you seem to have no regard for,” you scoffed, activating your shield and pushing him gently a foot and a half back. “You'll get nothing out of me, so if you'll excuse me—”

“Well then, how about former captain of the monster royal guard, who was here following a gunshot wound?” The man pressed. “He's discharged and these records are already public. There's no reason I can't ask you about him, is there, Nurse?”

You opened your mouth to tell him to buzz off, but he didn't let you.

“Is it true that you are secretly in support of gang activity?”

“Excuse me?!”

He smirked and adjusted his glasses. “Sources say you have been secretly making house calls for the former captain?”

“He is a patient of mine. He was shot. His case is unique and important to my research, and, shockingly, I am concerned for his well-being. Is that a crime?” You asked, raising your brow.

“No, certainly not. However, sources also say you treated a knife wound for an unnamed gang member at the patient's house, completely off the record. Then later that week, the former captain packed everything up and left. Seems fishy to me.”

“I saw a life in danger, so I saved it,” you said carefully, through gritted teeth. “I'm an MP. That's my duty. And it's hardly off the record--he came straight here and saw a respiratory expert on my recommendation.”

He's nodding along, and you realized in that moment that he was getting exactly what he wanted from you--a story. You can see it now--LOCAL MONSTER SYMPATHIZER SERVES IN GANG TURF WAR.

“And who is this?” The man asks, looking past you at Kevin. You immediately lean to obscure his view.

“None of your business. Now, I would prefer if you removed yourself, or else I will be forced to move you by hand.” You held up your horribly bloodied gloves for emphasis, and he paled a bit at the sight of the blood. “As you can see, I need to wash up.”

He reluctantly stepped aside, but annoyingly did not leave as you and Kevin stripped your surgery gear and deposited it.

When you turned back to him, he looked about ready to ask another question, but you had had enough.
“Listen. I don't know your name, and politely ignoring the fact that you are in what is supposed to be a sterile department, an arrestable offense by the way, I am about 30 minutes behind schedule. Nearly 2 people in this country die each second, and I'm not interested in it being one of my patients, nor do I think you are interested in being the reason they didn't get the care they needed. So if you will excuse us, and leave of your own accord, then I won't call security.”

He hummed and tapped the side of his recorder. “Alright. One last question, though, nurse--what will you think of monsters if it comes out that your twin sister was one of the children killed by them in the mountains?”

Kevin took a hurried step back as a familiar anger flashed through your eyes.

You grit your teeth. "...I suggest you stop talking.”

“Will you still treat them? Sympathize with them?”

You snatched his recorder and Kevin reached out to restrain you if necessary--

“My life is not your story. Fuck off.” You hissed, then hit the delete function and used your shield to keep him at bay until the robot voice said “recordings cleared”.

“That had all my interviews for the week on it!” He cried mournfully as you tossed it over your shoulder.

Kevin smiled as you shrugged and walked away.

“Did it? Huh. Oops.”

There's something about babies that entrances you.

It's why labor and delivery had been your focus before MagiMedicine was an option. You felt a special connection with each baby you helped deliver, and to the joy the families feel when they get to see their ultrasound or hold their child for the first time. You could look at someone and tell if they were pregnant, even if they didn't know.

And boy, Angel was definitely pregnant.

Even if Red hadn't told you last night, even if she wasn't in stirrups while the OBGYN discussed it with her, even if there was nothing to indicate it--you could see it.

A little red glow, a tiny little soul. She wasn't showing yet, only two and a half months along, but it didn't matter. You could see the glow in her belly, but besides that you felt it. You saw the lines, the connection between Red's soul and the glow, the way it siphoned magic to grow.

Red looks tired. Maybe you can give him a boost of some sort--he's doing most of the work since the baby seems to be mostly magic right now.

But at the moment, all you can do is let the feeling wash over you. It's a sort of calm you had been craving, the bond between Red and Angel was strong and healthy and warm, and if you focused, you could hear the tiny heartbeat as Angel answered some questions, Red stroking her hair lovingly.

And then came the noise. The reporters.

And with it, renewed anger.
Kyle picked through the crowd of groaning reporters in the lobby, surprised and yet not at the same time. He could hear your shouting from the parking lot, and the static in the air was definitely your magic.

“MP sure did a number on these guys, huh?” He mumbled to Shelby at the desk.

“Yeah, it was kind of terrifying, to be honest,” Shelby said quietly, eyes flicking to one of the reporters sitting in a chair, looking as if he was questioning his life choices. “She tried to talk to them at first, but they swarmed her with questions. I heard one of them asked about...you know...her sister?”

Kyle's eyebrows practically disappeared into his hair, and he took another look around the room. Every reporter looked thoroughly scolded and upset, and...

“She deleted all the pictures on all their cameras,” Shelby confirmed, seeing his gaze fall on the reporter staring intensely at his empty camera screen. “Felt like white noise, kind of like her sleep thing, and suddenly everyone's freaking out about having no pictures. Remember Papyrus? His brother was here and he looked awfully impressed. I think we're just lucky that she took care of it before he did.”

“Yeah, I've met him. That might have been ugly, if Mr. Werscher's face the day he got here was any indication.” Kyle looked around to see if he could gauge where you'd gone. “She around?”

“Private appointment in OB. Guess she's gonna be an auntie...you know, whenever she and that skele-man get their heads out of their asses.”

Kyle chuckled and thanked her, moving quickly down to OB. It wasn't hard to find you if he followed the static, and when he peeked in the door, he couldn't help but smile.

“You look happy, MP.”

You jumped at the sound of his voice and chuckled a bit, turning back to the seemingly impossible sonogram projecting from your hand to the whiteboard. He could just make out a vaguely human-shaped blob, about the size of a strawberry.

“Mmhmm. It's...amazing,” you whispered, near reverently. “I wish my emphatic sonogram could be translated to a picture. I'd love to give them a copy. Their baby is just...such a miracle.”

“What's all this?” He asked, pointing to what looked like white noise surrounding the shape.

“That's Red's magic,” you explained. “Providing a lifeline for the monster DNA to root to, since usually monsters are only a soul until the day of the birth. And this--”

You pointed to several dark spots that were moving slightly.

“That's Angel's soul trying to help in response. Admirable, but as a double beta unfortunately the magic is pretty much completely up to Red.”

Kyle looked it over for a moment, humming thoughtfully to himself. A monster hybrid...quite possibly the first in existence! They're lucky to know you personally, though he thinks you probably see it the opposite.

“Is it...you think they have a good shot here?” He asked quietly.
“With a double beta...honestly, it's pretty risky, but their bond is so healthy that I'm not worried,” you said. “As long as they're close physically and emotionally, there's no reason it wouldn't work, barring the usual complications. But the baby is healthy for human standards, too--developing right along the timeline. Look, they have eyelids! And tiny little fingers! And a brain!”

You pointed excitedly at the mentioned parts, but honestly he could hardly see it. You just have an eye for these things, he supposed, but not him--he couldn't tell his own sister was pregnant until two days before birth, he's that blind.

“Awww, just think, you get to deliver your own niece or nephew in just seven months!”

“Yeah!” You said excitedly, before his words sunk in and you blushed and stuttered. “Wh-what, wait, I--”

Kyle chuckled, punching your shoulder and making you stumble slightly. “Save it and head on home, I'm sure you're exhausted...besides, isn't Papyrus waaaaaaaiting~?”

The sonogram disappeared as you punched him in the arm with a flustered shout, stalking past him quickly.

He chuckled and let you go. There's only so much he needs to tease you to plant those little seedlings in your mind and fluster you all day.

Chapter End Notes

Hazel ain't dealin with all that BULLSHIT
How to Care for Your Human

Chapter Summary

Papyrus and Victor are going to force you to relax if it means throwing you onto piles of pillows in the dark. Wait, the dark?

Chapter Notes

Phew, Okay. I know it's been a while, but there's good reason! So, announcements:

1) I opened up a new tumblr specifically for asks to the characters, to be answered in character. I also sell Adoptables, now, and those are located on that same blog, here: mks-magical-menagerie. If you want to ask Boss and Hazel or other characters something, this is where you can go! If it's a story question you are asking me directly, it can still go to my main blog, mskcreates.
2) As I mentioned before, I'm selling adoptables now so I took a brief reprieve from updates to make that happen!
3) Check out this awesome fanart of Kyle's Blackmail Picture by parodypunksartwork on Tumblr! It's so cute and amazing! I might actually go back and add it to the chapter it's from.
4) I dunno if I linked these yet but if you're thirsty for Hazel/Boss I've done some future-oneshots of them in my Kinkpocalypse 2018 collection: The Jealousy Game and Hello, Nurse if you'd like to check those out (SMUTTY SMUT GUYS)

That all being said, this chapter is short but I wanted to move on, the next chapter will be the promised Never Have I Ever you guys voted on on my Tumblr!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There were few things that Papyrus valued over his own life, but those things were absolute.

One was his family--before, his father and Sans, and now, just his brother and his brother's mate. He would lay his life down in protection of them, should he believe Sans needed his aid. And Angel, he will admit--though she spurned his affection he held no ill will toward her. In fact, a fierce protective instinct rose in him whenever he was near her, a sense of responsibility...probably a side effect of your chastising him for his behavior.

Another thing he valued over his life was animals. He'd always had a soft-spot for them, ever since he had found his old cat Doomfanger in the dump, barely even open eyes and half-frozen to death. He levied the cruelest punishments on those that abused animals, a fact that actually made Asgore praise him more than once--for loyalty does not come without passion, and Papyrus had both in spades.

And, most recently he supposed...was you. He'd grown attached, that much was obvious, but more than that there was something inside of him that amplified his already none-too-shabby protective instincts when it came to you. It wasn't the same as Angel--you could clearly take care of yourself
in terms of wit and even a fight, so it wasn't the normal protective instinct he was used to.

In fact, it was more of a...wanting to make sure you're happy. And worrying about if you've eaten. And wondering idly what he would do if anything happened to you.

...Which it won't. Because he won't let it.

Cryptic thoughts and confusing feelings he has yet to sort out aside, though, there's one thing he knows--he knows how to protect someone from vulnerabilities, how to shield them from danger…

…but how do you protect them from themselves? From exhaustion or malnutrition or feeling unhappy? He's never felt like this, before--connections were few and far between underground, and Undyne has Alphys to care for her that way. Sans has never really let him see that side of him, either.

So when you texted him saying you were coming home in a few hours, after three excruciatingly boring days without you, he didn't know what to do.

Thankfully, Victor did.

“What in the world are you doing?”

Victor looked up from where he was shoving the couch against the wall, and smirked when he saw Papyrus standing near the kitchen.

“Oh, awesome, hey, can you move that table? It's too heavy for me on my own.”

“I can, but that doesn't answer my question,” Papyrus scoffed, moving the table easily to where Victor had indicated.

The musician then disappeared into a hall closet Papyrus had never quite seen, hauling out blankets and pillows and bean bags by the armful.

“Come on, don't you know how a blanket fort works?”

“Of course I do!” Papyrus scoffed, crossing his arms. “I just don't understand the why of it! The last blanket fort I built was with Frisk when we first came to the surface, but they're a child.”

“I like to switch it up when I'm preparing for Hazel to come home,” Victor explained with a shrug. “Sometimes it's dinner and quiet music, and other times it's blanket fort movie night. That's tonight, if you hadn't guessed.”

“Preparing for her?” Papyrus furrowed his brow in confusion. “What the hell does that mean? Why go to the trouble?”

“Oh, because I care about her and she works hard?” Victor raised a brow at him. “Self care is important, but she kind of totally sucks at it. So I help, because otherwise she'd come straight home, lock herself in the office, and work all night.”

You probably would do that, now that he thought about it.

“Man, I wish she had told me earlier, I could have had dinner made,” Victor mumbled to himself.

“But I can't do two things at once, I guess, so I'm sure she won't mind waiting.”

“Dinner?” Papyrus asked, perking up as he handed Victor another pillow. “I could cook!”
"Why does it smell like burnt pizza?" You asked as you shut the door behind you, kicking off your shoes haphazardly by the door.

"You're half right," Victor chuckled, meeting you in the entryway to relieve you of the groceries on your arm. "Hazel, sweetie, best friend I'll ever have...we didn't need more groceries, you could have just come straight home."

"I wanted to get some of Papyrus' favorites," you mumbled lamely. "I didn't know if he had done that yet...anyway, burnt pizza?"

"Perfectly baked pizza. Burnt...whatever Boss-man initially tried to make."

You sighed and rubbed one temple as you ruminated on this. You had been unreasonably excited to come home to Papyrus, but now you were just picturing a huge mess of a kitchen and scraps of...it smelled like lasagna?

You shook your head and braved it anyway, Victor lagging behind to hang your purse correctly from where you had dropped it on the floor. He swears you would lose your head if he wasn't there to find it for you.

"Papyrus, do you need help--"

You paused and blinked at the sight of an immaculate kitchen, perfectly clean but for the glass lasagna pan soaking in the sink.

Papyrus looked up in surprise from where he had apparently been scrubbing a very stubborn tile.

"You're here!"

"Yeah, I live here," you laughed a little, coming around the counter to inspect everything closer. "Pizza?"

"In the oven, Miss Impatient," he scolded. "Unfortunately my first attempt at cooking was turned down by your palate-less friend as 'unsalvagable' and 'stomach-churning' so I had to go with something lazy. I haven't made pizza dough in years..."

He trailed off on his mumbling tirade as he slowly met your surprised look.

"You like...actually made the pizza?" You asked, gesturing to the oven. "As in...from scratch? You didn't order Tony's or something?"

"Why would I order second-rate pizza when it's so foolishly simple to make at home?" He scoffed as the timer beeped.

He donned the oven mitts and opened the door, and the most delicious pizza smell you had ever smelled in your entire life wafted over you and prompted an impatient gurgle from your stomach.

You decided not to question how he can't make lasagna but for some reason he's apparently God-tier at pizza, which as far as you knew was a decently difficult dish to make.

"Hungry, are we?" He chuckled, shooing you back a bit so he could pull it out and set it on the stove.

"God, yes," you practically moaned, and if you were a cartoon you were certain your eyes would be pointing little hearts at that pizza as it cooled.
Papyrus smirked, clearly proud of himself. “If you want any of this pizza, you will turn around and go pick out a movie with the lilac-haired human. Go on, mush!”

You made a little whine as he practically shoved you out of the kitchen, but reluctantly obeyed and trudged around the corner.

Victor smiled at the laugh that escaped you when you finally laid eyes on the masterpiece blanket fort.

“Victor. No,” you protested as he snagged your wrist and dragged you down into the depths with him.

“Victor yes ,” he corrected, moving his hands quickly and faking you out in one direction, and within seconds he had removed the clip holding your hair back. Your curls tumbled down your neck as he tossed you a pair of sweats and pointed to your scrubs. “Off. This is a no-scrubs zone.”

You giggled and pulled your scrubs shirt over your head to reveal your tank top, then wiggled out of the pants while checking over your shoulder. You didn't give two shits about changing in front of Victor--you've known each other since before you needed to wear a shirt to the beach. But Papyrus was less than ten feet away...granted you seem to be obscured by three layers of blankets…

You pulled the sweats on and did a little butt-hop to yank them over your hips. Victor shook his head and you raised a brow in question.

“No more granny panties, young lady,” he said firmly. “I'm taking you to Victoria's Secret on your next day off so you don't get caught in those when you inevitably shag the monster under your--sorry, the monster in your bed.”

You smacked him with your bundled scrubs. “Shut up! You and I both know that isn't happening.”

“Do we, now?” Victor chuckled, but didn't press the matter. “Anyway, pick a movie. Kyle's coming over later, so make it good.”

“Oooh, movie night with all my guys!” You said happily, consciously pushing away the thought of the hospital without either you or Kyle--Kevin's getting really good, and there's no monster patients right now, so it'll be fine...right?

“The hospital can do without you for one night. Don't worry so much,” Victor reassured you, handing you the movie case so you could flip through.

“But the news said the windstorm might knock the power out tonight…”

“They have generators.”

“But…” You trailed off, out of excuses to worry. “.....Okay. Okay. Relax time, I promise.”

“Good. Now look alive, your not-boyfriend is coming.” Victor laughed as you jumped and looked over your shoulder, only to see he had been lying and Papyrus wasn't even out of the kitchen yet.

“You ass!” You hissed, and he laughed again, throwing his arm around your shoulders and pulling you back onto the pillows with him.

Kyle's phone shined onto the manicured lawn of your complex, the usual streetlights dark as night.
He heaved the bag of drinks from the passenger seat and shined the light on the passenger that had been beneath it.

“Well? Come on.”

Silas blinked and held a hand up to block the light a bit. “Yeah, sure, step into the house of my estranged childhood friends unannounced, where they live with a skeleton who hates me, who also happens to be the brother of the skeleton that put me in traction. Do you even hear yourself sometimes?”

“She asked me to check in on you on my way, so she clearly cares. The only one making it complicated is you.” Kyle said, stepping back so Silas could begrudgingly step out. “Trust me, she'll be happy to see you.”

“She will, because she's too nice for her own good,” Silas mumbled as Kyle closed the car door. “It's Victor and the monster I'm worried about.”

“Suck it up,” Kyle said with a shrug, walking off with the light and giving Silas no choice but to follow or be left in the dark. He knocked on your door. "Ding-dong, I brought the bong!"

Laughter was heard from inside as the door swung open to reveal somebody Silas hadn't seen this close in...at least six years. His jaw still ached from where Victor had punched him on that last meeting. He was an awful bit taller now, and clearly more decorated...last Silas had heard, he'd joined the Peace Corps, but clearly he's come back and, from the music posters in the hall, made a name for himself.

"Kyle, my broski, nobody's used that codeword since college," Victor laughed, slapping Kyle's hand and proceeding to do a complicated shake that Silas couldn't follow in the low light. "You didn't, like, actually--"

"God, no, I'm not 19 anymore," Kyle chuckled. "Nah, just drinks and this loser."

Victor followed his gesture, and all the warmth in his eyes instantly flickered out as they settled on Silas standing awkwardly behind Kyle. The smile stayed transfixed, the ease in his shoulders didn't wane...but his eyes were just as angry as they were the night Victor quit running with the ruffians that used to run this neighborhood. The night he'd broken his wrist dislocating Silas' jaw.

"Hey, Vic," he muttered lamely, waving awkwardly. For some reason, this actually appeared to disarm him, and he sighed as Kyle stepped past him into the dark house.

"...Hey, Si," Victor said, likely bypassing every instinct to gesture him in. "I, uh...Hazel says you're reformed, so...we're cool."

"Really?" Silas blinked, surprised, and took a hesitant step inside before Victor clapped his shoulder and shoved him playfully past.

"Yeah, man, quit hesitatin', you're letting all the cold air out and it's hot as balls out here. Did you guys bring a lantern?"

Chapter End Notes
One of us, One of US, ONE OF US
WELCOME SILAS INTO THE FOLD

In case it was unclear, the Windstorm DID knock the power out, so now it's a party in the dark!
Never Have I Ever...

Chapter Summary

This game will likely be the death of you, but not before Boss succeeds in killing you softly with every innuendo.

Chapter Notes

This chapter...is a little out of place, but I like it. Some characterization bugs me but it's also after they get drunk and if I don't get past this I'll never get to the rest of this story lol. This is directly because of the Never Have I Ever event I had a long while back, and you'll recognize some of the text from that as well.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“This pizza is better than sex.”

“Vic, you're Ace. Everything is better than sex.” You snorted, serving up another slice and passing it over to Silas--or at least trying to, and finding the immovable wall that was Papyrus sitting between the two of you, the lanterns around the blanket fort illuminating his scowl and crossed arms. “Papyrus. Let me feed our guest.”

“I didn't make it for him,” he grumbled sourly. “And he's your guest.”

“I'm not hungry, Hazel,” Silas mumbled, trying to disarm the situation.

“What, is my cooking not good enough for you?” Papyrus scoffed, brow furrowing further. You suppress a laugh, knowing exactly what was coming. You relinquished the plate as Papyrus snatched it from you, shoving it harshly toward Silas. “Eat it!”

“Like I'd eat anything you gave me, you probably poisoned it!” Silas shoved the plate back towards Papyrus, knocking it directly against his sternum.

Your hand came about halfway up before his pain-struck gaze glared sharply at you, and you rolled your eyes and dropped it. His pride would be more wounded than his chest were you to do anything right now.

“If I wanted you dead,” Papyrus hissed through ground teeth as he pressed the plate back towards Silas. “Then I would have killed you with my hands. Not poison. Now eat before I change my mind.”

You shook your head and turned to Kyle as they continued to bicker. He was busy futzing with the laptop, muttering about battery life.

“Hey--”
“The hospital is fine, Kevin is there and we have Kerrigan from the 6th street branch looking out,” he said automatically, looking up at you with a raised brow. “Generators were already on before I left so don't gimme that either.”

You frowned a little. “Not what I was going to ask, actually.”

“But you were worried about it.”

You shut your mouth and pursed your lips, making him chuckle a little in victory.

“Anyway, what I was going to say is what's the game plan, MacGyver?” You asked, nodding at the laptop. “Clearly not gonna get through a movie on that, are we?”

“We worry about the game plan,” Victor pipes up, slinging an arm over Kyle's shoulder. “You worry about resting. Down we go!”

With that he bowled Kyle over, making your coworker cry out in confusion as he in turn bowled right into you, knocking you flat into a doggy pile against the pillows. Papyrus gasped as you jostled him, and the plate in his hands turned over and--

Slap!

There was silence, and then a victorious snicker from Papyrus as Silas peeled the slice of pizza from his face with a conflicted grimace. Victor chuckled from his spot nestled against your shoulder, having wedged between you and Papyrus.

“Hey, bud, the pizza's supposed to go in the mouth.” Kyle deadpanned, earning a glare from his previous ward.

“So what are we doing, though?” You interjected, trying to steer the conversation away from Silas’ embarrassment. “No movies, obviously.”

“Lots of booze and company,” Victor pointed out.

“Never Have I Ever!” Kyle cheered.

You blinked and met Papyrus’ knowing look, then blushed and looked away, remembering the last time you made a drunk fool of yourself. You weren't looking forward to doing it again but at least this time you had others to be fools with...and you did promise Victor you'd try to relax.

“If you get sloshed again I'm not tucking you in,” Victor grumbled at Kyle, absently ruffling his auburn curls from where they ended up snuggling as you removed yourself from their pile.

“You will, don't worry.”

“Never have I ever been dared to eat something inedible,” Papyrus said, refilling his glass.

“Really?” You asked as everyone but him took a sip of their drinks, including yourself.

“Nobody dares me to do anything unless they want a broken bone,” he clarified.

“Hazel and I got dared by...got dared to eat the clay face mask stuff her Step-mom used to use.” Silas chuckles at the memory. “God, it was nasty.”

You wrinkled your nose at the memory. “Oh, God, Dad made us go to the hospital and sit there for
three hours until the doctors told him that eating clay isn’t poison.”

“I was dared to eat a worm on the playground in fourth grade,” Kyle says. “I won five bucks on that dare.”

“I was dared to eat Hazel’s cooking,” Victor says cheekily, effortlessly dodging your shoe as you threw it at him. “It’s amazing I’m still alive.”

“My turn!” You said, all-too-quickly moving on. “Never have I ever...broken into somebody’s house.”

Papyrus frowned and waited for you to turn around before taking a sip. Kyle nonchalantly throws one back, too, surprising everyone else.

"I feel like we’re learning a lot about Kyle tonight,” you mumbled. “I wanna know, though.”

“Yeah, Kyle, what the fuck?” Victor chuckled.

“I was 18 and stupid, secretly dating my friend’s mom and locked myself out in my skivvies,” he explained. “Heard my friend’s car pulling up, had about five minutes to jimmy the window open, throw my clothes on, and dive into his room to make it look like I’d been waiting to play video games with him.”

“Oh my God! Kyle! You’re a whole other person!” You gasped, covering your ears as Papyrus chuckled beside you.

“The ginger has more balls than expected,” the skeleton said, lifting his glass in a half-toast.

“I’m beginning to understand why you still see fit to hang out with me, Hazel,” Silas said, shaking his head as he took a sip.

“Oh, God, victor, no!” You laughed, moving to go after him, but Papyrus caught you around the waist and tossed you back to the pillows.

“Let him make himself sick! It’s my turn!” He scoffed. “Never have I ever--”

He’s interrupted by a choked cry from the kitchen and a sharp laugh from Kyle.

“Never! ¡Santiago y cierra, España! ”

“It’s hot sauce! And you aren’t a conquistadore!”
You chuckled and shook your head. “Looks like we need more tapatio sauce.”

Papyrus couldn’t help but smirk a little bit as Victor made a pained noise and flopped back onto the pillows beside you. “Are we done? Alright. Never have I ever had sex in public.”

Everyone drinks, much to his dismay.

“Disgusting,” he sighed.

“Parked car, Wal-mart parking lot,” Victor said. Papyrus decided against asking, but he was under the impression victor was Ace...

“Hheeey, parked car, Wal-mart parking lot!” Kyle agrees, clinking their glasses at the coincidence...which Papyrus was fairly certain was no coincidence. He’s beginning to understand the connection between the two of them, even if you seemed completely oblivious. “Also the bathroom. And the break room at the hospital. And...MP’s office.”

“Oh, God, Kyle! I do my paperwork there!” You gasped accusingly, swatting him.

“Like you haven’t had sex in there!”

“Yes, but it’s my office,” you mumbled, looking down at your drink.

“Makeout point, back of my old truck,” Silas said, ignoring you and Kyle completely. “My watch got stuck in her hair and the police found us like that.”

Papyrus stared at you all for a long moment. “...You all are animals.”

“What, big bad monster boy won’t do it outside the bedroom?” Kyle teased. “Say...in a hospital bed?”

“Victor!” You said suddenly. “It’s your turn!”

“Okay, okay,” Victor relents. “Never have I ever had a hangover.”

Everyone except you and Victor drink.

“You both are disgusting and I hate you,” Kyle scoffed.

“Drink more water,” you suggested, tossing a water bottle from the stash next to you. “Silas, your turn.”

“Okay,” he said, smirking devilishly. “Never have I ever...been shot.”

“Really?” You asked, face screwing up as you tried to remember all the times you’d treated him. “Huh. I guess you haven’t.”

Papyrus growled and narrowed his eyes. “That’s targeting.”

“Sure is,” Silas said simply, leaning back.

“You can’t do that,” he protested. “Nurse! He can’t do that!”

“Oh, come on, just drink,” you giggled, lolling your head to look at him sideways. “We all know you gotta.”
“I won’t,” he scoffed, crossing his arms. You rolled your eyes and sat up, looking at him sternly.

“Papyrus, play the game.”

“I’ll play when it’s fair!”

You laughed and moved forward, gripping his wrist and trying to push his drink closer to him. “C’mon, tough guy, don’t let him get to you.”

“I--”

You plopped into his lap and he locked up, his free hand zeroing in on your waist quickly and dragging you closer.

“Just drink,” you cooed, hair falling forward as you leaned on him, pushing his drink to his teeth. His eyelights flicked from the cup to you, and briefly down your top as you pressed up against him...and then he grinned at Silas, who scowled at him. He drank, and you laughed, leaning back. “See? Was that so hard?”

You gasped as Papyrus curled his arm around your waist, tossing you down to the pillows and following swiftly, his skull inches from your face.

“Pull another stunt like that…” he purred, his hand trailing over your side teasingly. “...and it might very well be.”

You blinked in confusion, the drink clouding your mind and making it all spin just a little. Was it hot in here, or was it just you? And his eyelights, like little fires burning holes in your body...

“Hey, it’s your turn, Hazel,” Silas said loudly, coughing.

“Oh-oh!” You squeaked, rolling from underneath Papyrus and returning to your spot between Silas and Victor. Your face was burning as you avoided Papyrus’ eye. “Uhh...right. Right. Uhhh...Never have I ever eaten a stick of butter.”

Victor and Silas both drank, and Papyrus frowned when you started laughing, leaning heavier on Silas.

“Oh, my God, I remember when you did that!” You laughed, shoving him just a bit. He laughed in return, bumping you back with his shoulder. “Ugh! I almost vomited! Oh, remember that time we thought there was chocolate in my dad's desk drawer, and it turned out to be gummies?”

Silas made a grossed out noise. “Yeah, gummy penises. I’ll never unsee that.”

“God, you should have seen the penis ice cubes, then.”


“Never have I ever farted during sex,” Victor said suddenly, breaking up the side conversation.

Nobody moved.

“Oh, thank God, I didn’t want to hear that story,” he chuckled.

“I’ve had someone fart on me during sex, does that count?” Kyle asked, half-raising his glass in anticipation.
“Ew, Kyle, nobody wants to hear about your gross asshole ex-boyfriend,” you scoffed, and Kyle laughed.

“Okay, okay, fair enough. I don’t even wanna talk about him. Is it my turn?”


Kyle nodded, hilariously serious. “Never have I ever owned a weird pet. Like, not a normal animal one might have as a pet.”

“I had a litany of rats, bunnies, guinea pigs, and lizards growing up,” you said thoughtfully. “I don’t think those are weird. Are they weird?”

“I’d say your pet raccoon was pretty weird,” Silas pushed.

“Oh, shoot, I forgot about Grumpy,” you giggled, taking a sip and throwing your arm around Silas. “Silas, the memory master!”

“I had a pet rock,” Papyrus sighed, eyes narrowing at the familiarity between you two. “Or rather, Sans had a pet rock. But he never treated it like a pet so I had to do everything. He laughed at me when I strapped a harness on it, but he wasn’t laughing when it zoomed down the road and nearly tore his arm off.”

You laughed, but he felt uncomfortable with it. It didn’t seem directed at him as much as it was Silas, who threw his arm around you in return as you recounted the time he spun so much in your father’s desk chair that he vomited, in response to Kyle’s turn. He was hardly listening to the statements now, but rather hyperfocused on you, and Silas, and...

...he hated that you had history. Not because of that fact, that would be petty, but because it was keeping him from spending time with you. Not that Silas was a threat, of course not, but...he didn’t miss the smug looks the guy was throwing at him.

Silas yelped as he fell over, and you wobbled in place, Papyrus’ strong hand keeping you steady.

“Oh dear, maybe you should call it quits?” Papyrus mused, smug smile pointed at Silas as he groaned on the floor. He tugged your arm gently and soon you found yourself practically in his lap, and for some reason that was just...so funny. You just didn’t know why.

Instead of dwelling on it you slouched in his grip, leaning fully back against him. Why not? It’s fine, it’s all fine, he isn’t even interested in you that way so why should you worry?

“Never have I ever worn a collar,” Victor said.

You shrugged and grabbed your drink, clinking glasses with Kyle as you both downed them. Victor made a face at you.

“Oh, god, I didn’t need that visual,” he groaned.

Papyrus chuckled behind you, fingers creeping up to ghost over your shoulders as he muttered in your ear. “Well...I did.”

You shivered and giggled. “Okay, my turn?” You sat up a bit and slouched forward. “Never have I ever hit on an authority figure.”

Victor takes a sip, and Papyrus reaches past you for his drink so he can take one, too.
“I tried to flirt with my professor once to raise my grades,” Victor admitted. “She told me it would have worked if she wasn’t gay.”

You snorted, and then looked up at Papyrus behind you.

“You’ve tried to hit on an authority? I thought you were the authority underground. Who’d you hit on, the king?”

He looked down at you, and then at his free hand where he was currently rubbing your shoulders. “…Yes. Let’s go with that.”

“Hitting on the king, man. That takes some balls,” you said, brows knitting. “Hey, no offense, or full offense I guess, but fuck that guy.”

“Excuse me?” He chuckled, taking it rather lightly.

“Yeah, fuck that guy,” Silas echoed. “He deserves the death penalty for what he did to E...er...to those kids.”

Papyrus squeezed your shoulders a little bit, and it sobered you a little. You’d nearly forgotten that he was head of the guard, and likely directly responsible for at least a few monster deaths in his time. And it’s likely that even if he didn’t catch them...he’d hunted those kids. Frisk included.

“Oh, Papyrus...I’m sorry, I...I didn’t mean…”

He avoided your eyes, and it got sort of quiet. Then he sighed.

“There is no defending what we did down there, regardless of whom to,” he mumbled. “I understand your point, so let us...move on.”

You could feel Silas glaring at him, and in an effort to defuse the tension, you laughed nervously and pointed at Kyle. “Kyle! You go!”

“Oh! Uhhh...Okay. Never have I ever confessed a crush to somebody.” Kyle said, and both Victor and Kyle smirked at you as Silas took a sip unnoticed.

You blushed and giggled. “Yeah, right,” you sighed, leaning back against Papyrus, who’s drunk-clumsy arms wrapped around you automatically. “My love life is in shambles. I’m a wreck.”

Victor gave a long-suffering sigh. “Well, that’s true I guess.”

“Never have I ever had a crush on my nurse,” Kyle said quickly.

“Woah, wait, you can’t go twice in a row,” you giggled. “Ugh...you know what, I’m tired anyhow. Think I’m at my limit. I’mmmmm’a go to bed.”

You tried to get up and swayed, falling forward and into the blankets on the floor with a groan.

“Who put the floor here?” You joked.

“Alright, come on, then,” Papyrus sighed, helping you to your feet. You both stumbled, and he backed up against the kitchen counter as the sheets on the floor tangled around your ankles. “…Fuck.”

You laughed and leaned into his chest. “Come on, you’re the trained one. Can’t you stay upright?”
“Much rather be horizontal,” he muttered salaciously into your ear, making you giggle and press your face to his shirt.

“Come on, Si, you can share the couch with me,” Kyle slurred, bowling Silas over with little resistance.

“Ugh! Just don’t breathe on my face,” Silas groaned, rolling into the pillows as Kyle made himself comfortable.

“Couch is over…” Victor paused, watching as you and Papyrus stumbled down the hall, and Silas and Kyle began to snore immediately. “Well. A pillow fort is good, too, I guess.”

“Oh, right, to the right!” you giggled as Papyrus leaned toward the wall. He chuckled and veered the other way, and you screeched as he swung you up into his arms and over his shoulder. “Ack! You’re gonna drop meeeeee!”

“Oh, well if you squirm,” he laughed, pinching your side. “Come now, I know where your room is. Probably better than you do, miss never-home.”

“You are such an ass when you drink,” you groaned.

“I’m an ass all the time, but at least it’s a nice one.”

“WaiWaiWait...do you have an ass?” You asked seriously. “Can...Can I like...do you have one? That’s for the notes.”

He chuckled as he deposited you on the bed. You bounced and yelped. “Of course it is.”

“It is!” You huffed, flopping into the blankets. “…What the fuck is wrong with my bed?”

He raised a brow at you as he shed his overshirt, revealing a black tank top. “What do you mean?”

You gestured helplessly at the blankets. “My blankets. They had ends. There was order. I don’t know how to get under the fucking covers.”

“I made the bed,” he explained. “You know...sheets and blankets, smoothed across the mattress? Instead of in a massive ball that brings joy to nobody?”

He made his point by flipping the edge of the blankets up and over you, and you made a disgruntled noise as you tried to flip him off from within your new prison. Man, your limbs feel heavy. This might be nice.

But you have to--

“Woah woah, where are you going?”

Papyrus paused, halfway through the doorway as you wiggled until your face was free to glare at him.

“I was going to sleep on the couch,” he offered slowly, cocking his head to look at you. “Since you are home, and this is your room.”

“Fuck it. Get in my bed, Boss,” you slurred, freeing one hand to beckon him over like an old witch from a fairy tale. He hesitated. “Get the fuck over here, fucker, I wanna pass out and I don’t want you killing Silas while I sleep.”
He laughed a bit, running a hand over his skull as he shut the door and made his way over to the bed. “...You have a filthy fucking mouth when you drink.”

“You like it, you think it’s hot,” you teased. “What is this, you wear tank tops now?”

He froze beneath your hands as you pressed up against him, always pretty snuggly at this point of drinking but you didn’t really care. You did have a bit too much tonight--perhaps drinking games with Papyrus weren’t a great idea, but it definitely made it easier to explain away your behavior in the morning. For now you just enjoyed the way he felt beside you, pressing lightly and tracing his bones through his shirt. Fuck, you wanted him so bad, but you weren’t drunk enough to admit that.

“So for your notes?” He teased, trapping your hand to his ribs as he rolled to face you, his free hand snaking underneath your blanket fortress to snag your waist and drag you against him. You felt your breath catch as his face became suddenly very close, too close, a nice distance if you wanted to kiss him which, you do want to, but you shouldn’t, so you don’t.

“I have a lot of things I could show you for those notes of yours, Nurse,” he purred, teasing you, and you laughed, leaning into his hold. He hummed at the positive response, a voice in his head telling him now is probably not the time to start this seeing as you were hilariously intoxicated...but another voice telling him that he’s tired of playing around, that he’s drunk, too, and sometimes drunk mistakes turn into happy accidents turn into wonderful stories to tell.

God, he had missed you these last few days. In the dark it was easier to stare at you, knowing you couldn’t see as well as he could in it. He hoped the power never came back on, if he could look at you in that tank top all night. Something possessive in him wanted to curl around you, to sink his teeth in and mark you so nobody would ever fucking dare to touch you again. So that asshole Camden wouldn’t even look at you wrong. He wanted to hear you moan his name in this blessed darkness, reverent and passionate and voice trembling.

“You could write a book with all the things I want to teach you about skeletons,” he said without thinking. “But I think you’d have a hard time marketing it as professional medical research.”

“You’re a fucking tease. Good night,” you said, planting a hand on his face and pushing him off. You flopped over, and he was left stunned in the dark as you scooted and settled into your blankets.

Foiled again.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed! Hopefully I'll be able to move on now!
**Self-Control**

Chapter Summary

Papyrus has to make a difficult decision, and you learn something new about yourself.

Life is full of difficult choices. Especially Papyrus’ life.

He's had to decide people's fates, their executions. He's had to choose between people he cares about, between hurting someone or taking the hit, between pride and life itself.

He's groveled more than he would ever share, both for his own life as well as Undyne's, Alphys’, Sans’, Frisk's...he knows what the business end of Asgore's trident feels like, and his blind left eye was proof.

Difficult choices were nothing new, not to him, but he'd never had to deal with this.

He resisted the urge to groan as you pressed closer, snoring soundly and supremely unaware of just how much he was fighting every instinct in his sleepy body. Your ass curved back naturally as you shifted, and brushed over his half-mast bulge.

What a way to wake up, he thought sleepily, still partially drunk if the lack of hangover was any indication. And partially-drunk Papyrus thought this was a great idea, his arm slung around your waist as he weakly debated just waking you up and going for it.

You smelled so nice...it was comfortable, even though normally he would never have let someone sleep next to him, especially not as indisposed as he had been...and apparently still was. The underground was not the place to trust anyone--a foolish night of drinking like last night was ill-advised when everyone wants to dust you for the status.

But for some reason, you broke all his rules. He’d shared his bed with you around four times now, just to sleep, he’d allowed you to touch his wounds and heal them, he’d gotten attached...so quickly. Something about you made him long for the days when he was clean, when he was young and idealistic and pacifistic. When he swore to protect anyone, not just the throne and his own reputation. He wished...he wished that he deserved you as much as he wanted you.

He couldn’t stop the groan and the grind of his hips as you sleepily adjusted again, and the feeling of you tucked against his chest overwhelmed him.

Your eyelids fluttered softly, and he saw a spark in them as you huffed and pressed deliberately back against him, still half-asleep but apparently just as turned on as he was.

That was all he needed to curl around you, dragging his sharp fingertips over the delicate skin of your chest, dragging down your tank top to dip and fondle you beneath the bra you’d passed out still wearing. You gasped and arched, and he hummed in satisfaction, the soft feeling of your skin beneath his claws and the sweet, mind-muddling scent rolling off of you...

It clicked, and he was instantly sobered.

You’re an Omega. That’s why you’re so talented at healing, even for a green mage. That scent
rolling off of you, the way you were still appearing half-asleep and dazed, the sheer sexual energy rolling off of you…

Sometime in the night, you’d begun your heat. Whether or not you’d ever had one before, he had no clue--but from the calm, non-lucid state you appeared to be in, it wasn’t likely. He could feel his instincts beginning to react, his magic pressing hard against your lower back as he realized…

...he can’t stay here. If he lets himself, he’ll fall into a rut himself, and then there’s no saving you. He’ll overpower you easily, and he’ll be...mindless, with how pent up he already is. Pent up, still drunk, and completely caught off-guard by not only your heat but your Omega status--a perfect mate, according to his magic.

He has about fifteen seconds to leave this room before he will actively begin assaulting you, trying to breed you, trying to claim you.

He can’t let that happen.

With what was left of his willpower, he forced himself off you and jumped from the bed like you bit him, snatching his phone from the bedside table and moving for the door as you sat up, hair a mess and confusion on your face.

“Papyrus?” You muttered...no, you moaned. It was sleepy and enticing, and a glance back showed him a sight twice as enticing as that.

He couldn’t risk answering you, his hand tightening on the doorknob.

Ten seconds.

He opened his mouth to make an excuse, feeling the flush of his bones, the quickened thumping of his magic in his bones.

Eight seconds.

He closed his mouth, unable to trust his silvered tongue to say anything to dissuade you as you moved to follow him. You reached for him--

“NO!” He bellowed, a layer of dominant energy wafting off of him and making it sound much scarier and angrier than it was meant to be. He almost thought twice when he saw that hurt look on your face…

...five seconds.

He whirled around and out, slamming the door behind him and booking it down the hall.

He can't mess this up, he can't risk the only good thing going in his life.

He can't lose you.

“And then he just...left!” You scoffed, holding your pen slightly tighter. “I mean, was it that unpleasant to wake up to? Am I so repulsive? I got...excited…”

Kyle smiled sympathetically at you, patting your shoulder. You bristled at the contact, feeling strangely affected today. Normally you're a cuddlebug and love physical gestures, but for some reason it felt like a hot poker on your arm.
God, you were really pent up from all that this morning. It had felt so...so good, and so right, and knowing that it might have happened was enough to make you shiver and crave the feeling again. You usually didn't get this thirsty but damn, you really need some time alone with your toys tonight...

“I’m sure it wasn't like that. He probably got nervous.” Kyle said, even though he didn't sound too sure. “When you go home tonight, maybe just lay out how you feel?”

“It's just a dumb crush,” you sighed, feeling more annoyed than you probably should. “I shouldn't be obsessing about it. Maybe that's why he ran, he could sense how much pressure I have in my head about him. Or maybe I said something weird last night when I was drunk.”

“M...maginurse?”

You both turned in surprise to see Burgerpants, standing a good ways away from you and hiding behind a decorative plant. You started to move towards him but he shrunk back, pupils blowing wide and hair standing on end, so you stopped immediately.

“Is everything alright, BP? Do you need medical assistance?”

“N...no,” he stuttered, huffing and trying to calm himself. “I, uh...think you should go home. You...you shouldn't work in your condition, at least not with monsters. I...yer real nice, buddy, and I don't wanna see ya get hurt.”

You and Kyle exchanged puzzled looks, and he pressed a palm to your neck.

“Geez, MP. You might wanna listen to him, you're burning up.”

“I am?” You asked, pulling one of the disposable thermometers you usually held onto out of your lab coat pocket and checking your temperature. “Huh. That's weird, I feel fine. A little irritated and sensitive, maybe, but not sick.”

“Not sick,” BP agreed, shuffling slowly from behind the plant, ears flat back against his head as if he might bolt. “Uh...Well...you...you smell.”

“What, you think I need a shower?”

“No! No, uh...” He made a weird growling mewl and scratched an ear nervously. “You smell as in...like...really, really good? Like, uh...breeding season?”

“What, like a heat?” You chuckled. “BP, humans don't get heats, only monsters and animals. I get a period--”

“Oh, no, thanks, I watched the informational videos,” he gagged, the most like his usual self he'd been this whole conversation. “But, uh...you're a mage. So...maybe that's why? I'm not a doctor but I know an Omega's scent when I smell one and believe me, not many monsters have the self control I do.”

“Couldn't hurt to call that scientist lizard,” Kyle offered. “If BP is like this, then I can't imagine any other monsters will be much better until you get this figured out.”

You hummed, looking at BP's agitated state. They're right about something being off...you guess you don't really have a choice.
“well, go back an’ claim her, then.”

Papyrus scoffed, squeezing his coffee cup a little tighter and glaring across the table at his brother. It was coincidence that he happened to run into him when he had a moment’s break from his job, but apparently he was as flippant and crass as ever.

And he calls him a brute and a child.

“She isn’t in her right mind! That would be assault!”

“weird. never had hangup like that with other offenses,” Sans shrugged, a teasing grin on his face. “look, boss. it’s simple. y’either find a place t’stay for a few days and find a way to work off the energy, or ya go back n’fuck ’er into the mattress.”

“A non-choice framed as a choice,” Papyrus snorted, standing and sliding a few dollars to the table for his coffee. “And here I thought you retained nothing from my trap-making lessons.”

“yer the only one makin’ this complicated. well, you an’ the nurse. literally everyone else already knows you wanna bone.”

“I want to, but that doesn’t mean she does, nor does it mean I want to claim and breed her. Not everyone imprints on the first human hussy they ever speak to,” Papyrus snapped.

Sans frowned, and he fought the decades-reinforced urge to step back. Even if he didn’t like admitting it...his brother was a lot more experienced and definitely scarier than he was, and he has very early memories of getting pummeled nearly to dust for less than what he'd just said.

“...i’m gonna ignore that just this once, since i can tell you know ya fucked up there.” His tone was calculated, a sense of...something. Papyrus couldn't tell if it was an attempt to preserve whatever was left of their relationship...but at the very least, it was appreciated. “look, i gave ya my opinion. i gotta get back to work, lots to pay for, so make yer decision but leave me outta it.”

He stood and stretched, his back cracking and a groan escaping. He slapped Papyrus’ shoulder in a calculatedly lazy fashion and promptly teleported away, leaving him at the table by himself, and leaving the money he’d been trying to give him for the coffee.

He picked up the bills and folded them back into his wallet with a snort of amusement.

If there’s one thing he can always count on with Sans, it’s that he’ll never let him pay.

“I’m sorry, what?” You sighed, rubbing your temples. “I thought mages were Alphas, for sure, but I...aren’t humans unable to claim other A/B/K-multi designations?”

“Un-Unlikely, sure, but not impossible,” Alphys said, thumbing through some papers on her home desk. “Mages as strong as you, with powers like, like yours? Absolutely within the realm of possibility.”

"But why now? It isn't as if I'm just now coming of age. I've been having my period for at least 15 years now. It seems wrong that this is my first Omega heat if I've been having my human cycle so long."

"W-well...It may be a response to the constant presence of a certain Double Alpha..." Alphys chuckled. "It may have...kickstarted your magic, you know? The good news is, from here, your powers will only get stronger an-and more capable!"
She handed you a pamphlet and you took it, snorting. You recognized these pamphlets—you’d handed them out at the hospital before.

“I don’t really need…” You started, and then sighed, unfolding it. It certainly couldn’t hurt to look over it again, if the spotlight is on yourself this time. “I forgot that these are aimed at like...teens experiencing their first heat. The cringe is real.”

“Imagine not g-getting any information at all,” Alphys chuckled. “Th-thinking your whole life that you’re p-powerless but, but finding out you’re more powerful than most? Being an...being an omega is a gift, you know.”

“I’ve seen more of them lately, coming of age an omega or giving birth.” You said with a small smile, remembering Bonnie and her triplets. “It’s nice to see the world is changing, allowing for nurturing and gentle parenting again.”

“It was di-different down there,” Alphys sighed. “An Omega down there was...almost a worse target than a double beta. The violence against us...much more graphic in nature. Forced marks, forced breeding. Sm-smuggling rings of Omegas to birth strong young. I only survived because I was born in...in the capital.”

You shuddered at the thought, knowing all too well the realities of the animalistic hierarchy of the underground. You weren’t a therapist, but you’d definitely seen the way it changes people’s attitudes. Hell, you had a prime example living with you.

You looked back at the pamphlet.

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**So You Discovered You’re Omega!**

*Congratulations, you’re having your first heat! You’re now well on your way to shedding your stripes and becoming a full-grown monster!*

*As an Omega, you might notice some nifty things that other monsters don’t experience during their heats. Don’t worry, these are totally normal! Here’s a few bits of info to ease your mind before we get started:*

- **If you find your sexual identifier doesn’t fall into the female, or female-presenting category of your A/B/K-multi, don’t panic!** Male, NB, or Genderfluid presenting monsters are also capable of being Omega with little to no complications. See the back page of this pamphlet for more information.
- **As an Omega you may find yourself getting more aggressive than submissive.** It’s easy to mistake these as Beta-alpha urges, but there’s a reason you’ve been labeled this way. Be patient, and your instincts will come to fruition as you mature!
- **Omegas that present mammalian forms may experience nausea, chest pain, and ravenous hunger during their first few heats.** There isn’t anything wrong with one or two extra snacks to feed the calories your body is burning!
- **Despite the heat you’re going through, you may or may not be ready for sex.** Doctors recommend you wait until at least your second heat to partake in sexual relations, though of course the recommendation applies only to monsters out of their stripes. You should wait until you’re mature to take on any mates, to avoid magic fluctuation and maladaptive heat behaviors.
• If by some chance you know a double-alpha, it is highly recommended that you steer clear of them and warn them of your heats, especially if you are not mates! The urge to mate is strongest in AA’s and Omegas, and spending too much time with one during your heat could result in unwanted advances. Talk to your doctor about pheromone suppression supplements if avoiding your AA friend or family member is impossible or unlikely, so everyone can stay safe, sane, and consensual!

“Oh my God,” You sighed, setting the pamphlet down. “I got so pissed when he ran off this morning when all he was doing was trying to avoid raping me.”


“Was...was he in bed with you this morning?”

“It wasn’t like that,” you mumbled, feeling the blush creep onto your face. “We were just drunk, and I haven’t cleared a space for him yet so...we ended up passing out. I mean...I suppose if he hadn’t controlled himself, it might have ended up that way.”

“That...that wouldn’t have been pretty for you,” Alphys admitted, adjusting her glasses. “Undyne is only an Alpha-Beta, and-and I can hardly walk during my heats. I can’t imagine what...what he might have done to you.”

“So, uh...when am I…” you stuttered, changing the subject. “When am I supposed to start feeling...painfully horny? I mean, other than my fever and apparent babymama vibe I haven’t...felt any different.”

“I’m not a medical specialist,” Alphys hummed, tapping her claws on the desk. “B-but my needs grow around the first evening. Your heat, since you aren’t mated, should o-only last a few days. Three, three at max. I would, um, I would just stay home, lay low. I have some special t-toys you can borrow, and some...some supplements to make it easier.”

“Yeah...uhm…” You bit your lip, thinking about the hospital. “I guess...I could call in to consult if they need me. I just...maybe I’ll take you up on some of those if you think they’ll help.”

“Or, you c-could call Papyrus while you’re still lucid and tell him to come home.” She chuckled as you stared at her, blushing madly. “Jus-just a suggestion! You kn-know I’m rooting for you two, you-you’d make very cute, very strong babies.”

“No, uh, not looking to procreate just yet,” you laughed.

“Th-then...maybe you could tell me more about Red and Angel’s little one?” Her eyes were gleaming with excitement. “Red wo-won’t let me within a mile of her, so I know that has to be it!”

You shook your head, grabbing the pamphlet and your bag with a smirk. “Aaaaand that’s my queue to go. Good night, Alphys.”
Forgotten

Chapter Summary

You and Papyrus continue to deal with the issues of your respective heat cycles...and the memories they vaguely dredge up.

Chapter Notes

I’m so grateful to those who are sticking around through this story! I found my motivation again, so here, have some badass Alpha male Boss making questionable decisions and some soft fluffy platonic Victor/Hazel moments.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Nurse : In short I’m really sorry I put you into that situation this morning. I really hope you’ll consider coming home, or at least tell me where you’re staying

Nurse: The streets aren’t safe and I got these supplements to prevent my pheromones from messing with you.

Papyrus hummed and stared at his phone, your short explanation of your visit with Alphys doing little to console him. If he’s honest, it’s a little too late for the supplements to do anything--he’s clearly in his own cycle, if his mounting paranoia is any indication. Now that he thought about it, he had noticed increased aggression a few times in the past couple of weeks, but he’d written it off as circumstantial...if anything, his own rut had probably triggered your heat.

He tapped back a quick response, telling you to lock the doors and call his brother if he shows up, knowing that at his least lucid he might try to track you down. Then he texted his brother and asked him to assist if you did call, to which he responded something along the lines of “not getting in the middle of that”. But he knew in the end that he could trust him to help, because for some unknown reason Sans seems to think you’re good for him and wouldn’t want to mess it up.

And with that, and the way the sun was disappearing over the tops of the buildings, he sighed and got up from the park bench he’d been glued to for the better part of an hour. He needed to find a place to bunker down for the evening, and he needed to get to a monster pharmacy for the things he’ll need for his rut. He only hoped they sold AA strength supplements over the counter--he usually just gets them straight from Alphys, but he didn’t want to risk running into you there seeing as you’re experiencing your first heat and will need the guidance.

A gentle breeze rolled over him, and he sighed, reaching up to unbutton a few buttons as the heat hummed through his body. He hated this, always found it stupid. There’s no reason for his rut to have come early this year--normally he could tell the date by the distance from his heats, they were so regular. But this was a few months early at least, and the only thing he could think of is that the injury and the excess magic being redirected to it had fucked with his cycle.
Oh, lovely, the only monster pharmacy on this block is closed.

He hummed, displeased, and turned to head into the corner store next to it, hoping he could at least get some smokes to ease the tension. Normally he hates those disgusting things, always snatching them from Sans’ teeth with distaste, but the echoflower ones did have natural remedial properties that might help his current situation, so he bought a pack with a grumble, along with a few snacks that caught his eye. Maybe if he just focused on eating his feelings, he wouldn’t have to focus on how good you’d felt against his body this morning.

And how good you had smelled, or the sound of your lewd moans practically begging him to take you…

...the feeling of your breast in his hand, so soft and supple, the noises you made when he--

“Augh!” He hissed, throwing up his hands and pelting his grocery bags at the concrete in frustration. He can’t sit here and ruminate on you right now! That’s how he would end up on your doorstep, two seconds away from breaking it down to get to you, and he doesn’t want that.

He sighed and pulled out one of the echoflower cigarettes, lighting it up and letting the cooling feeling of relief sweep over him. It was temporary, but at least it made things make sense for a brief reprieve.

He paused as movement caught his attention, and slowly, he finally looked up at the area around him.

...Huh.

Three dozen men lined the street on either side of where he had just spiked his groceries to the ground, armed to the teeth and frozen in no small amount of fear. He recognized the situation, of course—a turf battle, and he’d walked right into the middle of it, thinking about tits, thrown a bag of various snacks on the ground and lit up a cigarette as if nothing about three dozen armed men bothered him.

He wondered about his move as he exhaled the smoke, casting an unbothered gaze around the frozen scene. A handful of whispers tittered through the crowd as he observed their colors.

White Ivy, with their white and green tied around their arms and sewn to their leather cuts, a ragtag group of defenders that usually roamed around the neighborhood trying to keep trouble out of people’s homes. Admirable, even if they were still as dirty and underhanded as any other gang. They were on his right, armed with broken bottles and homemade shivs and broken planks of wood.

...Red and Gray on his left, and he felt the snarl building in his throat.

*Razorbacks.*

He put all that disgust and anger into his eyes as he slowly turned, finding his target in the crowd. Camden stiffened at the attention, and the others immediately sensed the severe danger in the air.

Camden didn’t wait for Papyrus to make a move, rather drew himself up tall and cleared his throat.

“We should go,” he said simply.

The crowd around him started to protest, and Papyrus took a step toward them.
The heat boiled in his bones, billowing outward in a pressure unlike anything else, and the weaker ones amongst the Razorbacks hit the ground from just the feeling of his magic alone.

“You should listen to him,” Papyrus chuckled, feeling the weight of his bone-rapier as it materialized in his hand. He inspected the hilt, bored. “After all, he’s seen my mercy twice, and he’s scared. Imagine what it’s like when I’m not feeling...merciful?”

He growled in spite of himself, his control peetering.

“...and then imagine what it must be like when I am really, really pissed off.”

Their eyes were everywhere but him, so he could only assume he’d created a wall of spiked bones ready to rain down, and he would have...

...if not for that niggling feeling that...he had promised not to get into trouble. Promised you.

“Run.”

They didn't need to be told again, and they scattered, Camden backing away slowly and wiping the blood from his mouth from where he had likely received a wallop in the battle he'd walked into.

Any White Ivy still within melee of the retreating Razorbacks wore a face of relief, many with superficial knife wounds from their quick bladework. These kids wouldn't have survived against the Razorbacks, armed with blades and a proficient knowledge of fighting. It made him sick to think of how, once, he might have taken pleasure in watching these fumbling children get cut down when pluck and bravery proved no match for knives to their throats.

He dismissed all his magic, and his dead socket was burning. He sighed and put the cig back between his teeth.

He jumped when a hand landed on his arm, someone on his blind side, and they squeaked when he twisted around and grabbed them by the shirt, lifting them off their feet with a snarl.

...

“It's you,” he observed, distaste evident in his tone as his eyelight rolled over the form of the boy he'd become acquainted with on the night he and Sans took out the Hellhounds.

He looked different in clothes that fit, white with green stripes on his shirt, the epitome of a child dabbling with things he shouldn't. He's a little disappointed to see him involved with this stuff again, but at the very least it was for the good guys.

“I...I saw your tattoo on that night you took the Hellhounds out,” the boy said. Papyrus narrowed his sockets, and the boy seemed to get the hint that he shouldn't mention that. “Uh...anyway...I tried to join the Black Lotus but they said they don't take fool kids.”

“Filthy liars, that's all they take,” Papyrus snorted, lowering the kid back down to his feet again. “White Ivy are allied, so is that why you joined them?”

He nodded, looking over at the rightfully frightened group of misfits who were all standing as far away as they could while still within earshot.

“...wanted to make a difference, like you,” he said. “Do something good. Clean this place up.”

Papyrus chuckled, feeling the honesty coming along. That was the other thing about his heat--it
always made him incredibly honest and sharp, something meant to pinpoint the genuine compliment required to de-clothe a partner but had accidentally served a thousand other uses in his lifespan.

“Idealistic, vague, and incredibly dull. You want to make a difference? Become a cop. Join the military. Actually--” He dug in his pockets and produced a copy of your business card, handing it to him. “Become a doctor. The woman on that card is the biggest damn hero this town can afford, and pretty soon she'll need a lot of hands and students.”

He leaned down and picked up his grocery bag as the kid exchanged glances with his crew, and took off without a second thought, away from them, the smell of blood, the crackling energy of a fight.

His marrow was boiling, all that energy teased and yet nothing released, the tension coiling in his bones.

---

**It hurt, the magic building beneath the surface. It felt like fire.**

There was a deep hole in his chest, a chasm so wide he would never know how to fill it. His blind eye ached, the bandages hardly covering the still-seeping wounds.

The heat did nothing but remind him of what he had lost, and it broke him to his very core.

“he's only 17! he's barely out of his fucking stripes!”

He squeezed his eyes shut, curling closer to himself, letting the sound of his brother's voice ground him slightly.

“there ain't no fuckin’ way i'll let him work for the psychopath that took his fuckin’ eyesight.”

“It isn't your choice.”

“the hell it isn't!”

“Look at your brother. Look at him. He needs this. He needs us to help him.”

Help him...help him...help him what? Help him get into the guard? No, that isn't right. He'd always veyed for the guard. Help him what, then?

He's forgotten? Forgotten what?

Something important...

...but the pain is gone.

---

“Oh my, darling, what a state to walk around in, fuhuhu…”

His gaze snapped up, and he realized he had robotically paced the sparse blocks from the fight to Muffet's apartment, and she stood in the doorway, looking down at him at the base of her stoop, two sets of hands on her hips and one cradling her chin as she looked at him thoughtfully.

“Did you wander here on autopilot, dearie?” She cooed, and his hand twitched around the grocery bag. “No small wonder with that energy coming off of you. Come in, love--let Muffet take care of you like always.”
He looked up the street, the corner of the hospital barely in view, meaning your apartment was just beyond.

He had been heading towards you after all. He could still head there…

...or he could fall into Muffet's many arms, instead of ruining the only good thing he has going.

“Oh, how I've missed these big, bony, noodle arms,” she tittered as Papyrus scooped her up, slamming the door behind him as he shoved her tiny form against the wall.

“Do us both a favor, and don't talk,” he hissed, hooking his arms beneath her legs and hiking her higher up the wall.

“Fuhuhu...well, then it's no fun, captain~”

He growled, and then he was lost.

You've been horny before, but it was nothing compared to this.

It was less of a physical neediness than it was like feeling touch-starved, but after you accosted the UPS driver for an intensely one-sided hug, you decided it was better to stay inside.

You spent most of the evening with an unquenchable desire to clean, and by the time Victor came home the house was so clean that he actually thought you had been robbed.

You'd been worried about Victor being home with your heat, but as it turned out, his touch was like a cold glass of water, wicking the heat from your body like not even the supplements could do. You clung to him pretty quickly once you lured him into the remains of the pillow fort that you had turned into a lumpy but comfy nest of fluff, and you can only assume it was because he was Asexual that your body felt nothing but happy platonic vibes from the cuddles.

Maybe he's a Kappa, if mages can have extra designations? If he was a Kappa, it did explain his calming effect on you, especially given your connection. You thought about it a little bit, but if you're honest you weren't feeling all that up to the whole thinking thing, his fingers in your hair lulling you pretty quickly to sleep, given how your furious scrubbing of every surface had exhausted you.

...

You don't know what you'd do without Victor.

You wonder if Eliza had a best friend wherever she went.

...you hope so.

It was dusty down here, but when wasn't it?

The nice lady who cared for you, she didn't like you coming down here. As you grew older you began to realize, this dust is probably from the people that had tried to come in.

The door was heavy, made of stone. You didn't know if it even really moved, or if it was stuck in place.

There was a crack, a crevice through to the other side, and glistening snow poured through it as
usual.

“Are you here?” You called softly, voice so small in the big stone chamber. Still just a child, as your ‘mother’ reminded you.

“YES!” The voice was muffled, but the child on the other side was quick to move closer to the crack. “I’m here, I’m here! I brought you the buttons I was talking about...cool, right?”

A mittened finger pushed a few shiny buttons through the crevice, and you smiled fondly, gathering them up. You had only started collecting buttons because it was the only thing he could pass beneath the door, but he never failed.

You wanted to thank him, but the words wouldn't come.

Why can't you remember his name?

Chapter End Notes

Memories are a funny thing. Sometimes they aren't even yours.
In the Storm's Wake

Chapter Summary

When the dust settles, there's a few things that don't sit well with either of you.

Chapter Notes

I'm glad to see everyone getting into the glimpses of the past! I hope it's as rewarding as I want it to be when it's all said and done.

So many of you were yelling at Pap about Muffet lol.

TW: Mentions of attempted suicide

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Where do you think you’re going, Dearie~?”

Papyrus froze in the act of pulling his boots on as two dainty arms wrapped around his shoulders, and two hands slid around his ribs, and two more teased the top of his pelvis and dipped beneath the edge of his jeans.

“...I was considering going home,” he sighed, his body still warm from his waning heat and her practiced hands making him squirm. “Is there a problem?”

Muffet chuckled, her hair tickling his neck and her scent...familiar and comforting and...dangerous.

“The problem is, every time you leave my bed, it takes you six months to wander back,” she cooed, her top pair of hands caressing his cheekbones and turning his face. She always looked so different when her hair cascaded around her shoulders. “I quite miss having my favorite hard-to-get captain of the guard in my arms at night.”

He let her kiss him, her fangs pressing against the soft bone and his heat’s influence still lingering...who is he kidding, he’s letting this happen.

He needed...he didn’t know what he needed. Muffet’s hands felt like a cool breeze, and lacked the tingle that your touch granted, but it was familiar and it filled something...something deep...something wrong...inside of him. It made it better for just a moment.

“Stay with me this time, you stubborn fool,” she sighed against his teeth as he adjusted, turning more towards where she was tangled in the sheets. “Come work at my bakery, you know you want to. Put those savant baking skills to use and run it with me.”

“Thought I said this would be better if you didn’t speak,” he growled, looming over her as she relaxed against the pillows, her petite frame naked and covered in his marks, bruises and bitemarks that she wore with the smuggest damn smirk he had ever seen. “I don’t want you.”

“Could have fooled me,” she tittered, one leg gently pressing up against the bulge in his pants. He
groaned, and glared down at her.

“Don’t let the heat fool you, this is nothing and you know it,” he growled as her hands wandered. “...psychotic bitch.”

“Uppity prick,” she laughed, pulling him closer. “Fuck me and get out then. You’ll be back~”

Once upon a time this banter was simple foreplay, and it would send excitement tingling through his bones. Now, it just felt like empty promises and dead ends.

He kissed her anyway. It felt hollow.

“We’ll see about that.”

Victor stirred slowly, humming softly as you snuggled closer. He’d hardly left your side for three days, and while you’d been hot as a furnace for those three days, now you were relatively cooled down.

He brushed your hair from your face and kissed your forehead softly—there was nothing weird about it, more like...when his abuelita would come to visit. You were precious to him, his best friend since he could crawl. He didn’t really understand all this Mage business, or Omegas and Alphas or Kappas...you had once told him that you saw the world in shades of emerald when you healed people, and that was the extent to which he understood.

He saw the world in music. Everyone had a song. Some people had entire playlists, like you. Silas, even.

...Eliza. Though her playlist hadn’t changed since…

Well. One best friend is better than none, especially when there was a time you might have left him, too.

That’s why he can’t stand to look at Silas’ smug fucking face. The night you almost left this world, he was too busy being a fucking prick to stop and listen. You had needed him, you had needed someone to get through to you, and Silas...laughed in Victor’s face and called him a liar.

So he’d socked him in the jaw, quit the gang for good, and sworn to take care of you for the rest of your lives if that was what it took. Even if it was only him and you for the rest of eternity, he wouldn’t mind.

He still remembered your face as you teetered at the edge of the East side bridge. Still remembered how scared you were, how you called for Eliza and begged her, as he wrestled you away from the handguards and tried to remind you where you were.

You kept screaming and crying about how she needed you, you knew it, you needed to find her…

He held you closer, squeezing his eyes shut at the memory. Things had been rough for everyone since Eliza disappeared, but obviously you took it the hardest. He’d had a chance to see your soul when you learned how to pull them out and...he’s 99% certain they aren’t supposed to look like that. You explained that you and Eliza were twin souls, which meant that some of her soul was in yours and some of yours in hers...bonded at birth. When everyone held out hope that Eliza was out there, you sat with the knowledge heavy in your chest that she couldn’t be, because your bond had been severed.
They were extremely lucky, since apparently in cases like yours, most die within weeks of each other. He had to wonder if that was what your attempt had been about, if you were trying to join her...ugh, this isn’t a happy train of thought.

Happy things. Uhhh…

You’re still here, which is good, better than good. You made it through that rough patch and worked hard to get where you are. Sure, he often believed you worked too hard, but it was better than where you could have been by a longshot.

Your music was like...a patter song. Fast-paced and repetitive but never boring, and you get stuck in his head. He listened to your playlist when he wanted to zone out and feel productive, or when he wanted to feel nostalgic for the packed summer days of childhood.

Eliza had been similar, but...slower. More relaxed. Country music, songs about home and friendship and sunny days. Sunshine to your rain...when you were together it was a rainbow that made everyone smile. Actual strangers used to just give you guys money for being so cute and well-mannered.

He wished he’d lived closer in your youth, before Eliza disappeared. His mom and yours were close, and that was what led you to be friends, but you lived in the country and he lived here in the city. Silas got to be there, Silas got to be your best friend and be there every day, and he didn’t even appreciate it! He dropped you like hot garbage the moment he didn’t like something and for years, years, you cried about it.

That punch had been coming for a long time, ever since Silas had started running with his gang in his streets, acting like he knew what was good in the ‘hood. But the way he acted like you didn’t matter? The way he had the gall to imply you just wanted attention? Victor wasn’t a very violent person, and he usually saw the world in music--but at that moment, all he could see was RED, red red red and more red.

“Vic, you gotta let me go sometime,” you groaned, pushing weakly against his chest, and he made an exaggerated noise and pinned you in an iron grip. “Viiiiiiic...nooooooo…”

“Vic yes,” he grumbled, pulling your head in to playfully chokehold you. “Say tio. ”

“Ugh, uncle!” You called immediately, and he rolled his eyes and released you so that you tumbled off his bed and onto the floor.

“Man, you’re no fun,” he teased, flopping over and kicking in your general direction. “I finally get three days to hang out and you spend the whole time muttering about babies and stress-cleaning the house. You owe me, corazon. ”

“I know, and I intend to pay up. Breakfast?” You asked, gathering a pajama shirt of yours off the ground. Your tank top was fine, but soaked through with sweat, your hair a hot mess, your...everything was a hot mess, actually.

“Only if we’re ordering in,” he responded, sitting up. “I’m not scraping burnt heuvos into my mouth just to be nice.”

You stuck your tongue out at him and he did the same, and then you both chuckled as he stood finally, in the laziest fashion possible. You wrapped your arms around him and he hugged you back.

“Your music's changed, you know,” he said, pulling away. “Since you met Papyrus.”
“What? You mean I'm not 90% Skrillex and They Might Be Giants anymore?” You giggled.

“Nah, you're only like...50% them to begin with. Another 20% Barenaked Ladies, 10% Alanis Morisette, but now...also 20% Hey Violet.”

“You are the only person who understands what any of that means, Vic,” you said, patting his chest gently. You turned to leave the room. “Nobody else speaks in songs and song lyrics like you do.”

You paused in the doorway to Victor’s room, and he almost ran right into you, following your gaze up.

Papyrus stood in the living room, surprised to be caught in the middle of taking his jacket off.

“Papyrus!” You sputtered, shocked and a little embarrassed to be caught in the state you're in.

He looked at you, and you looked at him.

He looked just as much of a mess as you were, though it wore it better. His clothes were rumpled, and not in that on-purpose way he usually wears, and it was the same clothes he'd worn when he booked it out of your room three days ago. He looked tired and like he'd been sweating, and you could feel the pain radiating from his sternum, a dull ache of overexertion.

What you could see of his bones were covered in tiny bite marks and lipstick stains, though you only saw them briefly before his hand flew up to cover them, and you understood.

Of course he had somewhere else he could stay. Another bed he could sleep in. Why wouldn't he? He's a pretty big deal in the monster world, and you couldn't reasonably expect him to be...what, celibate? You aren't even together or really flirting or anything, so why should you expect him to be available for you?

In return, his eyelights were burning holes in you, examining you and Victor as you stood there, equally sweaty and messy and both absolutely bathed in the sweet scent of you.

You looked as if you hadn't slept for days, and the house was immaculate--but behind you, Victor's bed looked a right mess, covered in pillows and blankets...a nest. He doesn't consider Victor a threat, but the evidence…

“You're home,” you said sweetly, a little waiver to your voice. “I was really worried...are you alright?”

He hesitated. He wasn't really, he was still tired and his cracked sternum was aching.

“...Right as rain, considering,” he said finally. “And yourself?”

“Yet to be seen, and I'm a hot mess, but when am I not?” You chuckled. “Victor was a huge help. He was here to help me with anything I needed.”

You patted Victor and scooted past towards your room quickly, hyperfocused on not thinking about his marks and also not looking like a toe.

“Not like that,” Victor corrected immediately as Papyrus’ brow inched upward in question, and he felt...relieved. “But I cooked and stuff. We cuddled.”

“I see,” he said simply, rubbing at his neck where he could feel the grime of Muffet's lipstick. “She
has more control than I, anyhow.”

“The other bathroom is down that hall, if you need...not sure how much you can get off but I'm sure it's not a lost cause.”

“There you go, assuming things again,” he chuckled, turning towards the direction he indicated. “Do you get a sort of satisfaction from shipping her with people? Worse than Alphys.”

“Nope, just you,” Victor chuckled, running a hand through his lavender locks, growing out at the roots but somehow still as charmingly grunge as the rest of him.

Papyrus sighed and turned down the hall, hoping that at the very least Victor was onto something.

“There are too many doors in this hallway,” he muttered, scanning the three doors in front of him, one at the end and one on each side. He leaned over and opened one, and saw an immaculate office space piled high with boxes and a bare desk. He almost thought it couldn't be yours, with how clean it was, but then again, Omegas in heat are intense when it comes to cleaning. And you were supposed to be clearing this room for him, right? So it makes sense that you would focus that energy for the last three days.

…Does that mean he won't be sleeping in your room soon? Logically, of course, but...all the ideas he'd been having lately...Alphys and Undyne had been teasing him about the “only one bed” trope and he'll admit, it appealed to him.

Well...it looks a few days away from finished, still. Maybe now that the heat has passed, you might forget about the project.

He closed the door and moved on to the one at the end of the hall, and sure enough, it was the bathroom…

...he looked over his shoulder at the last door, remembering how vague you'd been about the last room. What's in there? It isn't unlike you to be secretive, but it seems...extra secretive. He doesn't think he's seen anyone but you go into that room, not even Victor.

He could see what's in there right now...nobody's watching…

He sighed and turned back to the bathroom, curiosity bugging him in the back of his skull.

One problem at a time, no sense in getting caught up in another mystery before he even showers.

“Nurse.”

You squeaked and fumbled the dish in your hand, and Papyrus snatched it out of the air, deft fingers twisting and placing it on the pile of dry plates you were working with.

“Geez, uh…” You inhaled and looked up at him apologetically. “Sorry, you startled me.”

“So I noticed.”

Is he standing closer than usual? Or is that just you? Oh, God, you're sweating. Are you shaking? You can't even tell. You were so nervous when you ran off earlier that you spent 25 minutes in your room worrying about if you looked like you didn't care enough. How you can spend that long on making it look like you rolled out of bed, especially when he had literally seen you when you just rolled out of bed already, you had no clue.
“Are you okay? Did you need something?” You squeaked, eyes flicking to the darkened bite mark on his cervical vertebrae.

“Yes,” he said, leaning closer. “I need your hands on me.”

Your breath caught, and you felt like your face was on fire as he reached up, unbuttoning his shirt slowly...a knowing smirk on his face that infuriated and aroused you.

“I...what?” Great. Intelligent.

He chuckled as he opened his shirt up, revealing the intricate cracked pottery of his sternum. “Don't make me ask twice. I'm not good at this.”

Oh. Oh! He wanted healing! You probably should have figured that out pretty immediately, considering you could sense the pain he was in from across the apartment.

“Oh, of course, let's move you to the couch.”

He hummed and followed you, eyes sweeping over your flustered appearance. It only served to annoy you as he sat, spreading out across the seat with that dumb smirk on his face. You rolled your eyes and dropped onto the seat next to him, gently moving the collar of his shirt to examine the damage.

“I know you're pretty reckless, but you should probably tell whoever you intend on fooling around with that they need to go easy on you until you heal.” You grumbled, hands brushing his shirt to the side and splaying over his chest and ribs. The bite marks were here, too, and dark bruising like hickeys. Scratches that weren't there before.

“Alright.” He covered your hand with his, trapping it against his sternum. “You should probably go easy on me until I heal.”

You laughed and blushed, not believing him for a moment as your eyes dropped and you looked away. “Shut up, you brat. You know what I meant. The person who gave you these.”

“Ah, you mean Muffet.”

There was a long pause as he inhaled sharply, apparently surprising himself with his own honesty.

“...you didn't mean to tell me that, did you?”

“No. I really didn't. I was honestly planning on never divulging that we used to date. And still hook up at times.” He sighed, annoyed, rubbing his socket with one hand. “Feel free to stop me, I beg of you. My heat always makes me ridiculously honest and it tends to linger.”

You didn't say anything, partially because it was the first time he really shared anything with you that wasn't in the moment, and partially due to morbid curiosity. You kind of wanted to know, now, even if there was a twist in your stomach knowing that she knew more about him than you in more ways than one, that she had been with him like that...he isn't yours, you know that, but something irrational and emotional had a hold of you and it was...intrigued.

“...Nurse?”

“Tell me about her,” you said calmly, gentle fingers dancing over his cracks as the healing magic tingled through you.
“I’m not entirely sure that's appropriate…” He mumbled, vermilion eyelights trained on your face.

“Why not? We're not close enough to talk about the past?” You ran one finger down his sternum and he shuddered, arching against your touch with a shy flush, his hand fluttering delicately along the back of yours as if he could trap it again any second.

“Well, that's not exactly it,” he breathed, and his fingers slid gently beneath your chin to tip your head up. “You see, I try not to talk about the past when I'm sitting with my future.”

Oh, what the fuck. You stuttered as your emotions spiked, and a spark of magic went haywire against his chest. He grunted as your healing turned into a shield, for a moment, shoving him back against the armrest of the couch.

“Fuck! I'm sorry,” you squeaked, leaning back in with healing magic to dull the pain you caused. He was leaned back over the armrest, one arm coming to drape over his face as a chuckle reverberated through him. “…we're terrible at this communicating thing, aren't we?”

“Gods. Awful.” He laughed, and for once it wasn't a small chuckle but an actual laugh. “I can't tell you how many times I have thought as such.”

“You're really...in the moment. Not transparent but somehow predictable.”

“We must be cut from the same cloth,” he said, peeking over at you. “We dated for a few decades. Muffet and I, that is. Almost nothing to monsters, though there was pressure to have something steady in my position. Muffet has her flaws, and, admittedly, so do I--mine being there was no room for anything extra in my life. I made the guard my world, something to occupy my time and the emptiness, and I was...afraid to commit. Connections make you look weak, and though I was an example of power regardless I feared making the wrong choice. Bonding with her felt...wrong.”

He sighed as your fingers touched his sternum again, and brought his head up to rest against the back of the couch as he watched your face closely. He couldn't read you, but he could feel the mess of emotions through your Intent as you healed him--lingering heat made your magic more potent, almost intoxicating, as doubt and hurt pulled back against your sheer force of will and generosity. Bonding with Muffet felt wrong, because everything felt wrong. Since the time he was barely out of his stripes, everything had felt wrong.

But you. You felt right, and he meant that in more than one way--it was more than just the way your body had felt against his or your healing felt in his injuries. You felt familiar, but in a different way than Muffet did, almost as if he'd been missing you for decades.

“Papyrus?”

When had he pulled you closer? It doesn't matter, not when you were practically in his lap, one hand gently pressing his chest as his arm tightened around your waist. He couldn't read you, but he could feel the mess of emotions through your Intent as you healed him--lingering heat made your magic more potent, almost intoxicating, as doubt and hurt pulled back against your sheer force of will and generosity. There's no danger of him hurting you now, but that doesn't mean that he has your consent yet.

“Yes?” He asked, gently brushing a lock of hair from your face, tracing fingers through your hair and sending a satisfying shudder through you.

“You have to be honest, right?”

“All you have to do is ask, but yes, right now it's guaranteed.”
“Am I…” You paused and fidgeted a bit, leaning into his touch. “Would you have regretted it? Staying here with me instead of going to Muffet?”

He looked up at you, imagining...imagining you writhing beneath him and moaning, begging and pleading for more…

...sobbing and turning away from him, hurt and betrayed, possibly marked or even bred against your will, broken spirit and dead eyes. Cursing him, hating him, or even worse, loving him out of obligation.

“...Yes. I would have regretted it the moment I was lucid.”

Unreadable. Your face went blank and he wondered if that had been the wrong answer, but surely you wouldn't want him to be happy with raping you?

“...I see.”

“Is something wrong?” He asked as you leaned back.

“No! Uhm, it wasn't really fair of me to ask you that way, I guess. I'm sorry.” You flicked your hair back and laughed, pointing to his bullethole. “You, however, are in big trouble, regardless.”

“What? What did I do?!”

“You were fighting again! Or at least you’ve been doing strenuous...activities…” You pulled a face, clearly thinking about what ‘strenuous activities’ he’d been doing with Muffet the last three days. Then you sighed and removed yourself from him completely, hopping off the couch. “Forget it. I have to get to the hospital, I have three postponed surgeries to get to and then some. Try not to dust yourself while I’m gone.”

“Wai--” But you were gone, briskly striding across the apartment and disappearing down the hall, slamming the bedroom door. He groaned in frustration, falling against the throw pillows in exasperation.

He can’t exactly be mad at you--he knows Omegas are sensitive after their heats, and prone to anger and depressive episodes...the most he can do is let you cool off on your own and hope that you’re feeling more receptive by the time you can take a break at the hospital. Which gives him…

...12 hours to think of something to plaster over the hole he’s dug himself.

Chapter End Notes

Come on, nurse, pick up what he's putting down! That was at least four AMAZING pickup lines and double-entendres! Also, Papy, sweetie...get a clue.
Chapter Summary

It's good to let off some steam once in a while, and Papyrus isn't going to let you go alone.

Chapter Notes

These two are fucking idiots. They literally never learned how to communicate and they fucking suck at admitting their feelings. I'm pulling my hair out over these two.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Oh, goddammit.”

You turned to walk right out of the exam room you had entered, neutral face of displeasure plastered on as Camden scrambled up from the exam table.

“Wait! Wait, wait, I’m actually hurt, okay? I’m not faking it.”

You paused, struggling with your inner moral compass. Curse your Neutral Good demeanor for making you want to help everyone in need.

You turned back around, shutting the door behind you and crossing your arms, watching him expectantly. Camden sighed and returned to the table with a labored grunt and a wince, holding his side. “You’re the only one I can trust to stitch me up right, Babe, you know that.”

“I’m not your babe, but go on,” you said, gesturing. He lifted his shirt, and you gasped, all anger and pretense melting as you found yourself looking at a heavily infected knife wound. “Cam! What the hell!”

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I know,” he groaned, leaning back on one hand. “For once, boiling water to sanitize didn’t do the trick.”

“Lay down, now,” you demanded, feeling a little motherly in demeanor as he obeyed. “Oh, Cam...this is bad. How long?”

“Two weeks?” He blanched at your outraged look. “It was a street fight, and it was nothin’, but then your dumb skeleton showed up and ruined everything!”

“...Papyrus did this?” You asked, brow furrowing as you looked at it again. You hadn't really seen much of Papyrus between hospital triple shifts, not since that morning after your heats. He came by, but...it was busy, and you were still hurting.

If this wound happened two weeks ago, and Papyrus really was involved, it would have placed it somewhere at the beginning of his rut...
“Uh...yeah. Yep, he did.” Camden answered. You missed the mischievous, confident grin as he said it. “Yeah, showed up, started yellin’ and beatin’ the tar outta my guys. I barely got away.”

“But…” You hummed, running a gentle finger over the cut and removing the bacteria as best you could. He groaned as you basically ripped the entire infected, scabby new skin off. “...he told me he wouldn’t get involved in gang stuff without telling me…”

“So he lied, big surprise,” Camden snorted. “Dude’s fuckin’ nuts, Babe. He broke into my house and tied me to a chair, threatened me with a knife, and then left me there to wriggle free on my own. Hell, he’s sketch as fuck--my guys said he just up and fucked off out of his apartment with no notice.”

You averted your gaze, hoping he wouldn’t see the guilty look in your eyes--Papyrus fucked off from his apartment because you invited him to live with you. You weren’t sure of the validity of the other statements, but...it didn’t sound impossible.

“Aw, Babe. You didn’t.”

“He needed help,” you explained weakly. “They were treating him unfairly there. He was paying 2k a month to live in the Ricks!”

Camden hummed, and you found his hand on yours. “You always had a big heart, Babe. I get it. But you can’t...I mean, living with him? Is that even safe?”

“Papyrus wouldn’t hurt anyone who didn’t deserve it,” you huffed, poking his wound to close it. He hissed in pain, and you resisted the urge to smirk. “So, you must have done something dumb, like you always do.”

“Okay, so I started a street fight, it isn’t unusual! C’mon, Princess, open your eyes! The streets are in turmoil, everyone’s tryna snatch up the areas the Hellhounds left behind. Normal people wouldn’t be able to survive without the gang’s protection.”

“Normal people wouldn’t ask grandmothers and little old cat ladies for exorbitant protection prices, either,” you grumbled, shooting him a glare. He sighed and dropped the subject, leaning back against the exam table as you worked on his cut.

In the weeks following your heat, you had noticed that it was a lot easier to heal than before...almost as if your magic was flowing more freely now, one hand on his chest and charging through his soul, the other gently pinching the skin into place.

“...There. You should be fine, just try not to get it wet for a few days,” you sighed, dressing it quickly in gauze. It was healed, but the new skin was delicate and you didn’t want it to break. “As for me and Papyrus, I frankly think it isn’t any of your business, and it certainly isn’t a topic for when I’m on the job.”

“Then let’s have dinner. We can talk about a safety plan if things go wrong with him, okay?”

“Camden, that dinner sounds far more dangerous than living with Papyrus,” you said honestly. “I trust him, which is more than I can say about you. Now get up, I have a long list of people to check in on today and I’m not letting you keep me.”

“Dinner, and I’ll leave you alone,” he prodded, grabbing your wrist and kissing your hand. “Come on. Next night off, just come to the club. One dance, and I’ll forgive you for shacking up with the guy who stabbed me.”
“I’m having a hard time believing it was him who stabbed you. But fine. I’ll come to the club sometime. But no tequila!”

“Aww, that’s no fun,” he chuckled, standing up and pulling you in for a hug. You sighed and returned it, and some of the hurt from Papyrus’ rejection…dissipates. “You’re so easy to read, babygirl. Listen to me, okay? You know where I am if you need to feel cherished, okay? You’re chasing after disappointment, again, and I hate seeing you like this.”

“Bite me,” you mumbled, muffled by his chest.

“I think you’d enjoy that too much,” he purred in your ear.

You shoved him away, but you were blushing.

The next couple of weeks were a blur of emergency appointments and makeup surgeries, and…

You weren’t trying to avoid Papyrus. You really weren’t. It was just busy, and every time he came by the hospital or you were at home there was something pressing that you needed to be doing.

Finally, it came to a night where you had time off, and even the next day off. You took a nap for the first portion of the evening, played a few video games, watched an episode or two of something with Vic while Papyrus was out somewhere, getting groceries for dinner. By the time it got around to early evening, you were rested...

...and as bad of an idea as it sounded, you had told Cam you would make an appearance at the club, and you don’t lie.

After almost two months of no time to yourself, you found yourself staring into the mirror with a frown.

You really aren’t good at this sort of thing. You’re incapable of dressing your hair any way but braids and buns, so you had tried to curl it...you supposed it looked decent, but not as good as you wanted it to.

“Going somewhere?”

You jumped and turned, and Papyrus looked you over subtly. “Uh. Not really? I’m not sure.”

“You’ve curled your hair and you’re wearing a dress instead of yoga pants,” he said, leaning against your dresser and crossing his arms. “I’d say you certainly aren’t gearing up for dinner at home with us.”

You tugged at the hem of your dress, a little tighter than you might have liked but definitely a good choice. You had sort of awkwardly avoided Papyrus since you’d been home this evening, but you know you were hoping to crawl in bed with him when you get home, too tired to think straight and using it as an excuse...

Papyrus let his gaze wander to your hands as they straightened the hem. It suited you better than that lace monstrosity before, but he could tell it was meant for the same thing.

“Going dancing?” He asked. “Not exactly your scene.”

“I was invited out. Just an hour, maybe, and then I’ll be back. I’m not even going to drink.”

“Are you trying to convince me, or yourself?”
You sighed and twirled one of your curls around your finger. “...I dunno. Maybe both.”

“Alright, if I must come babysit you then I shall.” He didn't wait for an answer, just strode past you to the section of the closet where he kept his items. He pulled out a deep red shirt and black vest. “And don't bother arguing. Lord knows the last time you went out didn't work out for you.”

You frowned, but you couldn't exactly argue. Weren't you putting yourself into the exact position you'd been in that night? At least with Papyrus there you might actually get to enjoy yourself.

He sighed and pulled his Henley over his head, and you definitely caught yourself staring. Were those new tattoos, or were you just now noticing them? He'd always had tattoos, so maybe you just had never realized how detailed they were.

His humeri were covered with them, all black and white and intriguing.

There was the lotus on his shoulder blade, surrounded by something in Latin...you assumed it was his gang, the Black Lotus. Whoever did that one must have been very talented, because it was gorgeous, and the black and white shading was so well done you almost didn't notice it wasn't colored. Down both humeri he had vines, one arm branching into blooms of deadly nightshade that looked unfinished, the other plain vines and some symbols you didn't recognize...a monster language, perhaps?

“Listen, Nurse…”

You looked up quickly, a little flushed as he pulled the shirt and vest over his arms, covering the tattoos you had been ogling.

He isn't looking at you, but rather at the reflective closet door, a deeply contemplative look on his face.

“I wanted to apologize...I clearly said something that offended you all those weeks ago and, on top of not having the opportunity, I haven't really known what to say.” He buttoned the shirt, and then the vest, and turned to you, rolling the sleeves of the dress shirt, and chuckled. “Don't look at me like that.”

“Sorry, just...you don't really ever apologize about anything, you know?” You shrugged, turning back to the mirror and picking up your lipstick.

His hand caught yours, lowering the lipstick.

“You don't need all that,” he said, his form warm against your back as he leaned over your shoulder. “Whoever you're trying to impress, they're an idiot if they don't like you the way you are.”

You snorted at the irony of that. “Hmm. Yeah. An idiot.” You turned to him. “I don't need a babysitter, but...I could use a friend.”

“Am I forgiven, then?”

You smiled at him, and he smirked, cocky bastard.

“Yeah. I guess so.” You said, reaching up to where he had stopped buttoning his shirt. You examined his cracks, the deep red glow filling them with reserve magic. “…except you're still not taking it easy...but what the hell, I guess that's a lot to ask of you.”
“Maybe I just like it when you get angry,” he chuckled. “You'll never know.”

This is not what he was expecting when he went out with you.

He'd always had you pegged as a speakeasy type, someplace low-key and classy, easy to have a conversation in. But this place was just an explosion of noise and short skirts and high heels and cheap cologne, and even worse, it was crawling with Razorbacks.

Of course he’d expected it. The Nightingale was in the middle of Razor territory, and who else would have you dressing so outlandish and covering all your natural charm with powder and creams? It had to be Camden.

Good. He hopes he sees you together.

“It’s fucking loud in here!” He complained, and you laughed, grabbing his hand.

“We’d better hold onto each other, or we’ll get separated!” You shouted, and thank goodness it was so loud...you couldn’t hear him purr at the idea of holding you close.

You lead him through the crowd, but it proved unnecessary—people parted for him like the Red Sea, and he couldn’t help but smirk as he pulled you to his side, draping his arm around you instead and strolling through unhindered.

“How do you do that?” You laughed as you found a booth in the corner to slide into, and he rolled his eyelights—you apparently didn’t realize you had the same effect on people most of the time.

“You hold your chin up, think ‘murder’, and walk,” he hummed, leaning close to your ear so you could hear him. “Not that you need the lesson, you know.”

“Miss, a drink for you.”

The waiter had appeared from nowhere, nothing on his torso but a vest and bowtie, and he set a glass down—a tequila sunrise.

“We haven’t ordered yet,” Papyrus growled, suspicious.

“It’s customary for favored guests, sir,” the man said. “A gift from the owner’s son.”

You reached over and pulled the drink toward you, thanking him but setting it aside. The waiter left, duty fulfilled, and your hazel eyes began to scan the room.

“Over there,” you sighed, and he followed your gaze to find Camden in a booth across the dance floor, smug smirk strained as he stared hard at the two of you. “He does this every time, it’s embarrassing.”

“Embarrassing that he treats you?”

You blushed a bit and looked away, muttering. “...embarrassing that it usually works.”

Papyrus snatched the glass and downed it in one go before you could stop him, knocking it back nonchalantly and staring Camden down as the jackass’ smirk was wiped right off his face and into a scowl.

Ugh, it was much too sweet, but that covered up the real infuriating part—he could taste it on his tongue, the tingle of mood mixer—Feelin’ Frisky, the aphrodesiac, but bumped up with some of
Camden’s own foul magic. It was nothing to him, who had meddled with mixers before and could fight it, but the combination could only mean he was trying to draw you to him without you noticing.

A love potion. He's been *drugging* you into your “poor decisions”.

The snarl built in his chest and he started to stand, his own magic flaring and burning off Camden’s weak spell.

“Woah, wait, calm down! It’s just a drink, it doesn’t mean I’m going to walk over there and fuck him.” You insisted, grabbing his arm and guiding him back to the seat. “Look, just stay here with me, and we’ll maybe actually enjoy ourselves. Forget Camden.”

“I should be saying that to you,” he grumbled, turning his heated gaze on you. He slid closer in the booth, mere inches away from you. “Forget him already. He’s trash, the worst kind. He belongs behind bars.”

“That’s a bit extreme,” you laughed, and he hummed, displeased--he could tell you everything he knew about Camden right now, but...there would be time for that after he showed you a good time. You needed this night, and you needed it to go well, you needed to blow off steam--one of the reasons Vic had tipped him off about your plans while you were getting ready.

“Fuck him. We aren’t taking any more of his swill.” Papyrus said, waving the waiter over. “I will buy your drinks.”

“With what money?” You laughed. “I can buy it--”

“No, I have some. I’m treating you.” His arm wound around your waist and dragged you closer to his side, a natural movement that denoted a protective care, though he left you plenty of room to move away or do what you would. This time it was a waitress who approached, skirt a ruffled tutu, almost a maid costume. “Two rum and coke, neat.”

“Sure thing, handsome,” she cooed, producing a pen from her cleavage and writing it down. “I like a man with classy taste.”

“And I like waitstaff that doesn't flatter for tips,” he responded, waving her away.

You snorted as her smile twitched, and smacked his leg. “Papyrus, be nice!”

“I am. I'm not giving her the illusion that flirting will get her more tips. This way she can focus that energy on other tables and not on me, in full knowledge I will tip regardless.”

You hummed, arching one brow, a little impressed with his foresight. The girl's smile returned, a bit more relaxed and genuine this time.

“God, thank you. Some of these guys are downright pigs,” she sighed, tapping her pen on her pad. “Can I get anything else for you two or…?”

“Yes,” Papyrus gestured for the pen and paper, and she gave him a page from her notebook and the pen. You leaned, trying to see what he was writing, but he blocked you as he handed it back. “Give this to that wretched excuse for a man at the fancy booth, Camden, and an order of whatever it is he's drinking, on me.”

“Will do,” she said, brows nearly flying off her face at the note. She looked up at you as she tucked the note away. “Hey, hold onto this one, or I might snatch him up.”
Papyrus watched long enough to see Camden choke on his drink, his eyes flashing angrily over at them as your skeletal brat leaned closer to chuckle and get close.

You were having a blast already, even without leaving the table.

You'd been nursing the one drink Papyrus had bought you, and he didn't push you to drink more, although he was on his third. You aren't sure what his tolerance was--better than yours, anyway, if the last two times were any indication. So you stuck to your one, and enjoyed being somewhere other than the hospital without Camden bothering you, since he was sulking in his booth, trying to pretend Papyrus didn't scare him.

It was too loud to talk much, but occasionally Papyrus would lean down and say something, having to pull you closer to mutter it in your ear and send a shiver down your spine, his hand on your hip and his breath on your neck.

“Dancing?” He chuckled at your suggestion as you slid out from the booth. “No, thank you. I'm not a fan.”

“You’re no fun,” you laughed, and he hummed as you leaned into the booth so he could hear you. He loved how, even sitting while you stood, he was taller than you. “I'm gonna go dance. Watch my drink?”

He'd love to see the guy with balls big enough to drug your drink right in front of him.

“I think my eyes will be elsewhere,” he chuckled as you turned around, moving to the edge of the dance floor to dance by yourself. He watched you closely, smirking as you swayed your hips to the beat, and he couldn't hear you but he could see you singing along to whatever this song was.

He didn't think he'd like it here, but he had to admit the atmosphere was infectious. He found himself smiling more often than not, perhaps a side effect of how thoroughly defeated Camden looked in his booth across the way.

He scanned the dance floor, frowning as he noticed the number of eyes on you. Mostly monsters and, from what he could see, Beta-mages like Camden. He could see it, too, the alluring aura of an Omega that had settled over you. Your skin glowed, your hair was shinier and softer, everything about you and your magic was just...better. And everyone could tell, even if they didn't know exactly what it was.

“Hey.”

Papyrus looked up at Camden, entirely bored expression already easily assumed. “Can I fucking help you?”

“Yeah, you can get the fuck out,” Camden huffed. “This is my place, so I could get you kicked out if I have to. I'm giving you a chance to walk out with your dignity.”

“Your place? Funny, I thought it was your daddy's place.” Papyrus chuckled, leaning back. “And I haven't done anything, so you'll just look like a monsterphobe in front of everyone. Especially her.”

He could see him grit his teeth, knowing he was right.

Camden surprised him by sitting on the other side of the booth. “Alright, listen. I'm a little tired of your games. Not just with me, but with her, okay? I love her, and no matter what you think about
me, she is mine, she always has been, and she always will be. And I know you monsters respect other people's property, so the time to play is over. I want you out of her life, and I will do anything to make it happen.”

Papyrus beckoned him closer, leaning in, and Camden leaned in, too.

Papyrus snatched his tie and pulled, smacking Camden's head on the table and releasing him as quickly as he grabbed him. Camden made a grunt of pain, grabbing his head and glaring at him.

“Women aren't property,” Papyrus snarled, eyelight flashing with anger. “And neither are children. You can't barter and trade people. Did you forget, you insignificant worm? Did you forget the things I know about you?”

“You don't know shit, and she'd never believe you even if you told her,” Camden growled back. Blue magic gripped him and slammed him upright in his seat, knocking the wind out of him. He gasped, clutching his chest and shaking his head. “You...fucking asshole...you're a piece of shit, and once that list of children you helped kill gets out, she won't even be able to look at you. I've got a guy on the inside says you did some things that would break her little heart, now didn't you?”

“I never killed any children. I won't be baited by someone as low as you,” Papyrus growled, standing slowly and flicking him sideways with his magic to slam against the other booth wall.

The music was so loud, the movements so subtle...nobody even noticed. As he walked away, he heard Camden calling something after him, but it was drowned out by the music as he stalked through the crowd to pull you from where several female monsters were fawning over your hair and soft skin.

“Papyrus!” You squeaked as he pulled you away to a different booth, tucked further into a corner and much more secluded.

“Don't leave my side even for a moment,” he insisted, scanning to see if there were actions being taken against him...but it appeared Camden had slunk away with his tail between his legs.

“You're the one who decided not to dance,” you accused, laughing as you refused to be coaxed into the new booth. You pushed against him, and he backed up obediently to the dance floor, gripping your elbows and allowing you to get closer. “Come on, let's enjoy ourselves, you stuffy brat!”

“Stuffy?” He chuckled as you pressed against him. “This coming from the nurse who never leaves her hospital?”

“I'm here right now, aren't I?”

That was true, and he could see that there were several sides of you--this must be the version of you that fell for the snake he'd just been talking to. You're smart, incredibly so, even when intoxicated, but not socially--socially, you were naive, and even though he was certain nobody would be able to hurt you without you fighting back, it's also easy to build you up with kindness, since you always want to believe the best of people.

“Yes, and you're here with me,” he purred, turning you in his arms. With your heels, your body aligned nicely with his, and you giggled, shoving him playfully. “Make sure these lowlifes know it, yes?”

You turned your head, your lips barely brushing his cheekbone where he had bent to speak into your ear. Your voice was a pleasing purr, and he couldn't help but smirk at the challenge.
“Shut up and dance.”

Chapter End Notes

Ok, there’s a lot to unpack here. I really like the way this chapter worked out, with Camden kinda building her up, Papyrus defending her, and the light flirting. If you have ideas on tropes for the next chapter, on how things could go terribly wrong, or even terribly right, make sure and check out my tumblr and drop an ask! Or tweet me at: @msmkcreates
House of Cards

Chapter Summary

It was only a matter of time before everything came tumbling down.

Chapter Notes

I'm actually really happy to see all the people who were legit concerned over Papyrus' secrecy last chapter! Having you get frustrated with my characters choices means you're getting into the story, and feeling the righteous outrage.

As I said in some comments, nothing can be black and white forever, and eventually some things are gonna blow back unexpectedly. So I hope you will stick with this story as they stumble through!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

This is a bad idea.

God, it's a bad idea and you know it, but the way he feels pressed against you is enough to make you ignore that. The crowd around you is cover enough, the rum and coke giving you a pleasant buzz, and you find yourself a little shameless, enjoying yourself despite knowing you'll probably feel awful in the morning.

*I'm so into you, I can barely breathe
And all I wanna do is to fall in deep*

It's been confirmed so many times that he doesn't see you the way you see him, and he's been drinking tonight, but that wasn't enough to make you stop enjoying Papyrus' attention. Even if he just wanted to tease you insane, even if all you get is heartache, you want it, you want it all from him.

*But close ain't close enough 'til we cross the line
So name a game to play, and I'll roll the dice, hey*

Fuck, you've got it so bad.
Oh baby, look what you started
The temperature's rising in here
Is this gonna happen?
Been waiting and waiting for you to make a move
Before I make a move

He can't help the small hitch of breath every time you squeeze closer, his hands wandering over your body in that dress. Sure, it was out of place against you as he knows you, but he can't help but worship it for what it does to flatter your curves.

So baby, come light me up and baby I'll let you on it
A little bit dangerous, but baby, that's how I want it
A little less conversation, and a little more touch my body

You hadn't drank nearly at all, and yet you were all over him. Your signals were clear, with the way you subtly curved and leaned into every touch on the dance floor, the flash of your eyes and grin every time he met your gaze.

Were you just trying to make Camden jealous? That didn't seem to be it, you hardly looked anywhere but him so you weren't looking for a reaction.

Outside of Papyrus’ reactions, it seemed.

'Cause I’m so into you, into you, into you
Got everyone watchin' us, so baby, let's keep it secret
A little bit scandalous, but baby, don’t let them see it

He wanted to slam you against the wall of a booth and fuck you senseless, right here, where anyone could see if they bothered to look.

In fact, it wasn't a terrible idea...maybe not all the way, but he could get you to a booth and kiss you breathless until you begged him to take you home.

This could take some time, hey
I made too many mistakes
Better get this right, right, baby

Before he could ask or do anything, you were pulling him from the crowd toward the booth he'd been eyeing earlier, and for a moment he was wondering, anticipation building in his bones, if you had read his mind.
“I'm so hot,” you panted, falling onto the seat. He followed, sitting close...and when you leaned in, he sat even closer. “God, do any waiters come by here? I need a drink.”

“I'll get one,” he said, his hand tracing your shoulder, your clavicle, your jaw as your eyes trained on his, beautiful flecks of green magic winking up at him from deep chestnut irises.

_Oh baby, look what you started_  
_The temperature's rising in here_  
_Is this gonna happen?_

“You're beautiful.”

_Been waiting and waiting for you to make a move_  
_Before I make a move_

“What?” You called over the music, cupping your ear and leaning closer.

“I said…” he paused and moved from the booth. “I said I'll go get that drink!”

He cursed himself as he made his way over to the bar. He'd been caught off-guard by that admission, the feeling there was more than latent sexual energy between you. He's sort of glad he got a re-do, but at the same time it's frustrating that he bitched out like that. He should have just said it, and gone where it lead!

“Rum and coke, neat,” he said when he got the bartender's attention. “And a water.”

He sighed as he sat heavily on the stool, unease in his bones as he realized he couldn't see you from here. What if Camden took this moment to try and swoop in?

“Hey, fuckface.”

...Speak of the devil.

“I thought I dealt with you already,” he sighed, sparing only a glance but getting all the information needed as the bartender placed the drinks in front of him.

Camden, three flunkies on either side. Sleeves rolled up, postures intimidating, ready for a fight.

He grabbed the drinks and went to move nonchalantly past, but they stopped him.

“You're leaving,” one of the guys said, crossing his burly arms.

“Alright,” he shrugged. “Let me just get my date.”

“Just you,” Camden hissed. “I already told you, I want you out of her life.”

“And I already told you that that isn't going to happen, you disgusting waste of two inches of dick.”
Before he knew it the drinks were on the floor, smashed to bits, Camden’s hands tangled in his
dress shirt as he shoved him back to the bar, and Papyrus chuckled as people started to look their
way.

“You better watch that lack of mouth, skeleton man,” his opponent growled.

“Or what? You'll drug my drinks too? Or maybe you'll shoot me again? Or maybe you'll forget all
about this and go back to buying women and even children from your local prostitution ring?”

There was soft murmurs through the crowd as some people watching glanced at Camden, and he
could feel the negative energy as they all questioned if those things were true or not.

“You're lucky I don't have my piece on me today, or I would shoot your bony ass again! Except
this time I'd make sure you dust, instead of leaving you to somehow survive against the odds.”
Camden snarled. “Step off my woman, get the fuck out of my club, and don't even fucking look at
me again--and maybe I'll consider sparing you, even if you are a murderer.”

“Surviving isn't murder, saving lives isn't murder,” Papyrus said, leveling a glare on him. “Murder
would have been me killing you the moment I saw your hand around her shoulders, or when I
tasted your filthy love potion you've been using on her. And believe me, I am still considering it.”

Camden made a frustrated noise and lunged, and Papyrus went to close the distance--

But both of them were stopped short, slamming into something solid separating them, Camden
falling back against his posse and Papyrus staggering back to brace himself against the bar.

You stood there, an unreadable expression of displeasure on your face, arm outstretched to extend
the shimmering translucent green shield between them.

“Babe,” Camden breathed, eyes wide as he realized you were there. He laughed nervously, rocking
back onto his feet and reaching for you. “Did...how much did you--”

You smacked his hand away with a sharp slap! and within a millisecond, your face turned from
vague to searing anger.

“You've been drugging me?” You hissed, and even Papyrus took a step back as the anger rolled off
of you in waves.

“No, not, like, rufies or nothin’, come on,” he snorted, trying to play it off. “Just a little magic and
stuff, gettin’ you to have a good time, you know? With me?”

“How long? No, wait, I don't even want to know,” you see that, disgust evident in your voice as
you pointed back at Papyrus. “You shot him? You're the reason he almost dusted in my ER?!”

“That was self-defense!” Camden hissed back, puffing up defensively. “He killed 30-something
murderers, rapists, and child sex slavers,” you corrected. “Which begs the question, Camden--
why the fuck were you there?”

Papyrus crossed his arms and smirked smugly over at his not-so-rival as the question hung in the
air, and the longer he didn't answer, the more visibly disgusted you became.

“...Oh my God,” you said weakly, drawing farther away from Camden, who wisely made no move
to follow. “Oh my God, I...I healed you. I saved your life. Oh, God, I kissed you!”
The whispers were insistent in the crowd, but Papyrus didn't care, he was too busy swiftly following you as you turned in mortification to rapidly exit not only the crowd, but the club, your heels clicking along the sidewalk as Papyrus made long strides to catch up.

You felt... *disgusting*. Dirty. That was the least of it, but you were, quite frankly, in *shock*-- you had never in a million years thought Camden was *that* abhorrent! To think, you had once thought about *marrying* that asshole! That you had kissed those lips, you had let those hands roam over your body--

You sprinted quickly to the bushes to hurl your dinner--there goes that, you guess, but you're so undeniably disgusted that it doesn't really matter.

A hand on your shoulder jolts you, and you turn quickly, expecting Camden, but finding only Papyrus.

He held his hands up, and then offered you one... you sighed, ignoring the hand as you stood on your own, kicking off your heels and grabbing them up, continuing to stalk down the street.

“Wha--” He made a frustrated noise and you could hear his footsteps following you.

What few people still milled about dove out of your way, and you took a little bit of pride in that.

You heard Papyrus calling out to you, and part of you wanted to stop…

…but the other part of you was absolutely *livid*.

He had *known*. He'd known this entire time, *exactly* what kind of person Camden was. He'd even threatened Cam with *telling you* that first time. He had used Camden's *fixation* on you to... what? Get ahead, somehow? Strike some sort of deal? Was this a fucking gang thing?

He had just *let you* continue to think he was mostly harmless. And the drinks, he at least knew about that tonight, when he drank it, and he didn't think to tell you?!

What the actual *fuck*?

“Nurse, please, we live together, you'll have to talk to me some--”

“Pack your shit and get out of my house.” You hissed, stopping dead so that he nearly bowled into you.

“What?!” He scoffed, backing up half a foot to avoid knocking you down.

“When we get home, you're packing your shit and getting out of my house,” you explained, your deathly calm mask faltering into a half-sob. “You think this is a joke? You think I'm a joke? Just some fucking human you can fucking mess with? And for what? What did you get out of it?"

“I don't understand,” he sighed, annoyance clear in his tone. “You aren't being clear.”

“Lying to me! Keeping all this foul information to yourself while I... while I went about thinking the best I could of him!” You could feel yourself shaking, and you clenched your fists, drawing yourself up as best as you could to control the shake as magic sparked around you. “And my *drink*? You decided, what? Not worth telling me?"

“I didn't see the point in ruining the evening for it,” he scoffed. “We were getting along so well I didn't want to be the bearer of bad news.”
You gaped at him, and he shifted, crossing his arms.

“In my defense, it is almost as if you are a brick wall! Trying to get any of my intentions across is like trying to shove my hand into cement and hoping to grasp gold!” He scoffed, scowling. “I had no proof but my word, and though I kept trying to move our relationship further, you were so closed off, that I had no idea if you would believe me! Perhaps if you were more receptive, we might have had this conversation sooner!”

“So you didn't tell me because you wanted to smash?” You asked, disbelieving. “You thought that I wouldn't trust your word because I hadn't fucking you yet?”

A look of shock and shame crossed his face momentarily, before the scowl returned.

“I didn't say that!”

“Well, you fucking implied it!”

“I implied that that disgusting excuse for a man was worth no more than a limp noodle and that you should drop him, but implications seemed to mean nothing then!” He snapped. “At least my baggage doesn't cavort with sex traffickers and drug me!”

“Well, if Muffet's so perfect, then maybe you should go live with her!”

You spun on your heel, making a frustrated noise as you continued down the sidewalk, the anger trying to escape as tears, forming in your eyes on the brink as if waiting for the icing on the cake.

He hardly had to pick up the pace to keep in line with you, and he wasn't done with you yet.

“This is ridiculous,” he grumbled. “He's the one who's a piece of shit, and yet I am the one being punished. And for what? Not having a conversation fast enough?”

“No!” You stopped short, turning around and taking an alternate route in your annoyance. He was quick to pace beside you again. Figures.

“Well, then what the fuck is your problem? Forgive me for not being a goddamned mind-reader.”

“That's hilarious, coming from you.”

“What's that supposed to mean?!”

You stopped and resisted the urge to punch him directly in the bullethole, despite how very tempting it was. You were so emotionally exhausted already.

“I thought I could trust you, Papyrus.”

This finally brought him to pause, his annoyance faltering.

You sighed and continued.

“I just...I saved your life, and I healed you, and I helped you through your nightmares. I endured seventeen hours of Stephen King for you, I...when people told me you were bad, I stood up for you. Other doctors, monsterphobes, Silas, Camden--I opened my home to you and I told everyone else that they were wrong and they didn't know you.” Your eyes shone with tears, and they fell despite how much you wanted to stay tough. “An-and I thought, even if you never returned my feelings that at least you were my friend, at least you had my best interests at heart, and at least I could trust you to care.”
Papyrus’ jaw shut with an audible click as he listened, his anger deflating as you went to wipe your tears away.

“But there’s this horrible, awful person manipulating me, drugging me, and you can’t be bothered to say anything beyond friendly suggestions? You can’t trust that, after all I’ve done for you, that I might put weight behind your words?” You chuckled bitterly, folding your arms and shivering against the evening chill. “...I guess...I guess I was just...naive.”

“Nurse…” He reached out slightly, but changed his mind, scratching his skull uncomfortably like a child thoroughly scolded.

“No, forget it,” you sighed, steam completely gone as you turned away, trying to hide the tears as the wobble in your voice betrayed you. “Let's just go home, please.”

Papyrus could talk out of his tailbone like nobody else. It was a gift, he’d always thought, to have the perfect quip prepared for an enemy or the most precise compliment.

But this...had for once left him speechless. You both walked the rest of the way home in silence, and he decided not to remind you that he’d driven--he could retrieve his car in the morning if necessary.

He held the door for you, but you hardly even noticed. You tossed your shoes aside, and he paused at the end of the hall and watched you go into your room.

You left the door wide open. He thought for sure that you would slam it and lock it, but this was almost an invitation to continue to conversation.

...Maybe it wasn't too late to start communicating.

You brushed the last of the hair spray from your hair, and wiped away the mascara trailing down your cheeks. You looked down at your pajamas, much more comfortable than that dress.

Almost as if it never happened.

...Almost.

You resisted the urge to throw up again, and flicked the bathroom light off, pausing in the doorway.

Papyrus sat on the bed, looking haggard and tired, still fully dressed as if he could get up and walk out any second. He seemed deep in thought, and you weren’t one to stall it at the station, so you didn't say anything, just moved to sit on the bed in silence.

“...you don't actually have to pack your things and leave, I was just angry,” you said finally.

“I guessed,” he said, voice quiet. “Though I wouldn't blame you if you stuck to it.”

More silence, and then he sighed.

“Underground was different, you know. There wasn't much that went above me there,” he said, shifting, the bed whining under his weight. “As the captain, pretty much everything was my job. It's no excuse, but...I'm used to dealing with things on my own level, and I suppose I got caught up in it and didn't consider telling you because I thought I would just...report when I had completed the mission, so to speak.”
You didn't say anything, but he watched you run a hand through your leftover curls.

“For what it's worth,” he continued slowly. “I...promise to be more forthcoming in the future.”

“...Yeah. Me, too,” you said, voice tired and heavy. “I...look, there's a lot to unpack here, but I'm exhausted. Can we just...save it for tomorrow?”

He hummed, displeased with that option...but he also wanted to give you time to process and calm down.

“Yes, I think that's best.”

He got up and slowly changed into pajamas, seeing as you had seen it all before. He took his time, hoping that maybe you would ask him to stay so he could at least be a comfort in proximity…

...but you didn't, so he left to make his spot on the couch, trying to ignore Victor's eye from where he stood in his bedroom doorway.

When he laid down, he didn't know what to think about, so he didn't think of anything at all.

Nothing except for the way your gorgeous eyes had looked at him with such disappointment that it actually physically ached in his chest.

Chapter End Notes

Oof. And the house of cards comes tumbling down, and the miscommunication comes to a head.
Things are getting bumpy, can our favorite idiots get through this together?
Awkward Family Gatherings

Chapter Summary

An important event comes up, and despite trying to stay mad at each other...you and Papyrus can't seem to bring yourselves to give up.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Of course you couldn't sleep.

You just kept seeing Camden's face, imagining what he was capable of, and every time you thought you were fine, you saw something of Papyrus’ around the room that renewed your hurt. You didn't hate him, not like you felt about Cam, who had been blowing up your phone all night. You vowed to learn how to block a number in the morning.

No use. You need something comforting.

You slipped from your bedroom quietly, tiptoeing over to check on Papyrus--asleep, though apparently restless. Hmph. Good.

Then you slipped down the hall to the spare room, pulling your key from your pocket and unlocking it, and once you stepped inside...

...it was instantly better. In here. Like always. You scanned the pictures on the walls, all of you and your sister smiling and laughing and playing something. One hand ran over the dusty dresser, filled with clothes that would never be worn, and you stared into the mirror at yourself, seeing the bedroom laid out behind you.

You'd made this place for her, if she should ever come back. It had all her things, which your father almost put in the attic before you surprised him by saying you'd take them, and they were, you hoped, arranged how she might like it. These things held power, they held memories--the matching easter dresses in your closet, her caps and gowns the local schools gave you every graduation to commemorate her, the bed with the princess curtain she always wanted…

...and you, when you were here. You completed it.

You turned and crawled beneath the curtain, relaxing into the sunflower-covered comforter and reaching beneath the pillow for the worn quilt that your grandmother had made--Eliza's baby blanket. Well, technically both of yours, but it was much more comforting to think of it as hers.

You sighed as you tossed it over yourself and curled up small, clutching it close. It smelled like laundry detergent, but you swear you caught the faintest scent of crayons, acrylic paint, and spaghetti sauce, the lingering memory of how Eliza always smelled.

“Oh, Ellie,” you sighed, sobbing into the pillow. “I wish you were here. You were always better at people than me...maybe if it was me instead of you...then maybe this wouldn't have happened.”

The room didn’t answer.
It was quiet in the house when Papyrus woke, uncomfortable from the lonely night on the couch. As little as you used it, at least you had good taste in mattresses, so normally it was fine.

He didn't move immediately, which even he recognized was out of character. But his body didn't want to go where he willed it to, so he relented, moving his arm across his face instead.

You had been so right, last night. There was...a lot to unpack. The least of which is the obvious--

He fucked up, big time. Regardless of his reasoning, he could very well have gotten rid of Camden at least five months ago just by being honest. But instead, he'd played his stupid power game and let a dangerous person not only roam around in your life, but exist amongst normal people! Who knows who he could have hurt in those weeks?

And there was the matter of treating you the way he did. His brother was right--pussyfooting around his attraction was cowardly and unfair. He had treated you as his and something to be won, instead of a friend and potential lover he could earn.

...but he's still mad at you. He's nothing if not a stubborn fool, and the things he said still apply. You closed him out, while calling him a friend, not to mention you seemed to think he'd actively rejected to a confession since you were so sure he didn't return your mysterious secret affections. How is he supposed to be responsible for the hurts caused by you simply believing he could read your mind?!

With a sigh he finally willed himself up off the couch, stretching and humming as his joints popped pleasantly, old aches fading with the stretch of his invisible muscles.

…

He put his hand over his sternum gently with a grimace. He hadn't noticed last night, but his injury had taken a bit of a beating last night when Camden had him by the shirt, and it ached deeply, a pain that went beyond the physical injury and more into the emotional turmoil of what had transpired. What if you never wanted to heal him again? He'd grown used to your healing hands, the feeling of your magic flowing through him, relaxing him...he would hate to lose your gentle, unspoken affection.

“Does it hurt?”

He turned to see you closing the door of the mysterious room behind you, a quilt he hadn't seen before draped over your shoulders.

God, did he look as much of a mess as you? You had taken off the mascara last night but that didn't stop the tear streaks from forming on your cheeks. Your curls were going haywire, frizzy and charming as they stuck up and curled backwards defiantly in places.

Still, you somehow managed to look rested and recharged...maybe you'd put some time into restorative magic last night. He'd praise you for the self-care, but it wouldn't be appropriate.

He opened his mouth to lie about the pain...and paused, rethinking.

“...Yes. It hurts a lot, actually.” He said honestly, pressing it lightly through his pajama shirt. Comforting, to feel the silken fabric of the pajamas you bought him right now.

You raised a brow at the admission, clearly a little surprised. For good reason, of course, since he normally puffs up and pretends nothing can hurt him.
“...yeah? That bad?”

He nodded, and you gestured for him to sit down. He did, and you padded over, perching on the edge of the couch as if you could take off any moment. You let the quilt pool around you as your hands gently unbuttoned his shirt, and he prepared himself for a cold blast of magic like the last time he pissed you off--

--but instead, your fingers brushed it gently, and the magic that flowed was warm and inviting and sincere. He sighed, and you twitched as his own magic responded, and for a moment you both felt like you might understand each other.

“...Nurse?”

“Yeah?”

“I--”

Suddenly his phone went off, and you withdrew your hands like he bit you. You both stared down at his brother's name on the screen, and it was obvious he had to answer--their relationship was strained already, and Sans never called him first.

He answered it without taking his eyelights off of you.

“Sans.” You watched as he listened for a moment, looking annoyed. “You can't clean your own house? Or ask your father-in-law to come another day?”

There was a pause, and then his sockets widened almost comically.

“What the hell do you mean, you’re getting married today?!”

“Hey, boss, far-be-it for me to get involved with your life, or in between you and making my apartment presentable...but did that particular tile, like, offend you or somethin? because if ya scrub it any harder there won't be any tile left t'scrub.”

Papyrus stopped and sighed, withdrawing his brush from the counter, leaving behind a gleaming section of tiles. Perhaps he had jumped at the chance to take out his frustrations on Sans’ apartment, but it definitely made a difference in a good way.

“Do you and Angel ever fight?”

“Yeah, 'course we do,” Sans shrugged. “not often, but it happens.”

Papyrus sighed, not sure where he was going with this, but feeling a little better. It isn't likely Sans and his mate had fought over anything as big as this, but it did make him feel like it wasn't a lost cause.

“Somethin’ the matter with hazel?” Sans pressed, raising his brow bone a bit in question as Papyrus attacked the tile again.

“No!” He said quickly, and then sighed. “Yes. I think I may have, possibly...just a little bit...fucked up.”

“what? you? admitting fault? who are you and what have you done with my brother?” He chuckled and dodged the brush that Papyrus chucked at him. “Alright, kidding, yeesh. tough crowd.”
“It isn’t funny!” He huffed, moving to collect the abandoned brush. “I know that you have wanted me to learn these lessons for decades, but you don’t have to rub it in now that it’s bitten me in the tailbone.”

“you are so dramatic,” he sighed. “well, you showed up together today, so what’s the big deal? can’t be that bad.”

“I withheld the fact that her ex-boyfriend is a child molester and sex slaver, and that he drugged her drinks with his magic, and used it all in what was basically a dick-measuring contest to prove who the better mate was.”

Sans made a face, his grin twitching. “...okay, so it is that bad. what the actual fuck was you thinkin’, lettin’ that nasty asshole roam around?”

“I know! I don't know what came over me!” Papyrus groaned, tossing the cleaning supplies in the sink and rinsing his hands. “I'm usually a dealer of justice, not petty squabbles!”

“sounds like you need to take advantage of the romantic atmosphere today and do a little groveling.”

Silence.

“woah, wait, you ain't arguin’? yer actually gonna grovel?”

“Not grovel!” He scoffed, face heating up. “I don't grovel! It's pathetic! But I...I do need to talk to her, I really want to, but what right do I have? How can she trust my word?”

“love makes us do crazy things, boss,” Sans said, patting him on the shoulder roughly. “even trust people through the obvious red flags...she's too kind not to give y'the benefit of the doubt.”

Papyrus hummed, disbelieving, twisting the dish towel in his hands. “There's more.”

“more than that?” Sans snorted.

“...I think I've felt like this before,” he sighed. “It feels...familiar. This pain. Ever since my heat...no, since before that. There's something, some...some missing link inside my head, something deep and empty where there should be an answer. I can't remember anything other than I know something isn't right...it isn't fair...it's...”

Silence.

Sans shifted when Papyrus looked up at him, a wry smile on his face, fleeting vulnerability in his sockets...before he blinked and it was all gone.

“...what was I saying?” He asked, bringing a hand to his head and pressing one temple. “Ah, no matter. It's your day, not mine! Do you have an aspirin? Then I can finish up around here so you can go get your father-in-law.”

Papyrus sighed, running one hand over his skull as he checked himself in the mirror set up on the lawn one more time.

He would have preferred to wear his formals, but he supposed that would be in poor taste regardless. Sans had never really approved of his endeavors in the Guard, though he’d been as supportive as he could be expected to be. Wearing his dress uniform would not only be grossly out
of dress code for his brothers impromptu rockabilly thing, but also a bit of a sting.

Besides, it wasn't as if he didn't absolutely crush the leather jacket and jeans look. He had to admit he looked rather dashing in his greaser outfit, and his leather cut had been a gift from Sans, so it was more special to him than any stupid uniform.

…he can't believe his brother is getting married. And he'd seen Angel in her dress mere moments ago, helping direct setting up--he's still miffed that his brother never told him directly about the baby. He'd had to find out from Kyle making a dumb joke one day. But now, in her dress, her four-month baby bump was definitely showing, and as much as he was terrified of losing his brother and facing the world alone--he couldn't help but look upon his growing family with anything but pride and a sense of protective acceptance.

“You're positive you don't want me up there with the rings?” He asked as Sans wandered over with a stack of chairs.

“no weddin’ parties,” he said firmly. “everyone is just as importan’ as the next guest. but after the dancing starts...i will wantcha about fer some pictures. fer posterity an’ all.”

“Really?” Papyrus chuckled, crossing his arms. “You'd be alright having a fuck-up like me in your wedding pictures? Forever?”

“y'ain't a fuck-up, yer jus' misguided. now's not th'time fer this talk, okay boss? y'know i love ya, so let's skip the dramatics, a'ight?”

Papyrus melted, too emotionally exhausted to cover up his surprise and delight at the obvious affection. “…Alright.”

“aw, shit, don't gimme that puppy look,” Sans chuckled. “god, you look just like y'did in yer stripes right now.”

Papyrus followed him down the hill, taking half of the chairs and insisting his brother take a moment to rest (a prompt that went largely ignored) before setting off to set them up in rows.

He wished he had had more notice about the wedding--he had boxes of trinkets in storage somewhere he could have used to make some sort of collage, or something...not that the decorations were bad, in fact it was all very well done considering it had been set this morning. He's certain 90% of these things were bought this morning, when you followed Angel out on a manic post-panic-attack adrenaline fueled shopping spree.

He suddenly remembers Angel calling Sans 'Sugarnuts’ and, well, that's enough to chase his blues away for a minute.

“Papyrus, can you come hold this for me for a minute?”

He turned to see you atop a ladder, though hilariously not much taller than him, holding out a bundle of streamers as one hand held the ends of similar streamers against a post.

He'd seen you dressed up before, for the club and on your walk of shame, but this was...different. Your hair was swept up in a bandana, makeup applied more than flawlessly--he's certain you didn't do it yourself, it was that good. You looked more at ease in a petite leather jacket and a tight polka-dotted miniskirt, and he didn't miss the vintage tights tucked into a pair of pumps that looked...quite frankly dangerous for you.

He took the streamers from you, and, pushing down the instinctual thought of how much he
wanted to kiss that cherry-red lipstick off your face, he raised a brow as you wobbled slightly.

“That is, undeniably, incredibly unsafe and a terrible idea.”

“I'm fine,” you snapped, using a spark of magic to fix the streamers in place.

“I'm only saying--”

“I can handle myself, Papyrus.”

He frowned, opening his mouth to argue, but at that moment you leaned too far and wobbled, and with a squeak you fell right off the ladder.

Papyrus moved, but he wasn't fast enough--you were falling away from him, how could he get there in time without hurting you worse?

“Oh! Careful there, hermana, that coulda been bad.”

You blinked up at the biker who had caught you by instinct, recognizing him as one of the twins you had met earlier today. Which one was he? Bucky? Or Ducky? You think Bucky had a more prominent pompadour or something like that.

Ducky/Bucky raised a brow at you with a smile. “You good?”

He set you on your feet, not even looking at Papyrus, and you heard the tall skeleton huff and stomp away, the bundle of streamers harmlessly hitting the back of your leg as he went.

“I'm...I'm fine, thank you...er...sorry, I hate to be that person, but I can't tell you apart.”

He chuckled. “I'm Ducky. Bucky's the hothead hangin' around Angel. Don't worry, nobody--”

“--ever gets it on the first try,” you laughed, echoing the phrase you had repeated since you could toddle. “Yeah, I know the feeling.”

You glanced over to where Papyrus was now unfolding and slamming chairs down with far too much force, and sighed, resting a hand on your hip.

“Bit of a jealous type?” Ducky asked, following your gaze.

You flushed, seemingly more transparent than you wished. “I...yeah. Guess he is. We aren't together, though.”

“Bullshit.” Ducky chuckled. You looked up at him in surprise. “Please, I've seen enough in my life to recognize a lover's spat. Maybe you don't know it yet, but the both of you gave each other your hearts a long time ago.”

“Getcher ass over here, Donald!” Bucky called from across the park, and Ducky gave a meaningful glance over at Papyrus before he retreated, hurling insults at his brother in Spanish that you vaguely recognized thanks to Victor. You glanced over at where Victor was setting up the DJ booth, and he gave you a thumbs up.

You picked up the bundle of streamers that had been discarded, dusting them off thoughtfully.

Was that true? Did everyone see you and Papyrus that way already? Were you the only one that was blind to it?
...maybe you'd been too hard on him before. He was in a careful place, with how heavily you
guarded yourself--and if he'd been pursuing you so heavily as he had implied then you can
understand why news like the news about Camden may have been hard to tell. You say you trusted
him, and you did, but would you really have believed so many horrible things at once? Would you
really have seen it as anything but trying to make himself look better in comparison?

Papyrus is an honest person, when it comes down to it. He's kept his promises, and he's been
transparent about his affections and intentions--it was you and your own dumb baggage that had
kept you from believing it.

And no matter how hard you try...you can't really see how this can be entirely his fault. Of course
it would have been better if he had at least tried, or told you about your drink, but he wasn't wrong
about you having too many walls up to navigate. It's been a problem for you ever since Eliza
disappeared.

...you just don't know how much you're willing to lower those walls, for fear of getting hurt all over
again.

Chapter End Notes

There's quite a few heavy things in this chapter, from Eliza's room to Papyrus bonding
with Sans to Hazel feeling more than guilty about how things are going...
Progress and growth? Or about to crash and burn?
You and Papyrus both have issues, and nothing is ever going to get anywhere if you don't talk it out. Or cry it out. Or maybe more. Hey, weddings are emotional, right?

Ahhhhhh okokok. So. Some of you know a little of what is coming right now because you've read Secretly yours. And some of you haven't! So you don't! So let's just dive in and see where this takes us, yes?

You were staring hard at Victor, trying to signal him to knock it the fuck off.

The ceremony had been short but sweet, but now that there was dancing, Victor wouldn't let up with the love songs, staring daggers at you and Papyrus as Papyrus fidgeted a few feet away.

"Would you like to dance, hermosa?" Ducky asked, extending a hand as he cut off your silent argument with your best friend.

"Oh, upgraded from sister to beautiful?" You chuckled.

"You speak Spanish? Aye, now I feel like a fool," he laughed, deep and charming. "Dance with a fool?"

You hesitated, and shook your head. Ducky's eyes flicked up to where Papyrus was pointedly ignoring you, and he hummed in understanding.

He leaned in close. "If he isn't up in two more songs, I'm takin' you to the floor. See how long he plays the fool then."

You laughed as Ducky meandered away to offer Agnes a dance, and she happily obliged, her old bones proving more than up for the excitement as he twirled Papyrus’ previous neighbor around the floor.

Another song came and went, and Victor was really glaring at you now. He mouthed something at you, and the argument started anew.

_Talk to him!_

**And say what?** You mouthed back.

**Anything!**
He rolled his eyes with a groan and appeared to give up—the next song was a much more swingin’ number, and you watched Red break it down like never before.

“Alright, that's two songs.”

On one side, Ducky gripped your arm, and on the other, his brother Bucky looped his massive arm with yours.

“Come on, you're too pretty to be sittin’ out,” Ducky teased as they took you to the dance floor.

“Yeah, if Red's bro is too much of a stick in the mud, then let us show you the good time if he won't,” Bucky purred as they twirled you onto the dance floor.

Your heels clicked as you tried to keep up with the way they swung you around, and while you felt a little bad about the situation, you couldn't help but smile—being around other twins definitely gave you a boost, even if it was a little bittersweet.

You twirled again, but this time Papyrus cut in, almost exactly on queue with the music, bearing his usual scowl as the twins both shrugged and took their exit easily, more entertained by the swinging group dance party the club was having with the bride.

You crossed your arms and looked up at him. “What is your deal? Am I just a competition for you? Because you only seem to take action when somebody gets in your way.”

“Perhaps, but in my defense you historically have shit taste in men.”

He grabbed your hand and pulled you through the crowd towards the trees, and you stumbled along behind him begrudgingly. He could definitely just use his words, but maybe you’re just trying to put this conversation off…

“There’s a clearing over here,” you mentioned, pulling back against his wrist as he seemed at a loss for direction. “...found it when we started setting up earlier.”

This is...supremely awkward. The both of you seem to not know what to say, the music from the wedding playing in the distance as you get to the mentioned clearing.

“Papyrus, I--”

“I never--”

You stared at him, and he stared at you, and you couldn’t help but laugh a little bit. In a movie or a book, this would be the part where you both tell each other to forget it, and then you’d kiss and the audience would clap.

But this isn’t a movie or a book. This is your life. And you know that it isn’t healthy to continue on like this—at some point you’ll have to talk, and there’s no reason for him to stick around when you’re so broken.

Well, it was fun while it lasted.

“Papyrus…” you sighed, rubbing your arm nervously. “I...I was too harsh on you last night. All of that would have been a lot to take in at once, so...I can’t actually say that I would have believed you. I’m a fan of believing the best in everyone, at all times, and sometimes that can be to my
He seemed to deflate, apparently having braced for an actual fight. You continued, lacing your fingers and wringing them anxiously.

“I sincerely apologize for all my bullshit. You didn’t sign up for this, and no matter what I’ve dealt with in my past, I shouldn’t take my insecurities out on you. I have baggage, and it’s too heavy to shoulder so I try to ignore it, but the fact of the matter is that I’m fucked up, and no matter how much I wish it wasn’t true...I’m not the stoic, powerful, confident nurse that I made myself out to be.” You could feel the tears building up in the corners of your eyes, and you blinked quickly to not ruin the flawless makeup Victor had done for you. “I know that I have issues, I’ve tried to face them, but every time I turn around, they’re still there, staring me in the face. I’ve tried to be open and carefree, and it...didn’t end well, obviously.”

So you’d packed yourself away. You’d put all the cards in your hand and buried yourself in your work. It’s an endless contradiction--you want nothing more but to be found, but you just keep adding bricks to the walls around you and wondering why nobody can get through to you.

It’s safer if you don’t try.

“I’ve spent so many years building up these walls, but I didn’t expect you to come through and break them down in a matter of a few months. So, I’m sorry...for tricking you, I guess?”

“Tricking me?” Papyrus chuckled, crossing his arms and leaning back, observing you openly. “And what do you think had me fooled?”

“This? Me?” You gestured to yourself. “I’m not...cool. I’m not funny, or strong, or exciting. I’m not a...captain of anything, or even...a whole person. I haven’t been in a long, long time, and I’ve been going through the motions because...she would have wanted me t--”

You interrupted yourself with a startled sob, and your hand covered you mouth as you turned away. You hadn’t mentioned Eliza out loud to anyone but yourself or your family in...a long time. Especially not to somebody who didn’t even know her. He didn’t know how much brighter you had shined when she was near, how you were just a shell of who you could have been. He didn’t know her smile, how much it been a beacon of light for you. He didn’t know about the literal piece of your soul that had died, withering from a shiny gold vein to the tiniest dull bronze fade…

He didn’t know how many times you had looked in the mirror and cried, or how you still wished it was you that had been taken. He didn’t understand...but how could he?

His hand on your shoulder didn’t even startle you, you were so engrossed in the task of not falling apart at the seams. Keep it together, you can’t break down now, just bury it again, build the walls again. It’s the only option, you can’t think of anything else without--

“You may not be complete, but you are whole,” he said quietly, and you paused your heaving breaths to look back at him in confusion. “You’ve always been an entire person, you’re just mistaking your grief for your sister as a stain on your soul, when it should have been allowed to grow into a garden.”

He could have laughed at the look on your face, had it been appropriate to do so--you looked shocked and bewildered, borderline angry, with all the emotions running through you at once.

“Grief is not a pit we fall into. It is a seed we are given to nurture.” He placed his hand over his sternum, feeling the gentle ridges of the cracks in his bone. “Had I believed grief to be a pit, I
would have fallen into it a long time ago. I took my pain, and I channeled it, a bit too heavily, into my ambitions--and so did you. You studied and you worked hard, and you grew into a whole person--a nurse, a friend, and someone I and many others have grown to care for quite a bit. Not exciting? Bullshit! Not a single day since I met you has been ordinary. I’ve seen you do amazing things. Not cool? I’ve never seen any other human face down a 7 foot tall skeleton monster filled with rage and pain, dissociating beyond the ability to recognize them, and still be able to treat me with the gentlest touch I have ever felt. Who else could be that calm but you?"

He removed one of his gloves and gently brushed a tear away, cupping your cheek.

He breathed your real name with reverence, which you had been certain he didn’t even know. “You didn’t trick me. I saw what you were from the beginning, and it scared the fuck out of me. You have always been cool, and strong, and exciting. You’ve always struck awe in my soul, like a fearsome warrior princess. You want honesty from me? Perhaps I lie to myself but I will give you the truth--I’ve never longed for a touch like I do yours. I’ve never wanted so badly to look into anyone’s eyes, or listen to their stories. Here I am, the biggest and baddest of the underground…”

His other hand found its way to your other cheek, and all you could see was the smoking rubies in his sockets, fixed on your gaze with an intensity that made you blush.

“…and I find myself weak around a tiny human girl.”

You snorted out a laugh, the dumb voice in your head telling you that he was just saying that.

But hadn’t that voice been fucking you over for more than a decade? You had thought it was so much safer to run your life that way, caution to the extreme, guarding your little heart and pushing everything down.

But his hands on your face, so big and rough but enormously gentle in Intent--you could hear the flicker of his soul as he spoke, could feel the warmth emanating from him, could see it in his face. He may be an asshole and a brat, but he wasn’t a liar.

“I think you’re wrong,” you said slowly, reaching up and touching his hands softly. “It’s always you who’s been the cool one, Boss.”

“Oh, really?” He chuckled, letting out a breath he hadn’t known he was holding. He leaned closer, and you responded by leaning in a little as well, and he could almost feel your long lashes on his cheekbone. “Do I make you weak, then?”

“Yes,” you shuddered as the feeling of his words washed over you, hands moving automatically as if to push, but instead your fingers curling into the lapel of his leather jacket. “…and that scares me.”

“Do you think I’m not afraid?” He asked seriously. “Gods, I am terrified. I’ve never felt like this with anyone, never tried so hard. Felt so vulnerable. Anything could take you from me at any moment...even my own arrogance. Or your own self-fulfilling prophecies.”

“Fucking fight me, asshole,” you laughed, and his sockets sparked with mirth as he chuckled along.

You gasped as he advanced the little space you’d had between you, moving one hand to pick you up effortlessly and pin you against the tree behind you.

“I’ve got a much better idea,” he purred.
And then he closed the distance, and his teeth pressed gently against your lips, hesitantly, as if confident but unsure--and you sighed, kissing him back, the tension melting as you did into his arms, the tingle of his magic and yours creating sparks between you as you tried to pull him closer despite there being nowhere for him to go. It was as if something clicked, something good, something... right.

Something that should have happened a long time ago.

Your legs wrapped naturally around his waist as he adjusted to lean in more, and you parted you lips in invitation. He took it, and you gasped and moaned as a slightly buzzing tongue came into play, gently tracing yours until you were breathless in his arms.

“I have baggage, too, you know,” he panted when you parted momentarily. “Perhaps it’s too much of a burden alone, maybe we’re both stubborn fools, but, if you want...I will share your burdens.”

“But what if…” You closed your eyes as he kissed you again, and you sighed and moaned against his teeth. “...what if it doesn’t work out?”

“Counterpoint: what if it does?” He asked, and you both were quiet for a moment.

Is this just one perfect moment? Will it fizzle and die now that the chase is over? Will he grow bored of you, or you grow resentful of him? It’s a gamble, of course, especially with all your baggage piled high on the betting table, so high you aren’t sure you’ll ever be able to sort through it.

But it could also be...amazing. It could be falling more in love each year, Saturday morning sleepy kisses, laughter and soft touches, gentle passion. Sure, you could run and fall right off the edge, but you could also use each other to climb higher than either of you could get alone.

You finally giggled, and he smirked, that stupid, sexy, cocky grin. “Fair point.”

He kissed you again, with more fire this time, and your head was spinning immediately, his kiss taking up all your senses. The tree was rough against your back through the leather, but even the little voice that wanted to know how he could possibly kiss you without lips was too quiet to hear over the sheer emotion overwhelming you.

He didn’t want to stop kissing you, the fire in his chest, the long-suffering ache of something long missing--it was full of light and the intoxicating buzz of your magic, and everything was perfect. He could hear his brother calling him for pictures, but he didn’t care. He couldn’t care. He would, in a moment, report for pictures for posterity, but this...

...this moment was worth being late. For once.

Chapter End Notes

*Deep inhale*
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH
IT HAPPENED
IT FINALLY HAPPENED OH MY GOD
holy fucking shit I’ve never hated making something a slow burn so much in my entire life YES YOU IDIOTS KISS. KISS AND BE HAPPY.
This story is nowhere near over, but this is definitely the end of part one, I think. The first real hurdle has been cleared (The ex and the feelings). Please comment and tell me your thoughts, on this chapter, on the previous ones, and/or what you think is going to happen from here on out!

((This is heavily inspired by Safer and Something That Will Last from the musical First Date, BTW))
God Bless the Broken Road That Led Me Straight To You

Chapter Summary

You get quite a few surprises along the ride, but your first time with Papyrus is surprisingly natural. Somehow, you just can't help but relax around him.

Chapter Notes

MIND THAT RATING CHANGE Y'ALL. THE SMUT IS HERE.
Okay, okay, OKAY.
SO.
This has Been a wild journey, and I'm so glad you guys liked the conclusion to part 1, where these idiots actually got together, after driving me nucking futs for the better part of a year.
Here it is, the long-awaited consummation of their feelings. It's literally just smut, there's no plot here, so feel free to skip it if you aren't interested. I'm so sorry they talk so much, these two are so banter-based it takes forever for them to get to the point.

I'd also like to take this moment to remind everyone that Fight Me! is based on and runs concurrently to Secretly Yours by Meldaburke. I've seen a lot of people in my comments thinking I wrote Secretly Yours and she has received the same, and even some expressing concern that she has stolen my work or plotline, but SECRETLY YOURS CAME FIRST. Everything that lines up between the two stories is discussed between us in a private chat, we're good friends! Just because my stories have more hits, which is a tragedy btw, does not mean she stole my work. In the summary and the title you can see that this was dedicated to her.

Anyhow. Here we go!

Smut Tags: oral, p in v, size difference, big donger, power struggle, many positions

You giggled as Papyrus kissed your neck, your hands fumbling with your keys.

“P-Papyrus, I have to unlock the door,” you groaned as his fingers tugged at your blouse, untucking it from your skirt.

“Better hurry, then, or you'll be naked on the porch,” he growled, hands plunging beneath your jacket to rake sharp phalanges over the bare back of the blouse beneath.

You giggled, pushing him off. You were both a little tipsy and excited, having enjoyed the rest of the wedding and attended the afterparty like dutiful immediate family members. You'd only been able to steal away once, during the stickerbomb where Red had hidden you on the corner of 3rd and Straights, and he'd been the third to find you--the rest complained they couldn't find you anywhere.
But now that all the merriment was done, the only thing left was to settle in and let it sink in that you were finally a thing now.

And Papyrus was very excited to consummate that fact, and while you weren't opposed to the idea, you felt there was still a lot to talk about. But maybe you should just...save that for later.

After all, you can't help but be responsive to his touch, can't stop yourself from arching against him as you both finally step past the threshold of the apartment. Before the door was even closed, you were squealing in delight as he picked you up effortlessly, teetering sightly when you rocked forward in your enthusiasm to kiss him. He backed into the wall harshly, and you hummed in satisfaction.

“Weak at the knees, Boss?” You teased breathlessly. “Needta take a break?”

He chuckled as he pushed off the wall, still holding you with little effort, and strode off toward your bedroom. “You wish, dear nurse.”

“What? You underestimate me. If I’m anything other than a twitching, unresponsive mess after we’re done then I'll be disappointed in you.”

“Oh, don't you worry,” He purred, toeing your door open and sending Hobbes skittering away when he tossed you onto the bed. He followed quickly, kissing you hard and helping you out of your jacket. “I plan on thoroughly destroying you. You won't be able to walk for a week.”

“Mmm I have work tomorrow. Maybe bring it down a notch?” You joked as he tossed your new leather jacket aside.

“I may not be that practiced at restraint, but I can be gentle. Sometimes.” He said, sitting back on his heels and slowly peeling his leather jacket from his shoulders. God, it should be illegal for someone so smug to look so fucking good, you thought, as he milked the moment, stripping with far too much practice, ivory fingers expertly pulling the white t-shirt over his head.

“Fuck me,” you muttered, eyes roving over the new appearance of vermilion pseudo-flesh creating an abdomen and...lower.

“That is the plan,” he chuckled, fingers traveling to the button of his pants. “Unless you'd like to pause and take some notes? For science, of course.”

“You know, Workaholic Hazel doesn't seem to be home right now. Can I take a message?”

“Well, finally,” he chuckled, hands roaming over your top. “Tell me, not-nurse...how much do you like this shirt?”

“Not my favorite of all time.”

“That's the right answer.” There was a ripping noise, and you gasped as buttons flew and he discarded your ruined shirt without a second thought. He took a long look at you, drinking in the sight--all flushed and shaking just the slightest bit, a shudder of arousal as you looked up at him, eyes lidded and seductive, more green than not as your magic responded to him. Your arousal was sweet and heavy around him, cinnamon and Apple spice and something powerful and raw...your scent, as always, and now the scent of your Omega status deepening it.

“Like what you see?” You purred, bringing him back to reality by arching up against his hovering hand. “You might like it more if you touch~”
“Patience, I am getting there.” He chided, pinching your side gently as punishment. You squirmed and huffed, eyes flicking to his pants. “Patience.”

He'd been looking forward to this for far too long to spend it all in ten minutes of passion. He had plans, and many of them were already in action. He'd been watching you, of course, and taking into account you, your interests, and his own, he had a fairly good idea of what you might like.

That being the case, he was excited. It was finally happening. He was...giddy. He hadn't felt this way in decades, since he first started sneaking around with Muffet between shifts, and even then he didn't think it had ever felt this good.

Your heart was pounding in your ears as he observed you, a small smile on his face that did nothing to betray his thoughts.

“Oh, God, please say something before I go insane,” you groaned, covering your face in embarrassment. “This is not the time for you to suddenly decide to be quiet for once.”

“Ah, apologies, I was just so caught up in looking at you,” he purred, fingers gently tracing up your thighs. “I couldn't help but think it's funny. So beautiful, so turned on...that I got you so confused you don't even want to take notes on all the strange anatomy you're about to see. The way my magic forms something so solid for you, at the indication of attraction...”

“...the medical talk should turn me off, but honestly it's pretty hot,” you admitted sheepishly. “Talk nerdy to me, Boss~”

“Of course you'd be into that,” he chuckled, leaning down to kiss you again. The tingle of his kiss was intoxicating, making your heart leap as his summoned tongue left you breathless for the thousandth time tonight. “It's called ecto-flesh. It's what makes me an upsilon. If I wish, it could be female--my preferred default is male, obviously.”

“Can I touch it?” You asked. He chuckled as you sat up a bit, and he let you run your fingers over his abs. It felt like regular muscles, with a slight bit more give. “It's more solid than it looks!”

“Thank you, I do try,” he smirked, grabbing your hand and guiding it to the top of his jeans. “Is there anything else you'd like to touch?”

“That seems like a rhetorical question,” you scoffed, kneeling in front of him to unbutton his jeans, fumbling at first but ultimately succeeding. You tugged suggestively at the denim, and he got the hint, discarding them easily and leaving him in boxer-briefs with an obvious something outlined and bulging against his femur.

Seeing how turned on he was made you a little giddy, but you couldn't help the healthy touch of fear at the sheer size of the outline. Not that you couldn't take it, you'd trained with big dildos before, but who knows if that's even it's final size? What if he's a grower, not a shower?

He moved back to occupy your space on the bed, folding his arms behind his head. “Go on, I know you want to explore.”

“Are you sure? It doesn't kill the mood?” You asked, hesitating.

“You wanting to touch me all over and figure out how I work? Isn't that just called...foreplay?” he teased, cheeky smile as he had you pegged completely.

You laughed, caught, and turned your attention back to the intriguing specimen in front of you. You could write pages, entire papers, maybe whole books, about what you were seeing here...but
you might have a hard time marketing it as medical evidence.

The ecto continued until the knees, and you wondered if he did that on purpose to make it more normal for you, who had only ever slept with humans, or if it was always like that. In any case, it appeared to be wonderfully sensitive as you traced it softly. You could still barely see his bones through the soft flesh, and you traced the pelvis, pressing slightly to feel the bone like you might in a human.

He hummed in appreciation at the light, exploratory touches, and you blushed and bit back the automatic excuse of “for science”.

“You're gorgeous,” you said instead, running your hands over the toned ecto of his tummy, tracing the place where it met seamlessly with his bottom ribs, observing it filling the spaces between the bones.

For some reason, the bullethole was still hollow.

“Tell me something I don't know.”

You rolled your eyes. “Pfft. Brat.”

“You're gorgeous,” you said instead, running your hands over the toned ecto of his tummy, tracing the place where it met seamlessly with his bottom ribs, observing it filling the spaces between the bones.

You frowned at him. “Very funny.”

“Sorry, thought we were just stating the obvious.”

“When have we ever been that direct?” You asked, raising a brow.

“True, we are terrible at communicating.”

There was a moment of silence, and he punctuated it by taking your hand and flattening it against his sternum. The cracks were softer than before, rounded...healing.

The next kiss was fluid, moving with ease as you leaned down. Naturally, you began healing his chest like any other time, but the way he shuddered and moaned against you was new.

The healing felt different, even different than this morning, and he couldn't help responding with desperate arousal, his hands gripping your thighs as his breathing stuttered.

“Mmm...I like those noises,” you mumbled against his teeth.

“Stop teasing me,” he groaned. “And don't you dare put me to sleep, woman!”

“You're gorgeous,” you said instead, running your hands over the toned ecto of his tummy, tracing the place where it met seamlessly with his bottom ribs, observing it filling the spaces between the bones.

“Wouldn't dream of it,” you hummed, retracting your hand and magic to trace gently with one finger, apparently having found his weakness.

One thing humans have on monsters is their intense amount of control--the ability to use your magic on him in so many different ways without ever pulling his soul out for an encounter. The way your magic buzzed beside your touch, it drove him wild, made him wonder how good it would feel to have you touch his soul like that--

--but he's getting ahead of himself.

“That's enough,” he stuttered, grabbing your hand and rolling you over effortlessly, pinning you to the pillows and kissing you hard.
You squeaked and wriggled against him, the change of pace exciting. You lifted your ass so he could shimmy your miniskirt up to bunch around your hips, and shuddered as his hands explored your thighs with purpose. He moved to nip at your neck, and his thumbs brushed over your clothed entrance.

“I can smell your arousal,” he hummed. “Tell me what you want. Tell me.”

“You! I want you, Papyrus,” you moaned, bucking against his hand as he pressed the soaked tights teasingly, and with a press and the rush of sharp phalanges on soft flesh, he tore your tights and pushed your panties aside.

“And I, you,” he hummed, kissing you softly...before apparently deciding that was sappy enough for a lifetime and before you knew it he was buried between your thighs, pressing a tingling, prehensile tongue to your entrance and making you gasp and curl back against the pillows.

“Oh! Holy f-uuuck, you're good at that,” you groaned, angling upward and squeezing his head with your thighs involuntarily.

“Decades of practice and a dash of natural talent,” he bragged. “But it's nothing compared to the rest of me~”

“Promises, promises,” you breathed as he nipped your thigh and you gasped, the sudden pain mixing with pleasure.

He hummed, taking account of your reaction with a smirk as he returned to his task, sliding his arms beneath your legs and gripping your hips so he could thrust his tongue deeper inside you, tasting your arousal with a soft moan of his own. You tasted even better than he ever imagined, and it was making him growl with satisfaction when you moaned his name, twitching and writhing as you came for him, a rush of sweetness as he lapped up your release.

He reveled in how sensitive you were, taking one more long, languid lick up your folds and watching you shiver through half-lidded sockets.

Stars help him, he's going to destroy you.

“What are the odds of you pulling out a notebook when I pull out my cock?” He teased, fingering your slit gently as he looked up at you with that smug expression. “Should I blindfold you so you can just enjoy it?”

“You're such an ass,” you panted. “Papyrus, please--”

“Beg for it, I want to hear you,” he sighed, creeping up you slowly, leaning over you, kissing your neck and pressing the bulge of his boxer briefs against your quivering cunt so you could feel him. You mumbled something incoherent. “Louder, Dove.”

The nickname made you blush, so intimate and strange coming from someone who hardly even called you your own name.

“Fuck me, fuck me please,” you gasped as his hand moved between your bodies, teasing your folds before playing with his waistband.

“Do you have a safeword?” He asked, and you shrugged.

“I usually go with colors,” you said, raising a brow. “Are we going to need it?”
“Colors is perfect for tonight. Humans use green, yellow, and red, yes?” When you nodded, he hummed and nodded back, and you gasped as he finally pushed his boxer briefs down to pull out his cock.

You gasped as he pulled out a cock bigger than you’d ever seen, with spikes along the bottom and a silver Prince Albert piercing adorning his tip.

“Normally I would laugh at the look on your face, but I’m getting a little impatient,” he hummed. “Is this something you’d like or should I put it back in my pants?”

“I want it!” You blurted out, and the genuine excitement on his face was almost adorable. “I just...Holy fuck, Papyrus, warn a girl before you pull out the fucking Punisher!”

“I did warn you,” he laughed, shaking his head. He leaned forward and kissed you, and your worries flew right out of your head. “Don’t worry, Dove, it’s scarier than it looks.”

You hummed and decided to unpack the sudden use of the adorable nickname later, leaning and arching your back as his kisses pressed down your jaw to your vulnerable neck, and you keened beneath him as his fangs grazed over your jugular.

“Do you trust me?” He muttered against your throat, your bodies lining up so naturally it made your head spin. You could feel the warmth of his tip against your cunt, and the sharp contrasting cold of the piercing. “Right now? In this moment?”

You nodded softly, almost imperceptibly, and within an instant he was pressing into you, thick and hot and firm, groaning. As prepared as you were, it was still a lot to take in, and while it wasn’t an unpleasant stretch it still surprised you.

“Ah! Fuck!” You gripped his shoulders, and he stopped, making you whine in protest. “No, ah! No, don’t stop, sorry!”

“Don’t apologize,” he cooed, brushing your hair from you face. “I don’t mean to brag, but it is quite large. Color?”

“Y-yellow,” you stuttered, angling your hips and widening your legs to make it easier on you both. He obeyed the command, moving slower and punctuating his movements with small kisses, each one warming you softly and loosening any tension in your body. His hands gripped your waist, guiding you, stabilizing you, gentle but firm.

“Such a good girl,” he purred. “Is this alright? I’d hate to put out my nurse in the first round.”

“Shut up, I’m not that fragile,” you breathed, and he chuckled against your skin.

“Then you don’t mind if I pick up the pace?”

“Pl-eeease,” you moaned, and he growled low, rolling his hips and grinding harder into you. You gasped and squealed, and when your back arched, his arm slid beneath it, pulling you closer and bracing against the headboard with his other hand as he started a medium pace, sockets trained on your face.

The spikes, surprisingly, were soft and malleable, firm enough to affect you but not enough to hurt. Every time he dragged his cock out they caught your walls, making your toes curl with stimulation, and every time he pounded back into you it pushed a breathy yelp or moan from your lips.

“I love that sound,” he panted as you whimpered and wriggled beneath him, fingers curling around
his ribs and making him groan. “You feel like heaven, so good, ah, so good. You can take a little more, can't you, Pet?”

You nodded, and on the next thrust he didn't stop pushing until you felt like you might burst, and just when you thought you couldn't take any more, he shuddered and moaned, his arm around your waist tightening as you felt his pelvis press flush against yours.

You shuddered with a moan as you melted in his embrace, the much-needed time to adjust granted without question or even asking. A blissful haze fell over you as he kissed you, and you easily fell into a natural rhythm as he began to move once more, the room overtaken by panting and moaning from both parties.

Your fingers curled and scratched against his scapula, and he responded with a growl that made you whimper and arch in excitement. The voice in the back of your head tried to butt in and tell you he'd be done once he got tired of sleeping with you, but you ignored it when his teeth grazed your neck and brought a thrill down your spine, his pointed phalanges scratching and lighting up your nerves that begged for more attention greedily.

“Such a needy human,” he moaned. “And so loud...we'll have to...hmm...find another use for your mouth later.”

“Please,” you begged shamelessly, pushing against his shoulder.

He chuckled, his vermilion tongue peeking out just slightly as he observed your wrecked appearance through sultry, half-lidded sockets. “Oh? What is it that you need? Speak.”

“I need to ride you,” you managed to gasp out, and he gave into your push with little convincing, rolling swiftly and pulling you all the way down on his cock once more the moment you were seated on top, making you scream in pleasure and surprise.

You didn't hold back on top, and maybe he'd gone into it expecting to be a power bottom, but he swiftly found that he was absolutely wrong, and though the power shift should have bothered him, he couldn't find the energy to care when your hands were wrapped around his uninjured ribs, your magic dancing through his body and summoned flesh as you took all of him inside you over and over, in huge, brave thrusts that knocked the wind right from his ribs. He was nearly certain, the first thrust, that you had shot him again, but he quickly gave up on trying to control you and instead gripped the headboard with one hand and the bed with the other, focusing instead on controlling his breath and the noises escaping him.

“Fuck, you're--” He bit back a moan, but it sounded off deep in his throat anyhow. “You're good at that, you devil.”

“Glad you approve,” you murmured sweetly as you leaned down, lips brushing against his temple.

As entertaining as it was to struggle for power together, eventually it had to come to a close, but not before you'd tired a bit and he'd pinned you beneath him once more, your face pressed to the pillows as he pounded into you, his stamina much higher than yours and the deciding factor in his ‘win’.

“Can I cum inside you?” He huffed in your ear, his control peetering on the edge as he slowed slightly, and you made a muffled noise of pleasure as you came, legs shaking as you squeezed him, and he swore, squeezing your hips. “I think you're underestimating the urgency of the question--fuck, ah!”
“Yes,” you answered quickly, knowing enough about monster breeding and Papyrus’ medical history to know there was no danger to it. He huffed in relief and you gasped as he buried himself deep in your sensitive cunt, making your toes curl as you cried out, warmth filling you as his member pulsed with release. The feeling of his magic was so different than any human partner had felt, a tingling lightheadedness following as every muscle in your body relaxed, turning you into a purring puddle beneath him as he pressed kisses to the back of your shoulders and neck, mumbled praises mixing with tired sounds of pleasure as he finally pulled out, leaving your hole achingly empty but pleased.

You felt an empty disappointment as you felt and heard him climb off the bed, though you don't know what you expected. Cuddles? Not the type, is he?

You sighed and tried to force your relaxed body to move, knowing you should clean up now before it becomes more of a mess. You can already feel the slightly-thicker-than-normal cum oozing slowly from you, and you know Papyrus just cleaned this room...

You gasped when you felt something cold and damp on your entrance, and flinched in surprise.

Papyrus drew his hands away, looking confused and holding a towel. “Sit still, so I can clean you.”

“I…” You'd never had a lover or even a Dom partner who actually went and did anything after sex...you'd heard that they were supposed to, but supposed it was a suggestion most people overlooked, since you'd never experienced it. “...Alright.”

His hands moved you, from where you'd collapsed before in your little puddle, and as he laid you against the pillows he kissed you tenderly, his fingers brushing over your jaw. The damp towel returned to your sore heat, and you hummed at the relief it provided.

“It appears I may have caused some tearing, despite my best efforts to prep you,” he tutted softly, fingers probing your cunt so gently you were already panting, wondering if he'd shove his fingers inside you and fuck you mercilessly to watch you writhe—“I could heal you?”

“No, it’s alright,” you stuttered. The idea of his magic sparking on your oversensitive vulva was enough to make you crazy, and you didn't want to be seen as greedy when he hadn't been given any time to recover.

“Oh my, are you the kind that likes to be reminded of a good fuck?” He chuckled, and you blushed as you imagined feeling sore down there at work tomorrow, knowing how his cock feels between your thighs and inside of you as you roamed the halls of the hospital. “Very well. I'd fuck you silly again right now, but this will already be enough to have you walking funny and I don't think you'll let me send you to work in a wheelchair.”

“You could go again?” You asked, channeling great effort into not sounding too desperate.

“Of course I could. You and I could go until the sun came up and I wouldn't even be tired,” he purred. “Every moan and movement fills me with vigor and excitement, and I’ve none of that pesky refractory period humans have.”

You dropped your head back to the pillows with a tired chuckle, fighting with yourself on whether or not you should ask him to prove that, but it left your head when he started massaging your hips gently, removing your skirt, underthings, and ripped tights as he went, with a gentleness you weren't aware he was even capable of.

“Oh, fuck, what're you doing now?” You moaned, wiggling beneath his hands.
He chuckled, holding you gently but firmly down. “You act as if you've never heard of aftercare before.”

“Heard of, sure…” you admitted quietly, and his whole face changed. A modicum of anger flashed across it momentarily, likely pointed at your previous partners. “It's, I mean...nobody's quite fucked me like that before, either, though, so…”

“While that is likely true, it's no excuse. Even down underground, where we could crush each other at a moment's notice from boredom, we knew the importance of care after copulating,” he huffed, clearly displeased. “Now I wish I'd gone a little harder on you so I could show you what real aftercare looks like.”

“Still time for a round two,” you purred, batting your lashes up at him.

He smirked at you, and damn, you'd seen some sexy smirks in your life but this blew all of those right out of the water. How does he manage to look so smug and like he adores you at the same time?

“A glutton for punishment, are we?” He hummed. “As tempting as it sounds, I can tell you are exhausted.”

You made a displeased noise, but he wasn't wrong. Emotionally and physically you were drained, and now that you'd had your romps between the sheets for--you looked over at the clock in mild surprise--geez, the last three hours, your body was ready to throw in the towel.

He said no more, but rather pulled you to his side as he settled beneath the blankets. The comforting feeling of good sex and an even better partner washed over you, and you sighed.

“Thanks, Papyrus.”

He snorted. “For the sex?”

“No,” you laughed, pinching a rib. “For being here for me. For...I dunno. Wanting to deal with it.”

“You think I would sit there and watch you deal with all of my tantrums, and then the moment things got difficult with you I would turn and run? I believe it is I who has given you a harder time, overall, if you recall.”

“Hmm. Maybe. I did have a ton of extra paperwork to do when you left the hospital,” you said with a yawn. “And I had some awful reporter try to spin a weird story about me after I helped Gabriel. And--”

“I'm aware how difficult I am,” he chuckled, pinching your cheek. “But...I am glad that it all led us here.”

“Me, too,” you mumbled sleepily against his ribs, hardly awake enough for the conversation.

He chuckled as you pressed against his side, and he drew the blankets up farther and leaned back, letting his own exhaustion overtake him.
You're only walking on sunshine a teensy, tiny bit.

“Are you comfortable?”

A little giggle. “I'm fine, Papyrus. You don't have to keep asking.”

“Well, excuse me for wanting you to be comfortable!”

“I am comfortable!”

He squeezed his partner gently, nuzzling the top of her head softly. His soul was vibrating, magic pumping a rhythm inside his skull. Is he sweating? He's pretty sure he's shaking. He's never been this close to a girl before. His brother has teased him all day about what happens in the bedroom in the dark--is this it? Is this where he's supposed to...kiss her? He was already hugging her, er, cuddling her. This doesn't follow the steps in his handbook...

“Relax, big guy, just go to sleep,” she hummed, pressing her face against his chest. Her eyelashes tickled as she closed her eyes.

He'd waited so long to have her here with him, waited until he finally shed his stripes, until he could promise her protection. His attacks grew more powerful by the day, even his father was impressed! He'd make a good mate for her, he just had to prove it.

But that's easy. He's going to be the best! After all, shedding his stripes meant he knows now, he knows that he's a double alpha. He's got more potential and raw power than anyone he knows.

Nobody can take her from him.

“Papyrus?”

“Yes?”

She shifted and sighed. “Is there any way to get to the surface?”

He hummed, holding her closer. That was the one question he'd hoped she wouldn't ask. He's got a good memory, so he knows where the barrier is...it's heavily guarded, but he could get her there. He's strong enough.

“I'll get you there someday,” he muttered against her soft hair, enjoying the scent that rolled off of her--vanilla and oranges, soft and sweet, and the smell of acrylic paint. “I promise.”

“Good.” He could feel her smile and it made him smile, too.

If he can just help her...then everything would be okay.

Papyrus tightened his grip around your waist, moving sleepily beneath the covers to press his skull
against the back of your neck. The smell of apple pie was pleasant and gentle, enough to bring him from the realms of dreamless sleep and into the wonderful memories of last night.

“And where do you think you are going?” He purred, his hands roaming over your naked curves as he drew you back against him.

You giggled, shivering beneath his touch as you gave in to him, allowing him to capture you.

“Mmm...work, eventually.”

“Never,” he chuckled playfully, kissing your nape. “You've been captured. Property of the Great and Terrible Papyrus, Captain of the Guard. You go nowhere, Captain's orders.”

“Well, the Captain is on light duty due to injuries sustained, doctor's orders,” you bit back with a giggle. “So he's not the boss of me.”

“Is that so?” He smiled, and you keened beneath his touch as he manifested his magic slowly to press against your back, his cock pushing insistently between your thighs as he curled around you. He didn't move it or force anything, just let your quivering thighs encompass his magic for a long while as he waited for you to give in. “How about now?”

“You're Great and Terrible, alright,” you breathed as his fingers snaked up over your breast, exploring curiously what he hadn't the time for last night. “Ooohhh, fuck...you need to get a job so I can do mine.”

“Afraid I'll pay all those days you had me on bedrest back in kind?” He snorted, nuzzling your neck gently as his other hand traveled over soft curves to explore your folds, already slick with arousal as you pressed back against him.

“You don't scare me,” you huffed, arching your back and bumping your ass to his pelvis, making him growl deep in his chest and rock his half-hard magic between your thighs.

Before either of you knew it, you were panting as he held your wrists to the pillows, bent over you as he slid his spiked cock between your lips teasingly, a pleased purr in his voice as he watched you fight between the urge to give in and the need to snark back.

“Lost your voice? Or can you still beg properly?”

“Quit talking, you're ruining it for me,” you huffed cheekily, and he laughed a little at that as he leaned down to kiss you, taking note of your fluttering breaths as the head of his cock lingered, pressing insistently at your entrance but not moving even a centimeter.

“Beg,” he repeated. You huffed, and he decided to tone it back, seeing as actual dynamics haven't been discussed. There will be time for begging later. “Tell me you want me...Please.”

“A please from the great and terrible Papyrus?” You joked, before letting out a little moan that was music to him. “I want you, I want you so bad. Please.”

He groaned and bowed his head as he pushed against your warm cunt, his girth better accommodated than last night but still a struggle as you angled yourself to aid him.

It wasn’t quite like last night, where you’d been so desperate to finally connect, but rather slow and sensual, sleepy kisses as he took his time exploring. He was so slow you actually whimpered, non-verbally begging to be filled, but he paid it no mind, pressing fluttering kisses to your cheeks and jaw. His soft moans were enough to drive you wild, and his hands were firm when they pressed over each part of your body individually, as if he was trying to memorize you and you were written
In turn your hands glided over his bones and ecto, appreciating the curious magic that buzzed beneath your touch.

“Don’t leave,” he whined, a satisfying, wrecked tone to his voice as he finally bottomed out inside you, stretching you pleasantly. “Don’t go anywhere. Take a sick day. I’m not nearly done with you.”

You laughed, breathy and sexy. “It’s no fair to ask when you’re already pelvis-deep inside of me, you know.”

“Precisely why I asked when I did,” he teased, rocking against you and making you gasp.

He leaned down and kissed you, and you shuddered and kissed him back, your cunt aching with the size of his cock and your head spinning, happy and surprised and delighted as he rolled his hips, and even when he picked up the pace, hands holding your knees practically to your chest as you gripped the sheets, you felt worshipped.

He carried you to the shower after, despite your weak protests, and before you knew it he was proving his claim from last night and screwing you senseless in the shower. He helped dry you off, pinching your butt and chasing you to the bedroom playfully, where he caught you in a heated kiss on the bed, and before you knew it he was between your legs, whispering the question of consent so gently that you had to hold back a moan as you said yes, and he was...so very, very talented with that tongue.

By the time you came, trembling, it was beyond time to get dressed, but with his casual, heated stare as you searched your closet it was hard to focus on blouses. You surprised him by flashing him a sultry look over your shoulder, perking up your ass with a giggle and asking for more.

By the time he'd finished fucking you against the closet mirror, your cunt was thoroughly pleased but sore, and you knew he'd been taking it easy on you but damn, it had all felt so good that you didn't care how much it ached.

His surprisingly gentle hands cleaned you up one last time, and he helped you pick an outfit and even made you something to go for breakfast.

“You burnt it,” you chuckled, taking the bagel with a smirk.

“I did not! Your dumb toaster did,” he sniffed, smirking right back as he walked you out, holding up his keys with a questioning glance. You smiled and nodded, and so he turned to make a beeline for his car, opening your door for you.

“Why are you suddenly boyfriend of the year?” You snorted, sitting in the seat. He closed your door and went to his side, chuckling.

“This is just me. Pardon, but I believe datemates should be treated with respect.”

“You are a rare breed, then.”

“Well, Sans and I are the only skeleton monsters left, so I suppose I am a rare breed,” he teased. “But no...Hazel, this is what a relationship should be. People take care of those they care for. Shitty taste in men aside, surely you have gotten that idea from at least Victor and Kyle?”

You shrugged, smiling softly as you laid your head on the door. You'd kind of assumed those two
were a special case...though that dumb voice in your head always insisted they only stuck around because you were incompetent otherwise.

His hand rested on your knee, and it all felt like a dream. You were so worried that you would wake up this morning and he would have been gone, regretted it, looked at you differently...but not only did he not regret it, he'd consummated his enthusiasm many, many times over just this morning alone!

“When did this relationship turn into you taking care of me instead of the other way around?” You snorted as he parked in your spot at the hospital.

He chuckled and leaned over, hand softly teasing the nape of your neck as he kissed you, and your heart leapt as you leaned into him.

“Probably around the same time you made me realize that even the biggest and baddest needs somebody to look after them,” he said, his breath warm on your face. “Now, go save some lives. Call me when you’re on lunch.”

“Did I just see you kissing Mr. Tall, Dark, and Boney in the parking lot?” Kyle was grinning ear to ear as he pulled you aside immediately upon entering the hospital.

You felt your face get warm and you laughed nervously, turning your face as if suddenly very interested in the brochures in the waiting room. “Wow, did we reorganize this display? I think there’s some I haven’t read yet.”

“Ohhhh, you totally did it. You did! I knew Vic wasn’t pulling one over on me!” Kyle’s excitement was infectious, and you grinned, hiding it behind the randomly selected pamphlet on government health care.

“...I did.” You giggled behind the pamphlet as his eyes lit up, and you shook your head. “I still can't believe it! It was so crazy!”

“How crazy? How big, did he have tentacles? Come on, when do I get the dish?” He nudged as you started to walk towards the current tiny monster wing. You tried not to think about your walk, but you're sure he noticed your stiff movements. “Oh-ho, so good you can't walk straight?”

He caught a pamphlet in the face as you disappeared behind your office door, but he was still smiling.

He turned to Mabel, looking up at him with one prim brow raised.

“Well, Mabel, I guess you win again. Alright, everyone, pay up!”
*Power Struggle*

Chapter Summary

There's nothing wrong with a little switching, but trying to get Papyrus to admit that is about as easy as you'd imagine.

Chapter Notes

Smuuuuuuut BECAUSE I WAITED THIS LONG FOR THEM TO GET TOGETHER SO DAMMIT THEY'RE GOING TO ENJOY IT

Smut: P in V, sex in "public", switching, cowgirl, power play, fingering, testing limits, dub-con

These two have not discussed limits and probably won't sit and do it at once, but rather fumble through it like the prideful assholes they are. But they won't ever go too far, I would never write Non-con so no fear, ok? I'm a consent-lover. I only put dub-con up there in case your definition of dub-con is very stringent and I like to be thorough.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“I'll be home in ten minutes.”

“You said that three hours ago.” Papyrus sounded amused, not angry, so that's something. You don't know what, but it's something.

“I know, I know, but really, I'm in the parking lot. Uber's here.”

“Mhmm.”

“Drivin’ down the street.”

“I'm looking right at you. You're at your desk doing paperwork.”

......

Slowly, you turned to look through the window of your office where Papyrus was peering through, leaning on the desk of the Nurse's station with an amused smirk on his pointed teeth.

“....Kay, bye,” you squeaked, hanging up. You could hear his smug chuckle through the door as you returned to your paperwork, blushing and trying not to laugh.

The door squeaked as he stepped into the small office, and you let yourself giggle as you finally removed your reading glasses and turned toward him. He resumed his nonchalant lean against your desk this time, folding his arms.

“Okay, so I'm not on my way. But!” You shook your papers at him. “This is my last stack!”
"Oh, well, far-be-it for me to interrupt your thirteenth last stack of the day," he teased, before catching your wrist and inspecting the papers in question. "Hold on, are these even your patients? Ulcerative colitis sounds like a human doctor thing."

You flicked your hand, swatting him with the papers as you retracted your hand. "Well, I do treat humans on occasion. Even if it isn't a magical disease."

"Yes, but on top of every monster patient and magical means injury or illness that comes through the door?" He frowned, wondering how much paperwork and patients the other doctors here were really shoving onto you. "Considering you run an ever-expanding ward almost completely by yourself, don't you think taking on more patients is a bit much, even for you?"

"It's fine, it's so easy I could do it in my sleep," you laughed, brushing his concerns aside and swiping your messy signature on the last few pages. "See? All done."

You smiled up at him, and he wanted to press the issue, but...there'd be time for that later, after he got you home and got you to relax for once.

"If you can do it in your sleep, then take it home and sleep on it," he suggested as you stood, rubbing your eyes. He was rewarded for his sass with a sultry, tired smile.

"Tell me, Boss, how much work am I going to get done at home from now on?" You asked, dropping your lab coat from your shoulders and turning to hang it from the hook next to the door.

He took the opportunity to snag you by the waist and pull you closer, squeezing you affectionately and leaning in to mutter in your ear.

"Absolutely none," he purred, his breath tickling your ear. "Though, feel free to try. I've a flawless distraction plan I'd like to test."

"Why wait?" You joked, but to your surprise he smirked back, reaching over to slowly pull the blinds down over the little window on your door. "Woah, Papyrus, wait--"

"I thought you said why wait?" He hummed, leaning down to press kisses to your neck as he effortlessly lifted you into his arms. You keened beneath him as you feebly pushed paperwork out of the way, having a hard time coming up with a reason not to. After all, Kyle's had sex on your desk--you'll be damned if you don't claim it back. It only took a few minutes to hastily throw off your pants and lose his magic from his zipper, and he wasted no time in bending you over the desk.

"Hush, dove, do you want everyone to hear us?" He chuckled, enjoying the way you muffled your cries with your sleeve, his cock making lewd, wet noises as he slowly laid claim to you. "Cum for me darling, yes, ah, that's it...just cum and then we can take this back home."

You obeyed him so easily, your needy cunt squeezing him in just the right way to drive him crazy, but he couldn't cum here, not now, what a mess that would be.

With a groan he pulled out, shoving his cock back in his pants and stealing your lips for a rough, dominant kiss the moment you had somewhat straightened.

"Put your pants on so we can get home and take them off," he growled, and you giggled and did as instructed.

You received a few looks from your coworkers emerging from your office, red-faced and sweating, but Papyrus didn't break stride or even try to pretend to hide his glowing cock outlined starkly by
his tight jeans. You wondered if maybe he'd been lying about public sex, but wrote it off as nothing but determination as he pulled you along to the car.

The moment you got home he was pushing you to the couch, his mouth hot against yours and one hand already working his zipper...

...much to Victor's dismay, who'd previously been sitting on the couch. He jumped to his feet and made a beeline for his room without a word, sensing he was, eh, not needed.

You barely had time to laugh at that before Papyrus managed to loose his cock, yanking your pants just enough to give him access and thrusting into you swiftly, making you slam a hand over your mouth to keep from crying out. Loud music began to seep from beneath Victor's door, so you abandoned your efforts to keep silent, instead using your hands to grip Papyrus' t-shirt.

"P-ah! Papyrus!" You gasped as he rocked against you, your ass on the arm of the couch as your torso tumbled over the cushions.

"Yes, Dove, scream my name," he groaned. The music from Victor's room hastily got louder.

You had a hard time collecting yourself long enough to argue, but you managed to hook his pelvis and hold him firmly inside you, with little room to thrust. He whined pitifully, but stopped, and you were able to relax a tad.

"Holy fuck," you groaned, throwing one arm over your face as he gently massaged your hips. "This is...phew...amazing. But we need to continue it in the room, before Victor has to buy a therapist."

"As you wish," he huffed, pulling you up off the couch, off of him and into his arms, taking long strides to the bedroom.

He started to lay you down, and you stopped him firmly.

"Oh no you don't," you growled, and he felt his bones rattle slightly at the predatory look in your eyes. "Me on top now. Get down."

"I don't think I have to take orders from--"

"Get. Down." The request was clipped, but your tone sickly sweet as you kicked his hands away, moving to stand and take your clothes off properly. "Well? Do I have to take care of myself or are you going to lay down like a good boy?"

Turned out he was slightly hornier than he was haughty, because he only paused to undress properly himself before laying back.

It took no time at all for you to realize that, while he enjoyed bottoming immensely, he liked to think he didn't, biting back every delicious noise as you gently kept his hands pinned, riding him like a racehorse. He could only gasp and strain to meet you, the battle between his ego and his pleasure starkly clear. You wanted to praise him, but maybe it was too much of a slap in the face, reminding him he was submitting to you, so you let him regain a modicum of power by letting him control the pace a little after a few minutes.

By the time you finally felt him cum, you were achingly sore, but thoroughly pleased, falling against his chest in a heap, and neither of you mentioned anything about the switch, not yet.

“I had a whole plan to help you unwind after work, you know,” he hummed, tracing soft circles on your bare arm with one gloved hand. “It included movies, dinner, even a bath. It was going to be
spectacular.”

“Oh? And?” You prodded, making him chuckle.

“And you had to go and ruin it all by being completely irresistible,” he purred, turning your chin up gently to kiss you. “How are you holding up? I do hope I haven’t worn you out.”

“I’ve got juice in my batteries yet, Boss,” you laughed, patting his chest. “...I do feel relaxed, though. You are... very good with your tongue. And hands. And everything else.”

“You are far better than I in that respect,” he countered. You chuffed out a laugh, lazily stretching slightly to kiss him again. He met you, and a shudder ran down your spine as he cupped your face gently, gentle Intent layered beneath his tough exterior.

“We could still take a bath,” you pointed out, wiggling enough for his flaccid magic to dismiss. “I’m pretty dirty.”

“Dirty is one way to put it,” he purred, and before you knew it he had you in his arms, striding over to your connected bathroom.

He set you down on the edge of the tub and you watched him turn the knobs, leaning in to test the heat of the water. True to his word, he had bath salts and even bubble bath, and soon he was looking at you expectantly. You eased into the water with a sigh, laying your head on your arms over the edge, looking up at him.

“Do you bathe all your partners?” You asked as he wet the washcloth, and he paused.

“Is this not alright?” He asked, brow furrowing. “I realize I can be overbearing.”

“Understatement. But you can touch me and clean me if that’s what you want.” You leaned back against the tile, giving him access to your wet, bubble-covered body, and he ran the washcloth between your legs appreciatively. “Mmm...I like how single-minded you can be.”

“Watch yourself, Brat,” he warned, pressing the hot cloth against your sore heat only briefly. “It just happens to be the dirtiest bit, at the moment.”

“And whose fault is that, exactly?” You teased, leaning forward to kiss his cheekbone. He leaned into it with a little noise of appreciation. “Well? Are you getting in or are you going to stay out there? You’re dirty, too.”

You brushed your fingertips over his bare pelvis, where his magic and your fluids were still streaked.

“That...” His sockets closed for a moment at the light touch, as if it was slightly too much. You removed your hand just in case. “That might be crowded.”

“There’s room for at least five people in this tub, I think we can manage two.”

He let you tug him gently into the tub, settling in front of you. True to what you said, he fit easily, able to stretch out, even. If there was one thing you’d been sure about when you moved in here, it was that the tub was luxurious as fuck.

He seemed embarrassed when he settled, though, forced to sit spread-eagle and bare his pelvis, and the flush of red was noticeable.
“Can I have the cloth?” You asked, and he raised a brow bone, but handed it to you. You soaped it up, leaning in to gently wash his ribs and spine, and he hummed contentedly.

“Do you like it when I touch you like this?” You cooed.

The hum stopped, and he gripped your wrist, gently stopping you.

“Let’s get one thing straight,” he growled, demeanor shifting drastically. “I take care of you. I am in charge. I am not some...some... submissive.”

He said the word with obvious distaste, but there was a note of fear in his voice. You had enough experience with him to see it was a defense borne of fear of weakness, and the way he had obviously enjoyed himself earlier was testament that he enjoyed the occasional switch.

It’ll probably take some time before you can really coax him into being comfortable with that part, but that didn’t mean you couldn’t start now. A little bit of a brat to his tamer should be enough to get him doubting his fear.

“Oh?” You cooed, voice as smooth as butter as you leaned in, dropping the washcloth in favor of running your fingertips over the inside of his spine and down to rub his pelvis clean. He squirmed beneath you touch only slightly, but you felt the tingle of magic beneath your thumb. “Sorry, Boss, guess I just imagined saving your life. Suppose I dreamed up how you shiver when I tell you what to do. Isn’t that what drew you to me, love?”

He said nothing, eyelights bright and burning, glowing ashes as he trained them steady on you, keeping his arms resting on the sides of the tub in clenched fists.

You drew a finger through the heavy magic settling in his pelvis, and for a moment you watched him quiver...and just when his mask seemed ready to shatter, you withdrew.

“Guess it was wishful thinking,” you cooed, leaning in to make yourself small against his chest, straddling him and gently guiding his hands to your hips, returning the power you’d been teasing away. “But just so you know, Papyrus? I won’t think you’re any less sexy if you let me order you around.”

“You do an awful lot of ordering me around anyhow,” he grumbled, his smile twitching as he relaxed, thumbs drawing small circles on your hips. The water sloshed a little as he adjusted to pull you close and kiss you, long and drawn-out.

He didn’t say it, but he was sure you had seen it many times. He likes it, just a little bit, when you tell him what to do.

Chapter End Notes

Poor Victor lol
Visit my tumblr and talk to me!

Works inspired by this one: Rushing my Heart by Lyrevhart_Jhume

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