Undertale: The Royal Hunt

by TooManyJays

Summary

After falling down a hole in a mountain, Frisk, a young teen, finds herself in a strange land filled with talking animals and creatures of various shapes and sizes, that's currently being ruled by an oppressive monarchy. Now with the help of new and strange friends, Frisk must find a way home while also escaping from the clutches of The Royal Hunt, a violent group of powerful warriors sworn to the kingdom, and one that's being led by the psychotic and mysterious Mad Mickey.

Book 1 of the Shattering AU

WARNING: this is a pretty dark and violent story with GRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS and GORE, so if you are too squemish or simply don't like those sorts of things then I suggest you go back.
Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
“But I don’t want to go among mad people,” Alice remarked.

“Oh, you can’t help that,” said the Cat: “we’re all mad here. I’m mad. You’re mad.”

“How do you know I’m mad?” said Alice.

“You must be,” said the Cat, “or you wouldn’t have come here.”

- Alice Adventures in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll

Somewhere deep down...

When she first came to be, all Frisk could see was utter darkness.

What’s going on? she thought. Am I dreaming?

The next sensation she felt was an incredible pain. It seemed to spread out all over her body, both inside and outside, but it seemed to be the worst in her stomach and waist region. She also felt cold. Very, very cold, and the air had the smell of saltwater… and blood.

“Ugh,” she muttered when she tried calling out.

After a few moments, Frisk finally managed to open her eyes. All she could see at first was a dimly glowing flower in the distance, surrounded by impenetrable darkness.

As her vision got clearer, the luminous flower seemed to glow brighter and shewed Frisk the rocky interior of the place. The ground, for the most part, seemed to be made of complete solid stone, with the occasional grass or flower sprouting out, and the wall behind the glowing large flower was rocky as well and seemed to curve outward the higher it went. Frisk then noticed that the ground she was laying on was for the most part very soft, and then when she looked down she saw that she was laying on a wet beach of sorts. Frisk came to the conclusion that she was in some sort of an underground beach. She couldn’t bother thinking of any reason why because she was as terrified as she was confused.

“Wh-where am I?” Frisk said to herself. “What’s going on?”

The only sounds she heard in this dark, cavernous place was the strange sound that came from the glowing plant, and the distant splashes of waterfalls, which made Frisk realize this cavern was bigger than she thought.
“He-help!” Frisk shouted. “Anyone!”

There was no reply, but the echo of her voice through the cavern. If there was anyone nearby they would most likely have at least heard the echo. But nobody came.

Frisk trembled not just of cold, but of panic as well. She was terrified. Not only was she seemingly alone, but she had no recollection of anything. Where was she and what’s with this incredible pain?

Frisk tried standing up, but it proved more difficult than she thought. It hurt so much. It was like she hadn’t stood up in years, and so she just immediately fell back down and her face landed in a shallow puddle. She muttered and tried pulling herself up again. But then Frisk became stunned when she saw the reflection of a horrified mutilated face in the puddle.

It was a female face that looked battered and bruised, with blue and purple streaks around one of her eyes, and the nose was broken. Not only that, but the face was also covered in small cuts and splinters. It was like this girl was hit in the face with a wooden plank.

Realizing this was her face, Frisk unsurprisingly, became very terrified.

*This is a nightmare,* she thought to herself. *This has to be a nightmare.*

But the worst part was yet to be discovered, as she realized when she looked at the palm of her hand. It was not only wounded with few splinters, but it was also painted red with blood. Her blood. Even with her somewhat delirious phase, Frisk could tell that this large amount of blood couldn’t have come from just a few splinter wound.

Then she realized that just a moment ago, this palm was touching her waist where most of the agony came from, and she had felt something hard sticking out.

Finally, she managed to sit up on her knees and then, scared beyond belief, Frisk looked down at her stomach to see what she had touched, hoping to god it wasn’t her bone sticking out.

“Oh… oh god,” she instinctively muttered out when she saw the source of her immense pain.

A large, shattered piece of wood was impaled in her waist, and blood was seeping from the gaps around it.

Dozens of questions filled her mind, questions like: *Where am I? What the hell is happening? Why is this happening? Why is there no one around? And last but not least: What the hell should I do now?*

But Frisk couldn’t bring herself to ponder any possible solutions, not at the moment at least, for this situation terrified her too much to think about anything else except for the present predicament. Instead, in an illogical impulse controlled by her fears, she put her bloodied hand on the wooden shrapnel piece and attempted to pull it out.

She only managed to pull out about an inch before a short but very sharp stinging pain caused her to stop and wince in pain.

“Oh god, this hurts,” Frisk said to herself trembling.

The pain made her eyes water. After a moment of calming down, she wiped some tears off her face and put both her hands on the wood.

“All right,” she said to herself. “Let’s try this again.”
Filled with all the determination she could manage, she mustered immense strength and began pulling it out.

“Oh fuck,” she instinctively said out loud.

Every pull she made worsened the sharp pain.

“Oh fuck, oh fuck, oh fuck.”

The wood was now halfway out. It stung so much her eyes began to water again.

Tears began running down her bruised cheeks as the pain kept rising. She was now pulling much slower, and a small but growing part of her was now begging her to stop. But despite the overwhelming agony, she stayed determined.

The wooden piece was almost out of her now. Only a few more pulls.

“Almost,” she reassured herself, her eyes now blinded by tears. “Almoooossst.”

And with great and quick effort, she ripped the last piece out. At the moment she did, overwhelming anguish spread from that wound to all over her body, causing Frisk to release from deep within her bowels a loud wail of agony. Her cries echoed throughout the deep cavern, but once again, nobody came.

Frisk panted heavily as she tried to calm herself. Then she looked at the half bloodied stake in her hands that just a moment ago was impaled deep within her waist.

“Th-there,” she said to herself trembling. “It’s done.”

But her feelings of mild triumphs were short, as she noticed that blood was now seeping through the wound in greater quantities since there was nothing to clog it anymore. Panicking, Frisk tried blocking it with her one hand while she tried to rip a piece of her striped shirt with her other hand.

“Oh fuck fuck FUCK!” said Frisk in a mixture of irritation and panic. “What the hell was I thinking?”

Managing to rip a piece out after being forced to use her teeth for an assist, she ineptly tied the fabric around her wound as best as she could from her lacklustre medical knowledge and tightened it.

It seemed to have worked, for the tight binding managed to lessen the bleeding quite a bit.

Frisk felt exhausted now. Her last few acts felt like the most gruelling things she had ever done, and so she just laid down with her back facing the ground.

“What the- what the fuck is going on here?” she asked herself.

She looked at the darkness above her, trying to see stars or anything that could be construed as a light source. The best things she could find were tiny shining dots far in the distance. Frisk wasn’t sure these were stars though, for much like the glowing flower, they seemed to fade and grow in brightness.

It was kind of soothing she felt. Staring at almost empty nothingness with no noise in her vicinity but her breathing.

Also, and Frisk wasn’t sure if it was due to immense blood loss, but she felt kind of numb and tired.
Very, very tired in fact. She wanted to rest.

Just a little bit, she thought to herself.

And then she closed her eyes and dozed into a short sleep.

Suddenly, a rush of countless memories all of a sudden flashed before her eyes in an instant and she jerked awake. It was like waking up from a nightmare as she laid there gasping for air. She didn’t know how or why, but she somehow remembered everything now. She remembered her friends, her enemies, her purpose and all the events in the last few days that led her to this agonizing moment.

But the thing that most distracted Frisk was that she had somehow managed to forget this.

“How did I forget?” she said to herself panting. “How the fuck did I forget?”

Feeling an immense rush of adrenaline, Frisk managed to make herself stand up for the first time. Her waist and bones stung as she did, but she ignored it.

Frisk painfully wandered back and forth as she tried to digest her countless memories, and ponder dozens of speculations.

“I must have bumped my head on something when I fell,” she suggested to herself. “Or maybe there some time paradox shit going on or some nonsense like that.”

Then her thought went elsewhere, to her friends and the awful event that led her to this dark place, for whatever caused her sudden amnesia wasn’t as important compared to the tragedy that just occurred.

Frisk knew she had to go back, to warn everyone and prevent the attack from even happening, but she didn’t know how. There was barely anything in this dark place she could find that would help her load.

“I-I have to go back,” she said as her mind began scrambling for ideas. “I need to go back somehow, I-”

Frisk stopped mid-sentence as she glanced the cold, dark water. An awful idea popped into her head, an idea so terrible she couldn’t believe she even considered it. But it was the only way, the only way she could think of that is. She spent a few good moments staring at the lake, trying desperately to think of other options, ones less painful and quicker. But the shattered wood wasn’t sharp enough and there weren’t any loose rocks, so it was either the lake or waiting for hours until she bled out.

With that awful realization out of the way, Frisk closed her eyes and began to mentally prepare herself.

“Don’t worry,” she said to herself. “It will all be over soon.”

With her eyes still closed, she began to slowly walk towards the water.

“It will all be over soon, it will all be over soon,” she kept repeating to herself as she neared the dark water.

She felt her feet touch the freezing water, and she shuddered.
“It- it will be over soon, it will all be over soon.”

Frisk walked a bit further until the cold water was up to her knees. She winced as the freezing salt water seeped into the wounds on her legs.

“It will-it will all be over soon, it will all be over s-soon.”

She sat down on her knees in the cold water.

“It will all be over soon.”

She laid on her back and floated lightly in the water. She breathed irregularly. It was cold, and she was scared.

Frisk stared at the endless darkness above her once more and closed her eyes. She calmer now, and breathed easier. She was ready.

*Let’s do this,* she thought.

Then Frisk took a deep breath and pushed herself into the water. It wasn't that shallow this close to the beach, so it only took a few seconds before she reached the bottom. Even though she wasn’t trying to, she instinctively tried holding in her breath. But after a few seconds, she stopped.

She opened her eyes as her body seemingly jolted awake like from a bad dream. She saw nothing in the green, foggy water except for the red smoke that seeped from her wounds and to the surface. Bubbles floated from her mouth as she began gasping for air. A part of her tried to make her go up the surface, but Frisk held herself still and grabbed an underwater root to help keep herself down.

*God, it hurts.*

It was like a constant struggle between her mind and body. Litres and litres of water entered her mouth and lungs, and she felt water pour through her dozens of wounds. It hurt so much, but Frisk kept going, holding herself still as best she could.

She saw her life flash before her once more as her lungs were filled with water. She saw her friends, family, her happy moments, and her worst days. But it was too late to stop now.

Her vision was getting dark, and she felt her body giving up. In the end, she saw a light, and then darkness. Then Frisk let out a last minuscule breath as her lifeless body floated gently to the surface.

Frisk saw nothing. Not darkness with a hint of light or even darkness in general. Just nothing.

Then she saw her soul, a red coloured heart shaped object floating in the emptiness. Then there came a sort of yellow star-like object that seemed to twist and change in shape at every turn. Frisk felt a longing to reach out and touch it. When she did, her soul moved and absorbed the glowing shape and then the entire void was filled with blinding light alongside all of Frisk hopes and dreams, and fears and horrors as she saw all her possible pasts, presents and futures appear before her very eyes, if what she had in the void could be called eyes, in just an instance. But in almost the same moment they appeared, the flashes vanished from her sight and once again became distant long forgotten memories deep within the recesses of her consciousness. And then Frisk woke up…
“Ugh,” muttered Frisk as she struggled to wake up. She felt herself laying on her back on something hard… and wet.

Must be imagining, she thought.

Her blurry vision was getting better, and she had mustered enough energy to stand up.

I’m ready, she thought.

And when she managed to wake up, she became more horrified beyond reason. She refused to believe this was happening. She thought that maybe this was an illusion created from time paradoxes, or maybe time had yet to adjust to sudden changes or something. But the truth was worse.

She was still there, in the deep dark caverns, laying on the rocky floor on where she got her memories back.

“No!” she said. “No,no,no,NO! This can’t be happening. Oh god, this can't be happening.. I shouldn’t have loaded here, I didn’t save, I didn’t FUCKING save! This has to be a nightmare oh god please let this be a nightmare, god please someone please...”

Frisk frantically tried standing up before immediately slipping on the wet stone and falling face first into the hard floor. It hurt so much she couldn’t breathe.

She began to cry as she sat down on her knees.

“HELP,” she yelled into the darkness. “SOMEONE! SOMEBODY PLEASE… *sob*...HELP... ME!”

There was no answer, but the echo of her sobbing voice.

“HELP ME PLEASE!”

She cried and cried uncontrollably as the grim reality dawned on her. She was alone, in this cold, dark place with nothing but her immense guilt and terror to keep her company. There was no one around, and no one who could hear her cries.

“Oh fuck I’m so sorry,” she muttered to herself. “Flowey, Max, Undyne, Gerson, everyone. I am so sorry. I have failed you. I was so clumsy a-a-and stupid that I’ve... fucked it up and failed you somehow. Oh god, I am so... sorry.”

Weeping, Frisk stumbled past the flower and sat down by the cavern wall.

“Oh god,” she muttered.

She wiped tears and snot off her face with the back of her bruised hand as she kept sobbing.

“I wanna go home,” Frisk said to herself.

But in the deep, dark recesses of the earth, nobody heard and nobody came...

The Shattering
An Undertale story

Book 1: The Royal Hunt
Chapter 1: The Ruins - Part 1

A few days earlier...

Frisk could feel the hot, evening sunlight resting on her sleeping face. She was currently in a weird state where she was not quite asleep, but not really awake either, like her consciousness was stuck in a limbo of sorts.

A small part of her didn’t want to wake up just yet. She had been dreaming a good dream. Frisk couldn’t remember what it was about, just that it had been very good, and hoped that if she would fall asleep again it would pick up right where she started, wherever that was. Adding to that sensation was the fact that she was laying on something very soft, which were reminiscent of her old parent's bed.

When Frisk finally opened her eyes, she was almost blinded for a moment by the light of the orange evening sun until she quickly adjusted to it. Still too tired to stand up, Fisk looked around was laying in a bright, and a very brown underground cavern. Above her was the rocky platform where she had fallen and where the only cavern entrance she knew of was located with the setting sun shining through it, giving bright colours to this otherwise dull place.

She also had an immense headache, perhaps the biggest headache she had gotten in a long time. Not only that, but she also felt very tired and hungover. It was like she had been drinking all night, even though she remembered doing nothing of the sort.

“Ugh, mierda,” Frisk cursed and put her hand on her forehead.

After a short while though, the headache and dizziness went away.

Maybe I knocked my head on something when I fell, she thought. Would explain why I suddenly fell asleep. That and the soft floor .

Frisk finally sat up and looked further at her surroundings. She had been laying on a small flower bed consisting only of sunflowers that formed almost a perfect circle right underneath the cavern entrance. The flowers were very soft indeed, perhaps unnaturally so. Frisk figured they must have lightened her fall.

The next thing Frisk did was look down on her clothes. She was still wearing the same clothes as last she checked. A blue and pink striped hoodie with dangling white laces, blue torn jeans, and black matching boots. In other words, there was nothing that seemed out of the ordinary there. Frisk found it weird that she considered checking.
Frisk groaned a bit when she stood up. After that, she began to listen to her surroundings. Birds were singing, insects were buzzing in this underground cavern, and from somewhere far above, Frisk could hear the distant sound of an early autumn wind which gave her images of being inside a nice, cozy cabin during an extreme wind. It was like she had fallen into a fairy tale.

But as much as this peaceful atmosphere fancied her, another growing part of her was filled with dread. She had fallen god knows how deep and she was now possibly trapped. Starting to panic, Frisk looked up at the platform from where she had fallen and began to yell.

“Help!” she yelled. “Anyone?!?”

There was no reply.

“Hey, there’s a girl stuck down here! I fell down this hole, and I can’t get up! If there’s anyone up there that can help me, that would be great.”

There was no reply, but the distant chirping of birds. Frisk waited for a few more moments but still, there came nothing. Frisk sighed.

“What are you doing Frisk?” she asked herself.

She reached for her pants pocket and pulled out a small, white phone.

“What the hell?” she said when she opened it and saw the red glowing notification on her screen.

There was no signal. None at all. Frisk found this more surprising as much as it worried her. She had fallen far yes, but Frisk was sure she hadn’t fallen THAT far, and it wasn’t like the mountain was a long way away from a decent signal tower. In fact, there was one right on top of it.

Thinking it was a bug or some badly optimized settings, Frisk’s next move was to see if she could fix it herself. She went through all the setting she could find. She went through the Wi-Fi, the mobile data, and even the phone’s memory to see if it was full or something.

“C’mon, c’mon,” she muttered as she scrolled through the settings. “Shit.”

It was useless. Try as she might, she just couldn’t reactivate it.

“Dammit!”

Giving up frustrated and worried, Frisk put the phone back into her pockets. Her breath began to grow frantic. She was starting to panic. But she knew that a panic attack wouldn’t do anything but make things feel worse, so she began to close her eyes and calm herself down.

“Don’t freak out,” she began. “Don’t freak out. Just breathe slowly. It’s not that bad. You are just trapped in an underground cavern far away from civilization and no one has any idea where you are. Y’know, just typical teenage worries.”

She breathed calmly for a few more moments, and when she considered herself ready, she opened her eyes again as slowly as she closed them, and began to look around for a way out. Despite her ever-growing worry, Frisk stayed determined and tried her hardest to not let her panic overwhelm her.

“All right,” she said to herself. “Think, think.”

She considered maybe try climbing up, but then she quickly changed her mind as she remembered
she was a terrible climber. Also, the cavernous walls seemed to concave at the top, making it impossible to climb without the proper tools.

“Maybe I could… no, no, no, no. That’s stupid.”

And then Frisk finally noticed it. It was pretty hard to see at first because it was hidden in the shadows, but Frisk could faintly see a tunnel entrance deeper with the cavern.

“Ok,” she said. “This could be it.”

With that, she turned back to face the platform where she had fallen and yelled at it one last time:

“Y’know what? It’s fine! I think I found a way out of here myself. Turns out I might not need your help or anything!”

Once again, there was no reply.

“Great job Frisk,” she whispered to herself. “Yelling at nothing. That’s gotta be like the first sign of crazy.”

With that, she turned to face the tunnel.

“Could be a dead end,” Frisk considered. “Eh, might as well try.”

Since the path ahead was hidden from any visible source of light, it was extremely hard to see. But thanks to modern technology, Frisk simply picked up her phone and turned on the flashlight in it. When she did, however, Frisk was greeted by a curious sight.

“What the hell?” she muttered.

Frisk blinked twice, then a few more times just to make sure it wasn’t a trick of the eye. But it was there, as hard as it was for her to believe. There were pillars. Stone pillars carved on the rocky walls. This couldn’t have been any geological coincidence as the craftsmanship was obviously hand made. Not only that, but they also looked incredibly similar to the ones found in ancient Greek temples, which kind of didn’t fit with the whole Celtic or even medieval architecture Frisk would have normally expected to find in ruins this far north.

To make extra sure she wasn’t hallucinating, Frisk went and caressed one pillar, and felt the smoothly carved details. At that point, she no longer had any doubts. This was a real pillar.

Frisk found this discovery confusing as she had found it fascinating. If this place was as ancient as it seemed, why in the world hadn’t she heard of it in all her years living near this mountain. And why wasn’t there anything put in place to preserve this ancient history? It wasn’t like Mt. Ebbot was that far away from civilization which would make it impossible to find. In fact, the town where she lived, aptly named Ebbot as well, was only a short drive away. The only explanation Frisk could think of, although it was very improbable, was that she was the only person who had found it so far.

Unless the people who went missing at the mountain during all those years also found it. Which would’ve meant they also fell down here… and Frisk would soon find out what happened to them.

Frisk shock away those horrible thoughts and tried to stay optimistic. Whatever the reason, it didn’t matter to her as much as finding a way out, and so she stepped away from the pillar and continued her descent.
“Hello?” she yelled into the tunnel. “Anyone here? Any crazy hermits? Any wise old monks that can give me valuable life lessons? Any… scary trolls or monsters that are gonna eat me up? No? Alright then.”

The signs of ancient civilizations didn’t fade the further she went. Rather, they increased exponentially as the rocky, cavernous walls were subtly being replaced by solid and smoothly carved stone. After a short while, the place became indistinguishable from a large, ancient hallway.

“Ok, this is getting weird,” rambled Frisk.

After about a minute of walking, the hallway ended at a solid wall with the only way to continue being a large, open entrance to Frisk’s left with a dim light shining through. Like the pillars, it was obviously man-made and masterfully crafted, and it looked like it used to be a large gate except the doors were missing. Around this open gate were carvings that seemed to depict some sort of ancient history, but they were now completely illegible after centuries, if not millennials, of ageing.

The source of the dim light came from a sunshaft somewhere far above and it was built so that the sunlight shone straight down like it was a pillar of light. But Frisk curious wonder at this hidden relic of a bygone age was nothing compared to what she would find next when she finally decided to wander through the entrance and became witness to a sight that left her almost speechless.

“What the hell is this place?”

Cavern would no longer be the correct term for this place. A temple would be a closer descriptor at this point. A massive, beautiful temple in which this one open room Frisk stood in could fit in a 3 story building and still have enough room for dozens of people in it. The temple was built like a large dome very reminiscent of Hagia Sophia, and at the top where the curved walls connected, there was a small hole where sunlight shone through and illuminated the entire garden. The architecture in this place, that being the curved walls and tall pillars, seemed like they were directly stolen from ancient Greek buildings and even had some hints of old Tibetan monasteries.

This marvellous vista made Frisk gasp in astonishment. How no one had found this place before, especially in this current age of constant communication or surveillance, she couldn’t for the life of her figure out.

This is incredible, she thought. I’ve must’ve stumbled upon some sort of archaeological gold mine. If I ever get out of here, this shit will make me famous.

Then she stopped looking up and looked at the ground ahead of her when she finally saw it. The strange object that stood right underneath the shaft on the roof. The object in question wasn’t anything Frisk hadn’t seen before, or even anything completely out of place, but rather it was the placement of it and the utter mundanity that made it stand out so much.

It was a single sunflower in a pot, just sitting there.

Finding this immensely curious, Frisk went closer to it and crouched down right in front of it. For the most part, it looked like an ordinary sunflower, not unlike the ones from the flowerbed earlier, but this one seemed much fresher and healthier compared to the other ones.

Whoever lived down here Frisk figured, as it was no longer any question to her whether someone did, must have favoured this single sunflower above the other ones for some reason or another.

Someone must’ve placed it here, Frisk thought. But who the hell would do that? And why?

For a second, Frisk felt she saw a face in the pistil, but then she looked closer and there was
nothing. Frisk simply ignored it as a simple mirage.

“Huh,” Frisk said to herself. “Weird.”

“DON’T TOUCH HIM!”

“Wha-”

Before Frisk could finish that sentence, a swathe of flame suddenly burst out from the shadows like a dragon breathing fire.

“Oh shi-”

A small fire landed to her side, but it was enough to almost throw her away.

“Gah!”

She quickly stood back on her feet and began to run.

“STOP!” the voice yelled.

It sounded deep and masculine like it belonged to an old man with a great sense of authority.

“COME BACK HERE!”

Frisk felt her fight or flight instinct kick in as she began to frantically run. She didn’t have a plan on which direction, she was just wanted to escape. Unfortunately, she didn’t get very far since she put all her thought on getting away, she didn’t focus one bit on the ground and then she quickly tumbled down after her foot hit a rock.

“Gah fuck!”

Although the ground was mostly soft, her head still hurt when she fell headfirst into it. Her mind became dizzy from the pain. Her head didn’t suffer the worst though, unlike her knee which unluckily landed on another set of rocks and caused her perhaps the biggest pain she ever felt so far. Fortunately for her though, the adrenaline in her system dulled the affliction somewhat and Frisk promptly resumed her escape. Or at least she attempted to.

She tried to stand up, only for her to immediately fall right back down again. She realized the wound on her leg seemed worse than she first thought, as Frisk found it impossible to even keep balance on it. Realizing she couldn’t run, Frisk began to frantically crawl instead. The fires seemed to come from every direction. She didn’t care where she was going, or even that she couldn’t stand, Frisk just wanted to get away, away from the screaming voice and countless fires. But then her path became obstructed when a sudden wall of flame formed in front of her.

Too frightened to question the logic of it, she turned on her back and became saw someone standing in front of her. Someone whom Frisk could only assume was the person who attacked her.

She couldn’t get a clear look at this person as he stood in the shadows, but Frisk could still see a faint outline of him it due to the two fireballs in his hands which Frisk simply assumed were two little flamethrowers. The figure was of an immensely tall build and was wearing what looked like a long, tall robe, complete with a long fluffy beard and… horns?

Frisk didn’t think much of the last part, as she was too busy panicking.

“Jesus Christ mister, I’m sorry!” she frantically said.
“SORRY?” the figure harshly asked. “WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE YOU WERE SORRY? NOW TELL ME, WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO DO TO HIM?”

“Nothing, I swear!” Frisk said, not really noticing the figure referring to the flower as “him”.

“LIAR!”

“I swear to fucking christ I wasn’t doing anything. I simply just went closer to take a look at it! That’s all I did I swear!”

The flames in the shadows began to wain a little. The silhouette then seemed to turn to look at the flower in the pot for a moment before turning back to Frisk.

“You… weren’t… going to… harm him?”

The voice sounded a lot calmer this time, and Frisk felt she could hear a tinge of regret in it.

“No!” replied Frisk. “Why the hell should I!? I don’t even care about your stupid flower!”

The figure became uncomfortably silent.

“Stupid?” he asked.

Oh shit, Frisk thought.

But instead of a fit of rage as Frisk expected, the figure just gave out an amusing chuckle.

“My child,” he said. “I understand your immediate dismissal of him. He may not look that much, but I assure you that this not merely a “stupid flower”. In fact, he’s arguably the complete opposite. This flower… is my son.”

Frisk utter terror was almost replaced by a sudden confusion.

“Wha- what?” she asked. “Your… son?”

Holy shit, this guy really is crazy, Frisk thought.

Suddenly, all the flames in the room immediately dissipated as quick as turning off a light bulb. Frisk was so taken aback by it, that she didn’t even notice that the figure was now beginning to slowly, but surely walk towards her, until she heard the large thumps coming from his massive feet.

Realizing what he was doing, Frisk began to cover in fear. Judging by his unhinged nature, Frisk couldn’t imagine what awful things this seemingly crazy person was possibly planning to do.

But that fear was merely a fleeting moment compared to the absolute terror that came next when she finally got a better look at this person, or rather, creature.

The first thing that entered the light was a big paw. The paw was underneath a long robe, but it was so big in practically stood out and Frisk could almost see it in all its fluffy detail. It looked very much like a lion’s paw, but the fur was white like a rabbit’s or a goat’s. The next thing Frisk saw of this immensely tall yet skinny figure was the purple, flowing robe which she could now see was extremely torn and dirty and must’ve smelled as foul as it looked. Then came the uncannily human-like hands, and like the paws, they were white and fluffy, and the fingernails were extremely long. Frisk then saw the dirty and unkempt yellow beard that dangled on the robe reminiscent of an old, fantasy wizard.
Then, at last, came the head. A crowning centrepiece that sent shivers to Frisk’s spine as it made her realize she was looking at a creature, unlike anything she had ever seen in her entire life. The head was far from humanoid, unlike its hands and was a lot more animalistic like its paws. The closest animal resemblance Frisk could think of was a goat, due to the long white horns and dangling white ears, yet, the head also had the semblance of a lion, with the giant golden beard that looked a bit like a mane, and the goat looking muzzle also looked a bit feline. The strangest thing about it though was the eyes, which was also the only part of the creature that didn’t resemble any animals Frisk could think of, but they were almost completely human-like. One blue, one orange, and both wide open. Underneath them were dark marks, like that of a person who hadn’t slept in a long time.

The creature looked at the Frisk, not seeming to notice her frightened state, and gave an uncomfortable smile on its muzzle, similar to one of a person who had long forgotten how to be empathetic.

“Howdy,” the creature casually said. “I am so sorry. I didn’t know.”

“AAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!” Frisk screamed.

The smile on the creature faded and was replaced by a look of utter confusion.

“I’m sorry?”

“AAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!” Frisk screamed again. “What the- WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU!?”

The creature looked behind in a state of confusion and then back on Frisk.

“Are you talking about me?”

“Of course I’m talking about you! WHAT ARE YOU?!”

At this moment, the strange creature lightened up as if he seemed to realize something.

“Oh, how could I forget,” he said. “I am so sorry. It somehow slipped my mind that most of humanity hasn’t seen or heard about our kind for thousands of years.”


“Of course,” the creature said. “In fact, my kind are millions in numbers, each of different shapes and sizes. We are practically an entire different lifeform, one made mostly of magic. You, humans, had a name for us that might sound familiar to you. You humans used to call us monsters.

“Mo-monsters?” she muttered. “Magic? I… uh… what?”

These sudden barges of information made Frisk almost faint in confusion and shock. The creature noticed her state, seemed to be extremely worried.

“Are you alright?”

“I’m fine,” said Frisk, panting. “I-I’m fine. This is just… too much. I- I need a breather.”

“All right then,” the creature said and a smile returned on his muzzle. “Let’s talk about something else. What is your name little one?”

“Wh-why?” Frisk asked suspiciously.
“Just curious?”

Frisk looked at him for a few moments. She found it hard to bring herself back to an ordinary conversation with this creature, while it just stood there patiently and smiled. Eventually though, Frisk managed to resume some train of thought.

“Francisca,” she said nervously. “My name’s Francisca Esperanza Montgommero. My friends just call me Frisk though.”

“Frisk?” asked the creature.

Frisk nodded in confirmation.

“Well, that is a nice name,” the creature said. “As for my name. I am… I… am…  what was my name again? Strange. I seem to have forgotten. Eh, it doesn’t matter.”

Frisk looked at him worryingly.

“That’s… understandable,” she replied.

Thankfully for her, the creature didn’t seem to have noticed her semi-sarcastic tone.

“I see you’ve already met my boy,” the nameless creature said and went towards the potted flower underneath the sun shaft. The immense barrage of information from the creature had Frisk almost completely forget about it.

“But something tells me you haven’t been properly introduced yet,” the creature said while he picked up the flower gently like picking up a newborn. “He doesn’t really have a name per se, but these days he goes by Flowey, as in Flowey the flower. Flowey, why won’t you introduce yourself to your new friend over there?”

The goat creature smiling stared at the plain-looking flower for a good few moments. Unless you count the flower moving slightly due to the wind that came from the opening above, nothing really happened. Meanwhile, Frisk stared at this bizarre moment feeling a mixture of fright and confusion. Frisk wasn’t sure if this kind of weird behaviour that would be considered a sure sign of crazy for humans was completely ordinary for these “monster” creatures.

After a few more moments of silence from the flower, the strange creature chuckled and looked back at Frisk reassuringly.

“I think he’s a bit shy,” he said. “My son can be that sometimes, especially in the presence of strangers. I hope you understand me, but I’m not going to force him to talk to you if he doesn’t feel like it, ok?”

“All right then,” said Frisk.

Suddenly, Frisk felt an immense pain in her leg where she fell. She didn’t notice it at first because she was too busy being afraid, but now the pain was almost impossible to ignore. She tried to hide it from the monster because she was still a bit afraid of him, but it seemed to worsen with every moment. Frisk realized that she had failed when she noticed that the smile on the creature’s muzzle seemed to fade and once again be replaced by a look of worry.

“Are you alright my child?” he asked.

“I’m fine, I’m fine,” said Frisk and then winced in pain.
The creature looked at her with a doubtful expression.

“It doesn’t seem fine,” he said. “Don’t worry though. I think I know a way to make you feel better.”

Still holding the flower, the creature began to walk towards Frisk. When Frisk noticed that he was coming towards her, she began to softly panic and crawled backwards.

“Don’t be afraid, child,” the creatures said gently. “I am not going to hurt you. Gods, I never would have attempted it if I had known any better.”

He stopped when he was close enough so that he was practically standing over her, and Frisk saw just how tall and skinny he was. He was so skinny that Frisk could see the outlines of his bone in his anorexic looking hands, and the robe seemed a few sizes too small for him.

Then the creature began to carefully sit down as if his bones were incredibly fragile, which Frisk wouldn’t be surprised by. Then he adjusted himself in a cross-legged position and Frisk could feel his dirty, golden beard brushing her leg, and then laid the flower carefully to his side, and gently patted it on it’s “head”.

“I haven’t done this in a long time, to be honest,” he admitted while he stretched his clawed hands together and Frisk could hear them crackling uncomfortably. “But I’m sure that I am just as good as I remember.”

Then the creature outstretched his palms and let them hover shakingly over Frisk’s wounded leg like it was a warm furnace.

“What are you doing?” Frisk asked.

“You’ll see.”

The creature moved his hovered hand back and forth across Frisk’s leg.

Suddenly, Frisk felt a great warmth come from the creature’s palm. That was not the strangest part, as Frisk discovered when she looked closer. Some green, alien-looking energy was coming from his clawed hand. Before Frisk could react, the energy had spread from the creatures fingertips like green strings and it slithered worm-like all over Frisk’s leg. Frisk began to freak out.

“What are you-”

“Shh child,” the creature whispered. “Stay calm and this will be over much sooner.”

Frisk didn’t know what it was, whether it was the reassuring tone of his voice, a side effect of the green energy or if she had mentally just given up on fighting, but Frisk found herself suddenly no longer resisting. The energy passed through the leather of her jeans and then Frisk could feel it’s cool and tickling touch on her skin like dozens of wriggling worms.

Then the green energy vanished in an instant and the creature pulled back his hands.

“There,” he said. “All better now.”

“Wha-what did you just do to me?” Frisk asked.

“I fixed you,” the creature said smiling.

“What?”
Then Frisk felt it. Or rather, didn’t feel it. The pain in her leg was gone, and she realized that she was able to move it without any difficulty. She pulled up her pant leg was shocked to find her suspicions confirmed. There was no wounds, no marks, or anything that would have hinted that she had fallen. It was like she was never wounded at all.

“My god,” she said in shock. “You fixed it. How did you… wait. Was that… magic?”

“Indeed,” the creature said.

Then his smile faded and he immediately looked bewildered.

“Wait, you have never seen magic before?”

“No,” said Frisk. “Where I am from, I mean up there, magic is basically a myth.”

The creature looked at her like he couldn’t imagine that kind of life in the slightest. Then he just chuckled and his weird, somewhat creepy smile returned.

“It’s all right,” he said. “You’ll grow used to it.”

“I don’t think I ever will,” admitted Frisk.

“Well, whatever the case, let’s agree to disagree. Oh, pardon me I must be going now. I’ve just realized it’s late and my boy needs to be home for dinner.”

Still holding the flower in the pot, the eccentric creature stood up and began to head towards another entrance that was further away, while Frisk just sat there, still trying to process everything that happened. Halfway on its path though, the creature stopped and turned around to look at Frisk.

“Are you coming?” he politely asked.

Frisk was a bit surprised by that question. This creature that she had not only just met, but who also just attacked her was now expecting her to follow him? Normally, Frisk would absolutely refuse following a stranger who recently attacked her without a doubt. But as strange as it sounded, Frisk found this question difficult to answer. Not only was she lost, but she had learned so many things in these past few minutes that turned everything she knew, or rather thought she knew, on its head. Suddenly, she was in a world of magic and strange creatures. In short, Frisk had a dilemma.

The creature looked like it had lived in this place for a long time, judging by his tattering outfit and dirty look, so he must know it like the back of his hand and thus could possibly know of a way out. But to say that Frisk wasn’t scared of this so-called “monster” would be an understatement. She was frightened of the possibility that he would lead her to a hidden place so that he could eat her in peace. On the other hand, this creature, while obviously eccentric, appeared to be somewhat nice and seemed to be immensely regretful for attacking her earlier, but that could also just be because he’s attempting to lead Frisk to a false sense of security. Whatever the case, she couldn’t just stay in this temple forever and so she had to make a choice sooner or later.

In the end, Frisk decided to take the risk.

“Don’t think I’ve got a choice,” she said.

She stood up and lightly dusted her clothes.

“All right then,” she began. “Lead the way.”
Wow, that was a long time coming.

I know it really took a while, I think about two months, and I honestly don't really have any good reason. I could argue that I was super busy these last few weeks, but I don't feel like that's a good excuse. Even then, I had like an entire Christmas break and I don't think I got much work done then. I guess I just wasn't up to it, but that's a topic for another day.

I think the only thing I can say is that... well... I'm sorry, and I hope that I will update much faster this year than the last. I've also decided, as you most likely noticed, to split the chapters into smaller "sub-chapters" so I can upload more and you don't have to wait two months for an update. You might be disappointed to find this to be a bit too short for a two-month hiatus, but I promise you that I have the entire chapter almost completely outlined and I just need to fix up a few things and start writing. I like to see this part as being an introduction to this version of Frisk and what kind of character you should expect from her. If you are wondering, this Frisk is about 16-years-old.

Anyway, that's enough rambling. I hope you enjoyed it so far, and I will try to update soon.

P.S.

Also, a week ago I commissioned an artist named Atlas-White for an art based on a scene from AHTTR. Check it out, it's pretty good:
https://www.deviantart.com/carmilliancrown/art/UT-By-the-Campfire-Commission-782313249
The darkness and dampness of the ruins didn’t seem to get any better the further they went. Frisk couldn’t see far, so she mostly just tailored a few feet behind the large, goat-looking creature, who still held in both his hands the sunflower he called his son. The creature didn’t only seem to not mind the darkness, but also seemed clear on where he should go. Frisk still had her phone up with the flashlight mode on just in case.

Frisk and the creature went up some stairs that led into a half circle, and then they wandered into a small dark room. There was no furniture, or even anything particular about this room at first glance, but then Frisk noticed the big stone slabs on the floor that resembled buttons and an unreadable mural on the wall that seemed to resemble some instructions of sort beside a closed door.

“The monsters of old built room like these to ward of humans,” the creature began. “It was believed… or at least I think it was… that by using clever and complex puzzles, they could break a human’s patience and will, and then the human would simply leave in frustration and/or boredom.”

“That sounds kind of far fetched,” commented Frisk.

The creature didn’t seem to notice her sarcastic response, and he began to walk over the buttons in a vertical line and the closed door quickly opened.

The next room they entered was a bit larger, but still just as dark. What Frisk could see though, was that it had a lot more to it so to speak. There were two small water streams that ran through the room, with tiny little bridges leading over it, and some of the walls had some vegetation covering it. Frisk could hardly see it at first until she shone her light on it, but on some of the walls were small levers which had already been pulled down.

*Huh, weird*, Frisk thought to herself.

It was at this point that Frisk’s curiosity overwhelmed her.

“What is this place?” she asked.

“This, my dear child,” the nameless creature began as if he had answered this question many times before. “Is the remnant of an old place called Home. It was once a great city, a thriving metropolis that was founded shortly after we monsters were thrust and imprisoned within these cavernous depths. But today, these once great halls and streets that bustled with life and monsters of all forms are now mere crumbling memories of gone days, with the only life here besides us being spiders, Whimsums, Froggits, and the occasional stragglers that managed to break in here somehow.”

Frisk and the creature now passed through an entrance and entered a small circular room. Frisk tried to imagine what Whimsums and Froggits were and looked like.
“I do admit though,” the creature continued. “That I do miss the energy and seeing all the nice folk that used to wander through here, going to work and chatting about recent events. But now they are all gone. Where have they all gone to I wonder? And why have they all gone? These questions haunt me once a day, and yet I have found no answer.”

Frisk and the creature had now entered another small hallway, but one with less life in it. There were no streams, and only a few of the walls had any vegetation in it, but Frisk didn’t really seem to notice or care this time, as she was too invested in the creature's tale. Frisk wasn’t normally the type to pay much attention in class presentations and teachers droning about some history of a place long gone, but hearing descriptions of an old civilization and species she had never heard about or even knew existed until now fascinated her. She could be the first person to hear about this in maybe a long time, and she did not want to waste this opportunity.

“Whatever the case,” the creature continued. “I hope that one day they will all return, and my son and I won’t have to be so lonely anymore here in the dark. Maybe they will never return. But... now that you are here, Frisk, perhaps we don’t have to wait anymore. With you here, we can perhaps build something else... something greater.”

This last sentence mad Frisk stop in her track and pulled her out of her fascinated, awed state and into utter discomfort. The may have been trying to be nice to her, but the implication of the last sentence Frisk found hard to ignore.

Was he intending to keep her here? It sounded to Frisk like he was implying that. It could just be that the creature had trouble properly expressing himself, but that still couldn’t shake off that uneasy feeling he gave her.

If that wasn’t bad enough, the creature was now looking at her and his heterochromic eyes seemed to give off a maddening glare, and his smile didn't really seem to help.

Frisk began to back away from him. Now she just wanted to stay away from the creature as far as she could.

“I, uhh…” began Frisk.

Then the creature seemed to take notice of her disquiet and immediately changed his expression and tone.

“Oh dear lord,” he said. “I am so sorry, I have no idea what came over me just now. I guess my longing, my wishful reminiscence of days long past had momentarily taken over me. Frisk, you really don’t have to stay with me in this dark and damp cavern if you don’t want to. You are a young girl. A fine young girl and you have the power and will to make your own choices in this world, and it should not in my right or power to control them.”

Even though his tone spoke of genuine sorry, it was not enough to shake the discomfort out of Frisk.

“Ohh, thanks man but umm,” began Frisk. “You’ve been of great help, I swear, but... I think I am going to go my own way now. I’m sure I’ve got the gist of this place and I’m gonna just go through these ruins by myself ok?”

“That’s not a good idea,” the creature replied.

“Why not?” asked Frisk.

“Because!” the creature said with a surprising urgency in his tone. “These ruins are not safe for
you. They are not safe for anyone. I regret not informing you about it earlier, but there are other beings here besides the aforementioned Froggits, spiders and so on. There are creatures here. Bad creatures. Other monsters that are much dangerous than anything you have seen or encountered and ones that will not hesitate to take you."

Frisk almost froze in fear after hearing that. Other monsters? Ones more dangerous? But then she felt a bit suspicious as the timing of it seemed a bit too convenient.

“You-you are bluffing,” she protested.

“Of course not,” the creature said with a hint of sadness in his tone. “I understand your suspicions, but please… trust me.”

One part of Frisk wanted to protest, to yell at him, call him a liar, but another part of her wasn’t sure about anything anymore because of all the things she had learned just this day, things like the facts that monsters and that magic were actually real, and so she was basically open to anything at this point. Not only that but once again the creature seemed genuinely sorry.

Frisk currently felt a bit ashamed of herself for her behaviour towards the seemingly sorry creature. But then again, was her distrust of this strange and seemingly crazy being unjust?

“If you really want to leave my child,” the creature said. “Then I won’t stop you. But please, if you do, then I hope you take my warnings seriously.”

Frisk was practically trapped between two bad options at this point, a rock and a hard place. It was either to stay with this strange creature she didn’t fully trust or to wander alone and blindly through these labyrinthian caves and ruins where god know what lived.

In the end though, after a short while of thinking, she had decided.

“All right,” Frisk said nervously. “I’m coming.”

The creature’s smile returned on his muzzles.

“Then I’ll promise that I will keep you safe.”

If the creature had attempted guilt her into this choice as Frisk now began to suspect, it had succeeded, but either way, Frisk decided it was the lesser of two poisons. She rationalised it by the fact that she at least recognized him somewhat, and believed she could outrun or outwit him if she could, opposed to the other monsters that she hadn’t even glimpsed at. If they existed at all that is. After what she had seen though, she didn’t want to take that chance.

They went through another doorway, and the current path now seemed to curve slightly to the right.

“Are you frightened my child?” the creature asked in a gentle tone.

Frisk was taken aback by that sudden question.

“What noooo,” she lied. “Of course I’m not afraid, why would I be? You are here to protect me after all right?”

The creature looked doubtful.

“It’s all right to be afraid,” he said. “It just means you are still sane.”
“I promise you I’m fine,” insisted Frisk.

She didn’t want to tell the truth to the monster exactly because she was terrified. Of this place, of him, of what he might do if she somehow managed to upset him.

“Alrighty then,” the creature said and looked back on the path.

Frisk wasn’t sure if the tone in his voice meant that he was convinced or not. She tried not to think about it, however.

The pathway now curved back to the left, and they now entered a curious looking room, perhaps the strangest one so far. Almost the entire room was underwater, except for a tiny bridge in front of them that lead to a metallic platform, but that platform was completely covered in dozens of tall spikes that protruded from the ground. They were almost as tall as the nameless creature. Frisk dreaded at the thought that they might have to swim through the pond as she didn’t want to think about what could possibly lay in that murky watery abyss.

The creature wandered close to the spikes in the centre as if he was going to magically walk through them.

“Some monsters doubted the humans supposed impatience and inadequacy,” he said and lightly touched one spike. “They said that we should not underestimate their will, their determination, and so they built puzzles that were more deadly and challenging and ones where if you failed, you could suffer, and even die.”

The creature put his hand away, and a small red blood drop ran down his furred hand. It then fell down on the floor, where it instantly vaporized into a small cloud of dust. Frisk saw it happen but didn’t think much of it. She was basically not surprised by anything at this point.

The creature turned his head down to face Frisk and put up a reassuring smile on his bearded muzzle.

“But you shouldn’t worry though,” he said. “My boy and I know these puzzles in and out. I will guide you through them carefully, and you will not have to fear getting maimed or impaled.”

“I… I didn’t know these were possibilities but ok,” Frisk said.

Then the creature went to touch the spikes on the right side, and then suddenly as if on command, they quickly shrank through grates on the floor.

“This is the path,” the creature said. “I remember it clearly now.”

Then the creature reached out to Frisk with one of his clawed hands, while holding the flower pot with his other.

“Come take my hand,” he said. “It’s much safer that way.”

Frisk hesitated for a bit but then she took hold of the giant clawed hand. The hand felt soft and fluffy, but also incredibly thin. Then the creature closed the hand and carefully squeezed hers, and they began to slowly walk.

The creature guided her through the spikes in a serpentine pattern, where at every step the spikes would make the same sound as they shrank through the floor, but then Frisk looked back and saw the spikes protruding back up when they were out their way.
At literally every moment in this whole ordeal, she feared that the spiked below them would suddenly burst out from the grates below and impale her, despite the creatures complete reassurance that they were going the right way.

After about dreadful 20 seconds that Frisk felt went on forever, they had finally reached the other side. At the moment they did, the creature lightly let go of Frisk’s hand, and she immediately put her hand on her knees and began to pant heavily, as she had just barely survived being hit by a malfunctioning car.

“Oh, oh my god,” Frisk said in between the panting. “I thought… I thought I was gonna die there. Holy… holy fuck.”

“Language my child,” the creature gently said.

Frisk chuckled a bit.

“All right,” she began. “I guess that’s how it’s gonna be. Funny you should only say just now though considering I distinctly remember swearing like a sailor when we first met.”

Frisk looked at the creature’s face and could tell a small hint of surprise in it.

“You did?” he asked and then looked a bit doubtful. “Well, I am very sure that I would have caught on to tha-”

Suddenly, there came a loud clanging sound in the distant.

Frisk yelped a bit in response while the creature looked worryingly in the direction of the sound. The noise didn’t come from this room, but it was still sounded close enough to be only a few walls away. It also wasn’t anything Frisk hadn’t heard before, nor was it particularly loud but in the utter droning silence of the ruins, it might as well be a roaring trumpet.

“What the hell was that!?” Frisk asked frantically.

“Wait, you heard that as well?” the creature asked in surprise.

“Uhh, yeah,” Frisk replied.

“Oh well then that must simply be a lose boulder falling on a metal board,” the creature explained and for a moment Frisk felt a bit at ease. “Either that, or yet another ghost is prowling about.”

“Wait, what?” Frisk asked in utter shock. “Did you just say ghosts? There are ghosts here? They exist!”

“Of course,” the creature said without a hint of jest. "I forgot to mention. Sometimes old specters come to these ruins looking for habitation or simple peace and quiet. I, unfortunately, don’t know the reason why.”

“Oh god, can we please get out of her?”

“Of course Frisk, if you want to.”

“Oh I definitely want to.”

“Ok, then let's move on.”

And so they continued, and Frisk almost frantically began to tail after him.
“Ca-can you go any faster?” she asked.

The creature stopped as if to collect his thoughts.

“I want to,” he replied. “But this is, unfortunately, the fastest I’ll go. Any quicker, and I would risk dropping my son. I once did it before, and that was a horrible experience I do not wish to go through ever again.”

Frisk decided it was not worth it.

“I see,” she answered and they continued their slow traversal, despite Frisk’s actual yearnings.

Then they passed through another entrance, and Frisk saw that they were now standing in an extremely long and dark hallway.

“This hallway was once of ordinary sorts,” began the creature. “But now, it’s dark current state, it’s a test of sanity for all who wander through alone. Thankfully I have always had my son here by my side, but many have not been as fortunate.”

He took a short pause as if he was just reminded of something very unfortunate.

“Frisk,” he continued. “I suggest you stay by my side all the way through this hallway. You should never stray away from me if you value your mind.”

“W-way ahead of you,” Frisk said.

She was practically shaking at this point.

“Good,” the creature remarked. “Then follow me.”

After a few moments in the dreaded hallway, the near utter silence of the place finally began to get to Frisk. The only sound she could hear now was her’s and the creature’s footsteps. She had never been in such a quiet place before, and Frisk wasn’t sure whether it was that aforementioned silence of the hallway or if the nameless creature’s warning was somehow hitting her harder now, but her surroundings seemed to have somehow gotten exponentially worse despite not really being different from the previous rooms. Then, she noticed subtle distant echoes, and she felt that she could see shadows moving in the blackness. The possibility that there were actual ghosts, and other monsters in these ruins much more fitting of the term, just gave validity to what Frisk would otherwise consider nothing but paranoia.

Trying to find more comfort, she decided to turn her sight and ears to the creature that was guiding her. With nothing else to look at for a few minutes, Frisk noticed loads of things about the strange creature that she didn’t at first, including the fact that he was shaking. It was subtle enough so that you wouldn’t notice it at first glance, but once she did Frisk found it hard to ignore. It wasn’t cold here, or even one bit chilly, which meant that the creature was clearly anxious about something. Possibly due to the other monsters in this ruins, or maybe something he seemed to be hiding. If he shook any more, or if he would accidentally step on the wrong foot, he would most assuredly drop the flower in the pot. Frisk didn’t want to be around him if that happened. Frisk wasn’t sure if the creature was always shaking like this and that she just hadn’t noticed it, or if the creature also seemed to feel the immense dread as she did.

The hallway seemed to go on forever. At this point, she was practically huddled by the creature. Once again though, Frisk’s morbid curiosity came back and so she turned her head back to sneak a
look at the way they came, while she was still tailing him. It was like looking down at a pit of endless darkness that kept growing and growing the further they went. She shone her phone in that direction, and the light barely reached it.

After a few seconds, Frisk had enough and stopped looking.

“How much further?” she nervously asked.

“Don’t worry child, we are nearly there.”

Thankfully for Frisk, this was not an exaggeration. Only a few more steps and they had arrived at what seemed to be finally the end of this dreaded hallway, signalled by a brick wall, a small entrance way, and a curious lonesome pillar to their left. They went through the entrance and Frisk stopped to once again take some breaths. The new room wasn’t that small compared some of the others they had been through, but it still felt like an incredibly welcome change from the seemingly endless hallway. The new room had a few piles of red leaves, and two obvious new pathways, one straight to her left, and another one further down her right. She looked through the entrance they came from, and could barely see the other end. Frisk smiled in relief.

“Thank god,” she said. “I hope there is not another hallway because I really don’t want to go through that shit again. Sorry, I know. Language. It’s just that I… uhh, mister?”

The creature didn’t seem to notice her, as it was too busy seemingly doing nothing but stare at a wall. Confused, Frisk shone her light on it but saw nothing out of the ordinary.

“What is it now?” she asked.

“Oh right,” the creature began and was pushed out of his sudden daze. “I just remembered something just now. I had completely forgotten about it, but thankfully my son was kind enough to remind me. The thing is, I need to go do something… alone.”

The creature looked at Frisk with a saddened expression on his muzzle, and Frisk felt like she knew what he was going to say, and she dreaded to hear it.

“You are going to have to stay here for a while,” he said.

Frisk could felt an immense volume of fear fill her stomach. Even though she kind of expected him to say that she still couldn’t fathom it.

“What?”

“I’m going to have to go somewhere, alone, for a while. I’m dreadfully sorry, I truly am, but-”

“Are you seriously just going to leave me here? Alone?”

“Yes,” the creature said sadly.

Frisk couldn’t believe it. She was unsure about this monster, yes, but she was more frightened about the idea of being left alone in this dark, mute place.

“Just take me with you.”

“I’m sorry, but I can’t do that.”

“Why not!!”
“This place in question cannot be accessed or seen by humans. I’ve done it with other kids before and the place just vanished as soon as they arrived at it.”

Frisk line of thought almost halted when she heard that last line.

“I’m sorry?” she began. “Did you just say, other kids?”

The creature looked incredibly confused.

“Did I?” he asked in surprise.

“Of course you did!” said Frisk almost on the verge of yelling. “You…”

Frisk put her hands on her head as she wandered back and forth. There were so many thoughts going on in her head she found it hard to organize them.

“Y’know what,” she eventually said. “I am just going to come with you, and if the place vanishes then so be it.”

“That can’t be done I’m afraid.”

“I am sorry old man, but I am NOT just going to stay here ok?”

“I know you are nervous of it but I assure you I will only be gone for about a minute, at most.”

But then, without a single hint of irony in his voice, the creature said something completely contradictory to everything he had hinted at so far:

“Besides, it’s not like there is anything dangerous in these ruins. You’ll be perfectly safe where you are, no worries.”

Frisk wasn’t sure if she heard him right. Did he just say that there was nothing dangerous? After everything, he had built up?

“But… you just said earlier that there were a bunch of monsters here that wanted to take me.”

The creature looked at Frisk like he once again had no idea what she was talking about.

“Did I?” he asked. “Huh, strange. I must have misspoken or something.”

“How… how the hell was that a misspeak? You straight up said that there were monsters here that would kill me.”

“Trust me, my child,” the creature said as he chuckled. “I have made far more embarrassing errors in the past. Now as I said, there is nothing to fear here. There is nothing that can hurt you in these ruins.”

Frisk didn’t know what to think at this point. Was the creature trying to hide his contradiction, or was this just another example of his craziness? The creature seemed so convincing but he could also just be extremely good at pretending, but it also showed the same confusion when Frisk said he had mentioned other kids. Did he have some sort of terribly short term memory?

*Just what the hell is going on in his head?* Frisk thought.

“Y’know what?” the creature suddenly said as if an idea just popped in his head. "If anything DOES happen, just use this to reach me ok, and I promise, I’ll come right back to you.”
With that said, the creature picked up with one hand (while still holding the flower in the other) a strange object of sorts from underneath his robe, and handed it to Frisk. It was surprisingly heavy so that Frisk almost dropped it when she grabbed it. The object in question was about slightly longer than her two palms, and looked like a large rectangle with what looked like an old school antenna at one end, and was apparently made out of pure metal. On the front, or what Frisk assumed was the front, were dozens of numbers and computer symbols aligned in an order similar to an old cellphone.

Wait a minute, thought Frisk.

This item was a cellphone. An incredibly ancient one, possibly one of the earliest ever made. Frisk recognized it from seeing it in a history magazine she read once. Frisk felt like an idiot for a moment for not recognising it at first glance, until she realized that she wouldn’t have expected to find such an item here. This was an ancient relic of course, but it really old enough to fit into the ancient and medieval feel the entire ruin gave across. Frisk wouldn’t be surprised if the creature didn’t even know what it was.

“Uh thanks,” Frisk said to the creature. “But no offence, but I already got one of those.”

She dangled her phone around to get the creature's attention to it.

“Oh no, that’s a flashlight,” the creature said and smiled. “You are not going to be able to call me with that.”

“No it’s not,” said Frisk. “Nevermind. I guessing you never seen a mobile phone before.”

“A what phone?”

“Of course,” muttered Frisk.

“Well then,” the creature said. “If you can use this strange flashlight of yours to call me, then you might not need mine after all.”

Then the creature reached out and grabbed the old phone from Frisk’s hand.

“Hang on,” she began. “Did you only have one phone?”

“Yes,” the creature said. “Why would I need more?”

“And you gave it to me… so that I could call you.”

“Of course.”

Frisk sighed. She didn’t bother to question this strange creature circular logic.

“All right,” the creature began. “I think that’s enough stalling for now. I really need to go.”

The creature began to now walk towards the furthest exit.

“Wait,” Frisk called after him. “You didn’t give me your number.”

The creature stopped and turned to face her direction.

“My number?” he asked.

Frisk sighed.
“Ok, how the hell do I call you?”

“Just use the phone,” the creature said.

At this point, Frisk mentally gave up.

“Y’know what?” she began. “If something happens, I am just going to yell instead.”

The creature smiled.

“That could do it,” he said.

Then he turned away from her and back towards the entrance.

“Now my son,” he said and looked at his flower. “Enough fumbling about. Let us go.”

Then the creature left walked down the room and towards the furthest exit. Then he turned left and completely vanished from Frisk’s line of sight. Frisk huddled down by one corner and began shining the phone’s flashlight around the room. There was no sound, or anything resembling life besides the strange piles of red leaves. Maybe there really was nothing there after all. But still, the fear of the other monsters still remained, whether they existed or not.

“Ok,” Frisk began. “Don’t freak out, don’t freak out.”

Chapter End Notes

So here is the next chapter of The Royal Hunt. In this one get to learn more about Frisk and the "mysterious creature" that guides her.

So this was originally just the first half of a much longer chapter, but as I was writing, I realized that not only finish it in time, but it was also much longer than I anticipated. So I thought of the brilliant idea of simply spitting it in two.

Also here is a much less fun fact:
It might be a while before the next chapter comes out. It's not because I've lost interest in this story, far from it, but I am going to be busy as shit studying this week, with FOUR tests to prepare for, and a thousand-word essay to finish. That's also partly why I split this chapter in half. Because I didn't want to make you wait for a long time yet again. But once I'm done with the school stuff, I will get back to the story and try to get it out as early as I can. If I had to pick an estimate release date, it would be sometime in early March.

Oh and one more thing:
To those who are worried from this chapter that this AU is just going to be a beat-by-beat retelling of UT, but with changed roles, don’t worry, this is NOT going to be one of those AU’s. I am not going to spoil, but I promise you that shortly after Frisk leaves the ruins, the story will go in a completely new route and direction. It's only the first couple of chapters that follow the same formula but after that, it's a complete free-for-all.
Anyway, here is the next chapter and I hope you enjoy.
The Ruins Part 3

About 10 minutes had passed and the creature had still not returned. These 10 minutes, while short in hindsight, felt like a gruelling hour in this dark, silent place. Frisk hadn’t heard a thing in a while beside her uneasy breathing, and distant cavernous echoes. Even then, she still felt that she wasn’t alone.

To make matters worse, Frisk swore that she had sometimes managed to glimpse from her flashlight some silhouettes of what looked like giant frogs about the size of dogs. Were these the Froggits entities the mad creature had mentioned earlier? If so, were they harmless? Frisk figured they must be since the creature had mentioned them far earlier than he did that there were dangers here, but Frisk figured that could just be related to his unnatural memory loss. In fact, nothing she had seen for the last hour or so had been natural.

Frisk was even starting to question whether the silhouettes were even there in the first place. She had read a few things about mental illnesses online before. She didn’t know any close relatives that suffered from it, but the cause wasn’t always genetics. Could it be that the nature of this place was finally starting to make her crack? In fact, was anything around her real? Were these ancient walls and hallway mere cavernous rocks that manifested as building bricks to her mind in this near impenetrable darkness. Now that she was thinking about it, was the strange, unnatural creature from earlier even real in the first place-

No, Frisk thought to herself. He was totally real. I know it. I touched him. I felt him. The texture of the dirty fur. That was too real to be a hallucination. So was the fire he spewed. I could feel its heat. I know I’m not crazy. He HAS to be real. He must be. Oh god. What even is real anymore?

“This…” Frisk stuttered. “This place is really messing with my head it seems heh.”

It was at this moment that Frisk realized she had finally had enough.

“Fuck it,” she said and stood up.

Frisk had decided, she wasn’t going to stay anymore in this dreadful place, despite the creatures clear order not to move. Didn’t he also tell her that she was capable of making her own choices? Then why Frisk still decided to accept his bidding despite knowing that she would literally hate every second of it, she had no idea. Frisk figured she must’ve pitied the old monster, that madman, but now that he was gone to who knows where with no indication that he was ever going to return, Frisk figured that she was all on her own again.

That is… if she wasn’t always alone, to begin with-

Frisk shook that uncomfortable idea from her head again. From here on out, until she would find a more satisfying alternative answer, the creature was real, and even if he wasn’t, it didn’t matter to her at the moment. Finding a way out was all that did.
She shone her flashlight around and examined the room. There were two entrance ways, one on her left that seemed to lead to a dead end, and one further down right where the creature had headed. Frisk decided to head down that way, thinking that she might catch his trail and maybe catch up with him.

But then she looked around once more to see if she missed anything, and then she noticed from the corner of her eyes, something glittering inside other room. She couldn’t exactly see what it was, but to her, there was no mistaking it. There was something shiny in that room.

Frisk figured for a moment that this could maybe be an elaborate trap, but she couldn’t resist her curiosity and so decided to take a peek inside before continuing her way.

“My curiosity is going to be the death of me,” she muttered.

It was a small room, just about the size of two cupboards, and in the centre of it, on a thick pedestal surrounded by more red leaves, stood a large and rusty silver bowl. Right underneath it, there was something resembling a text carved into the pedestal. Curious as always, Frisk went closer to see if she could read it.

Sadly, most of the text had faded with age, but Frisk could still make out the main gist of it.

Candy, --ke one, it said in old fashioned English.

Who the hell would put candy in a bowl in this place, thought Frisk. Must be that crazy monster guy. It wouldn’t surprise me, to be honest.

Frisk decided to take a peek into the bowl, but then she hurled back immediately afterwards and put her hand on her nose.

“Gah, fuck me,” she said. “Fucking disgusting, ugh”

She only had one glimpse at the candies, but that was enough for her to say no to them.

They looked ancient and mouldy and had an incredibly foul smell resembling a rotting sugary carcass. Frisk could also swear that she saw some flies in it, or at least an insect of sorts.

“Welp,” she said. “Don’t know what I expected.”

Then she turned around and saw something that made her completely stop with fear. In the room where she had just been, there stood now dozens of silhouettes each resembling what looked like massive frogs creatures, each about the size of a small child. The figures “heads” seemed to subtly bob back and forth like a bobblehead, showing that they were clearly not static. To make matters worse, they were all staring at her like they were analyzing her.

To Frisk, there was no mistaking it. These were the same figures she had only glanced at before, and since they looked much clearer now, that could mean that they weren’t illusions.

Nervously, Frisk shone her flashlight at them, to see clearly just what these shadows could possibly be hiding.

Fortunately for her, the creatures didn’t look nearly as frightening as the build-up had anticipated.

The creatures looked like large frogs with snow-white scales, and on each of their stomachs were what looked like a second, smaller mouth. Now that they were in clear light, Frisk saw that the way they stared at her seemed more like due to ample curiosity than malice like they had never seen
such strange being before. If anything, Frisk found them to look somewhat adorable.

But Frisk learned a while ago that looks could be deceiving, so she crept to them with utter carefulness. Some of the “frogs” backed away slowly when they realized she was coming to them.

“It’s alright,” Frisk said softly. “I am not gonna hurt you.”

The creatures seemed to stop after she said that. If they couldn’t speak, they could at least understand her, much to Frisk’s relief.

Finally, she thought. Some other intelligent life here.

When Frisk was close enough the one closest, she kneeled down in front of it.

“Don’t be scared,” whispered Frisk. “I just want to see if you can help me or not.”

The frog said nothing and just croaked.

“Do perchance, know of a way out?”

The frog creature just stared at her and turned its head diagonally like a dog that was utterly confused. Frisk sighed.

“Of course you can’t understand me,” she said. “Why would you?”

Suddenly there came another clanging sound in the distance, and Frisk and all the frog creatures looked in its direction.

“Goddammit,” said Frisk. “That sound again.”

Then she turned back to the frogs and became even more nervous, because, whatever the noise was, the frog creatures looked immensely frightened of it. They began to look around themselves anxiously and some croaked frighteningly. Frisk was now scared again. These creatures obviously knew something she didn’t.

“Gu-guys? What was that sound?” she asked, even though she was not really expecting an answer.

Then suddenly, the frog creature who looked the oldest judging by its tall size and droopy, elderly looking eyes, stared straight at Frisk and said in an uncannily human voice:

“Leave this place girl. Leave. If you know what’s best for you.”

This made Frisk more surprised than the clanging sound, so much so that she didn’t manage to absorb its message.

“I’m sorry?” she began. “You can talk?”

Then, as if on command, the frogs all began to disperse and hop away from her into any random direction.

“Hey!” Frisk yelled. “What are you doing? Come back here!”

There were so many of them and they were all jumping around so wildly that it was nearly impossible to keep track of them all. But Frisk managed to spot from the wild crowd the old looking one who spoke to her, who was heading alongside a few others down the corridor where the nameless monster went. Frisk ran towards it.
“Hey stop!” she yelled. “I wanna talk you!”

Frisk turned left and through the entrance which led to a smaller corridor. There she saw the frog creatures hopping away in the distance.

“Stop, please. I have so many questions. Can I just-”

Her foot suddenly went through the ground.

“Gah, fuck!”

She looked down at her now trapped foot. Thankfully it didn’t get damaged, but pulling it out still proved somewhat of a struggle. Frisk looked ahead and saw the frog creature vanishing in the darkness. Now mixed with utter frustration at her bad luck, Frisk used up all her might to pull it out.

“C’mon!” she said. “My leg’s not that heavy!”

Then, like pulling out an old nail, she succeeded, and the grey marble dust ran down her dirty pant leg. But before she could celebrate, Frisk heard and felt an immense rumbling. It quickly became clear to her what was happening. The floor beneath her was now crumbling.

“Oh shit!”

Not bothering to take a breath, Frisk stood up and began to run. She didn’t see the floor behind her fall, but she heard it clearly, and when she had reached the end of the corridor, she jumped and landed face first on the hard floor.

“Ouch!”

She turned around to her back and stared at the crumbled floor she had just narrowly escaped from.

“Shit,” she muttered. “That was close.”

When she had relaxed, Frisk stood up and shone her flashlight down at the newly formed pit. Even with her phone at full power, she could still just barely see the far bottom. There were what looked like piles of leaves there, but Frisk wasn’t going to take the chance that they could soften her fall.

“Welp,” she said to herself. “Sorry old man. Not getting back there again.”

She turned around and shone her flashlight down the empty corridor ahead, and she just remembered how frightening this place was when she was alone. Still though, Frisk stood determined and brave.

“Alright,” she said. “Where to now?”

After passing the 15th or so doorway, Frisk had completely lost track of time. All the walls and decors in these labyrinthian ruins seemed to repeat and become a pattern. It was only when she saw walls with large cracks on them that she felt she had made any progress or once or twice when she had entered a large, church sized room with pits and leaves, but these alongside the cracked walls became more infrequent as time went on. On passing the 30th doorway, all the rooms had become completely indistinguishable from one another. One time, Frisk swore that she was basically running in circles.
But as much as frustration was building up in her, that was only boosted by her urge to get out of this place of utter loneliness and terror. Throughout her entire lonesome traversal through these claustrophobic hallways with low ceilings, these empty and sometimes dusty gardens, Frisk hadn’t seen a single soul. Not any the strange frog monsters from earlier, or the crazy goat hermit, or even any insects or worms. Just utter nothingness, as if everyone who lived in these halls just went up and vanished. She had tried calling out.

“HEY ANYONE?” she had yelled. “HELLO? BIG MONSTER GUY? I THINK I’M STUCK AND THESE ROOMS KEEP REPEATING! PLEASE JUST ANSWER ME! SOMETHING! ANYTHING!”

She had gotten no response, but Frisk didn’t stop until her throat began to hurt.

Frisk didn’t hate being alone. She had been so many times of her life. But that was a different kind of lonesomeness where she could still see and fathom the loud bustling of people and cars, the singing of birds and insects. But here, there was nothing. No life and no sounds save for the occasional distant echoes. Nothing. For the first time in her life, Frisk felt that she was truly alone.

Still though, Frisk refused to give up. Refused to simply kneel down on the ground and cry. She knew it wouldn’t help her. She believed there was a way out, and she was going to find it.

Then suddenly, as if whatever forces laid out there had answered her crying inward voice, she heard something that gave her much joy. Unlike the distant echoes, this sound came from very close by as if it was only a single room away, but it was what it sounded like that actually gave her joy. It sounded like deep croaking, almost identical to one of a frog. There could be no mistaking it. Frisk had found one of those frog creatures again.

She began to run towards it. She had become so desperate for another life, something she didn’t think she ever would. Frisk didn’t care at the moment whether it was unintelligent, non-sapient, or anything. She just needed someone, something, anything to keep her company, so much so that she didn’t notice the unusual amount of dust on the floor she was stepping on.

“HEY THERE!” she yelled “I NEED YOUR HELP! PLEASE JUST STAY THERE, I NEED TO-”

Then she turned the corner and saw something pretty unusual, or at least unusual compared to what she had begun to expect. It was yet another of those frog creatures, but this one seemed immensely different, and a bit more frightening. Not only was it grotesquely fat, but its eyes looked dead and bloodshot like a zombie. The mouths, that being the “main” one and the little one on the stomach were overwhelmingly brimming with pale dust, so that a decent volume of it began leaking down them alongside the dripping saliva, like a bucket overfilled with snow.

The way the creature stared at her, with hunger in its coal black eyes, made Frisk regret immensely in revealing herself by shouting.

“Hu-human,” it croaked.

Frisk backed down in terror.

“I-I’m sorry,” she said. “I think I mistook you for someone else.”

The frog’s saliva seemed to increase.

“Hu-hungry,” it croaked and sounded almost as frightened as Frisk. “Pl-please help me. Th-this hunger… it never ends. It just doesn’t end.”
“Th-that’s too bad,” Frisk began. “But sorry. I-I don’t know how to help you.”

The frog’s expression seemed to suddenly change into utter sadness.

“I think you do,” it said.

Frisk didn’t like the implication of that sentence.

“I-I’m sorry,” she said. “It was nice knowing you mister… but I think I need to go now.”

The frog noticed her backing away.

“Please,” it begged. “I want to try. Try to see if it would satiate me. Please. Just a foot. That’s all I will ask of you.”

Frisk began to back away faster.

“I’m sorry,” she said.

Then she turned around and began to run away.

“Hey, HEY GET BACK HERE.”

Suddenly, dozens of small, white, spiky spear looking things materialized in the air in front of her.

“What the hell!?”

Then the spikes began to fly at her like homing missiles, and in a hasty decision, Frisk turned back around. The fat frog stood still there and had a groaning face like it was constipated. The missiles were no mere coincidences, Frisk figured. The frog was some sort of sorcerer.

“You- you are not getting away,” it said, and even more spikes materialized in front of it.

Before Frisk could react, the spears flew towards her in an unnaturally high speed, none of them hitting her, but enough to send her completely off balance and fall on her back.

“Gah!”

She hit her head on something falling down, causing immense pain and her vision to get incredibly dizzy. But just as her vision got better, Frisk saw that the frog was on top of her.

She screamed, and pushed it away from her with surprising ease despite the monster’s size, but then there materialized something heavy which pulled her back down. She looked at her arms and saw something resembling white bricks holding them down. Then, with utter fright and a growing feeling of hopelessness, she looked back on the fat frog, whose mouths were still filled with falling dust, as it hopped back towards her.

“Get the fuck away from me!” Frisk yelled.

“I’m so sorry,” the frog said as it jumped back on top of her. “But you left me no choice. I am really, honestly sorry about this, believe me. But I am just so hungry, and you’re the only living thing with matter I’ve seen in years. You could be just the key I need. I promise I will be quick, but I cannot promise that I will only stop at the foot. I would like to apologize a whole lot preemptively, but I might end up eating you whole. Please, forgive me.”

Then the frog turned her leg, and with its upper mouth licked its lips.
“Pl-please don’t,” mutter Frisk.

“GET AWAY FROM HER!”

Suddenly the room lighted up by a distant fire. Frisk knew what it was, and her heart was instantly filled back with hope. It was the large goat monster, who left her behind, and he stood in the room, both arms filled with orange flames, and his blue and orange eyes shining unnaturally bright, and his face was filled with rage. The fat frog looked at the old creature and its white face became immensely filled with a fearful expression that said: “not him”.

The frog hurriedly jumped of Frisk and tried to hop away the best it could. The nameless creature fired dozens of small fireballs in its direction, to the point of almost burning the room up, and just as the fat frog began to think it could maybe escape, it was hit point blank by a large hurling fireball that sent it almost flying of its balance. The fire quickly engulfed the poor frog creature, and it let out an unnatural screech, unlike anything Frisk had heard of before, and then it fell down limp on the floor. Then there flew some weird, grey energy from its charred body, and when the fire quickly faded, the charred remains crumbled into dust, completely unmistakable from the ones it’s mouths were filled with earlier.

Frisk laid on the floor and panted heavily, as she watched the tall monster walk towards the newly formed dust pile, and then pick up some with his palm to examine. She also noticed that the immense weight on her had vanished. Frisk looked at the arms and saw no white bricks or anything that suggested they had been there. Frisk sighed in relief and looked back at the large monster.

“Th-thanks,” she said.

She didn’t bother being angry at him, especially since he had just saved her. Then the creature, seemingly not having taken notice of her gratitude, turned towards Frisk with an angry look in his face.

“What did I tell you!” he said, sounding almost on the verge of yelling.

Frisk was taken back immensely by that.

“Wh-what?”

“Didn’t I tell you to stay?” the creature continued. “Stay exactly where you were? So that things like this wouldn’t have happened?”

Frisk couldn’t fathom it. This monster was angry at her? When he was the one that left her alone? Now, all the anger and frustration Frisk felt towards the monster came running back to her. He didn’t deserve to be angry towards Frisk. Not for what he did.

“Hey wait just a minute!” she protested and stood up. “Are you really questioning me? After all the shit you pulled!”

“Language!” the creature said harshly. “Do not speak back to me like that!”

“Oh shut up!” Frisk said. “After what I’ve been through I think I at least fucking deserve to do that much!”

“Language!”

“Ok first of all,” Frisk began. “Where the hell did you go that was so important to leave me behind
for so long, I honestly feel like I deserve to know!”

“It was not important!” the creature insisted. “What was important was for you to stay! Instead, you disobeyed me with you utter impatience!”

“U-utter impatience? I’m sorry, but you were gone for a long, LONG time. I don’t know how it works to your people, but most humans my age aren’t keen on staying alone and defenceless in utter fucking darkness.”

“Hey, language!”

“Oh stop with that!” Frisk angrily said. “You are not my dad, and even if you were, is that really your fucking priority here? My language? Not you trying to help me get out of this hellhole where I remind you, I almost got killed?”

“That’s only because you didn’t stay still exactly as I asked you to!”

“What the- what the fuck did you think I would've done back there? You fucking left me behind back there! Alone! In a place with god knows how many monsters and NOTHING to defend me with! Besides, didn’t you just say that there were dangerous monsters her?”

Frisk pointed at the pile of dust that used to be the frog.

“The what the hell is this then!”

“Tha-that was a rare exception.”

“Then why the hell wasn’t I allowed to move?” Frisk yelled. “Are you that paranoid over the smallest things? Besides, didn’t you also say that I was allowed to make my own choices, or did you just suffer another convenient memory loss about that?”

“It’s not that I don’t want you to make choices,” the creature said and his tone of anger was beginning to sound more like desperation. “But you could have gotten hurt! You could have fallen in a crevice or be attacked by random strangers, which may I remind you, is exactly what happened! You could have been killed! Gods, I dread to think what would’ve happened if that happened. A child dead under my watch, and… and… it would’ve been my fault. Be- because I didn’t take care of them hard enough, because I left them alone. Because I…”

The creature became suddenly silent as if every light inside of him was turned off.

It was then that the creature did something that Frisk did not expect from him in the slightest. He was beginning cry. There was no doubt about it. Dozens of tears were running down the creatures furry cheek and down his golden beard.

Frisk didn’t know what to think now, as her irritation toward the seemingly controlling monster seemed to be slowly being replaced by pity and empathy.

“I-I’m sorry mister,” Frisk said calmly. “I didn’t mean to-”

Suddenly, the creature leapt into her and hugged her tight.

“What are you- hey let go of me!”

The creature was now weeping, and Frisk felt the gigantic tears run down her hoodie.

“Let me go! Let.. me…”
Frisk began to slow down in her struggle against the creature’s grasp when she began to finally hear the creature's words through all his loud sobbings.

“I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry,” the creature muttered. “I left you. You could have been killed because I left you. I’m so sorry. You were right. I should not have done that. I should have taken you with me. I was so stupid to leave you all alone out there. Oh, gods. Why did I-”

Frisk couldn’t believe it. She was feeling for this creature. The same creature that she was terrified of just a moment before, and one she just barely knew. But in this strange, perhaps overacting moment on the creature’s part, Frisk felt that he was strangely human. Instead of the frightful, untrustworthy and mad creature she had come to recognize, she began to consider whether she was being hugged by a sad and lonely old man, that although crazy and unsure how to properly behave, seemed to have a good heart concealed behind terrible decision makings and awful word choices. Or at least, that’s what Frisk currently felt, outside of the uncomfortable tightness of the creature’s incredibly strong embrace.

“Hey, hey,” she said in a calm voice. “It’s ok. It’s ok.”

After a short while, the creature let go and Frisk found herself finally able to properly breathe again. The creature wiped the remaining tears from his heterochromic eyes with the back of his hand.

“Sorry about that,” the creature said. “A bit of an overreaction on my part. I just wanted you to know I was sorry and-”

“It’s fine, it’s fine,” said Frisk. “I mean you’re right, it was totally an overreaction, but that’s fine, that’s completely fine. At least I think I understand you better now, I guess.”

The creature chuckled.

“I should get going now,” he said. “It’s getting late. Do you want to come with me or…”

“Right back at you,” replied Frisk.

And so the two of them walked together again.

“Hey,” began Frisk. “Sorry about lashing out at you back there.”

“Nah, don’t be,” the creature said. “You had every right to be angry. I know that now.”

“Ok then,” replied Frisk. “Whatever you say, old man.”

The creature chuckled again.

“Y’know,” he began. “You kind of remind me of a daughter I had actually. She… wait a minute. Daughter? That’s not right. They were a boy, weren’t they? A boy, yeah. I had two sons… I think. Wait. Are they even mine?”

The creature noticed Frisk confused expression and realized he was rambling again.

“Bah,” the creature said and smiled. “Such needless details. They tend to… well, slip my mind sometimes.”

Frisk chuckled. She was getting used to his eccentricity and weird memory losses.

“So um,” began Frisk. “Where is this other son, or daughter or whatever at now?”
The creature smile waned as if he had just remembered something he didn’t want to talk about.

“I do not know,” he said simply. “Maybe they’ve gone home. Maybe they’re far away, or maybe they never existed in the first place. I simply just don’t know anymore.”

“Oh, well sorry for asking.”

“Nah, that’s ok.”

Suddenly, Frisk just realized something was missing.

“Hey speaking of children,” she began. “Where the hell is your flower—er, I mean your son at?” she asked.

“Oh I brought him home actually,” the creature said and his smile instantly returned. “I figured he would be bored staying with me, wandering around all day, so I dropped him at our home on the way here.”

“Oh,” began Frisk. “So where is this home exactly?”

“It’s very close by in fact,” the creature said. “Just right pass this corridor.”

Then the two of them walked over a small patch of grass that had grown on the ground, and turned to a passage to the left, over another patch of leaves. Suddenly, they were in a large open room, with the ceiling being cavern walls far above them. The first thing Frisk saw of note in it was a large, singular dead tree in the centre that was clearly intentionally planted a long time ago. All the leaves had fallen off it, so it looked like there was a red circular bush around the stump. But it was what was behind the dead tree that was of much more interest to Frisk.

It was a cozy and small house made of bricks, looking like it had been built in, and sculpted out of the old ruins. There was only one floor, with two windows in front with dozens of red leaves underneath each one.

Just looking at this place gave Frisk immense comfort. It gave her nostalgic feelings of old, comfy cabins she used to visit when she was very young, away from the loudness and busyness of her old city. She had almost forgotten this hidden realm of calmness and solitude, but the old looking walls, the small empty garden and the clean air dragged those memories back from the depths of her subconsciousness. This place, in short, made her feel calm.

“Welcome,” the creature began. “To my home.”

Chapter End Notes

Once again, sorry for the wait. Honestly, I expected me to finish this part much later.

I don't have much to say now. I will mention that perhaps my only downside with
fanfictions, and that maybe relates to most fanworks in general, is that there are not any editors of sorts involved to help you out. Some of you may know that I fancy criticism as long as it's constructive, but in the chaotic world of fanfiction, nothing of the sort is there. Of course, editors aren't necessary in this hobby, but for aspiring writers such as myself, it basically means that I have to much boring work once I've "finished" the story, which boils down to reading the draft back, fixing any errors or things I don't like, and then copy paste it into Grammarly since Google drive doesn't support it for some reason, and THEN going back and formatting the story, putting in current fonts, and so on. But even then, there does occasionally slip through the crack some errors that I don't notice until I run over the stories after I have already published them and I think to myself: "Why the hell didn't I notice this before?"

Anyway, am I rambling? I think I'm rambling now. Eh, whatever. For now, just enjoy the story (or don't, I'm not forcing you) and hope you stay for the next.
Unfortunately, the interior of the monster’s home proved to be much more disappointing than the exterior. Like the tunnels, it was very dark and it was hard to see. Thankfully though, there were dozens of candles placed throughout which the large monster promptly lighted using his fingers. The next thing he did was light the fireplace in the living room, and the sofas and table brightened up with an orange hue, like from an evening sun. Now that Frisk could see much clearer, the felt that the place looked a bit better, but only for the most part. Also, other less visible issues now popped up in the light. Frisk saw that the wallpapers looked old and lifeless, with some tearing off or falling into a state of rot. There were cobwebs at almost every corner, and the wooden floor creaked uncomfortably with every step. What was worse, as Frisk soon noticed, was that in the hallway, there were missing planks that had been evidently been ripped out.

The few pieces of furniture that were in the house, while dusty and unclean, looked the most competently made things so far. But they also looked dull and colourless and were nothing you’d be surprised find in an ordinary home. They were mundane things like cupboards in the hallway and table and chairs in the living room. The only extraordinary thing of note was the potted sunflower that the monster kept calling his “son”, which was now placed in one of the two sofas in the living room, rather than on a solid surface like a cupboard or a windowsill like any sensible person would place it.

“Now then, how do you like it?” the creature asked as they stood in the living room.

Frisk stayed quiet for a few seconds before she answered. She didn’t want to upset him, but she also found it hard to hide her disappointment.

“Well, it uh… looks alright,” she said.

Then she saw the smile starting to wane of the creature's muzzle.

“Bu-but with some small changes and a bit of hard work,” she hastily added. “This place could become something special I think.”

The creature smile returned.

“Well that’s good to hear,” he said. “Well, I’ll be in the kitchen then. Do you like pies?”

“Oh, yeah I like pies,” she said.

Frisk was kind of taken aback by the randomness of that question but she decided to play along.

“What kind?”

“Umm, all kinds I guess. I honestly rarely have one so I guess I’m open to anything.”
The creature became thoughtful for a moment.

“Do you like…” he began after a while. “Cinnamon or butterscotch perhaps?”

“Uh yeah,” replied Frisk. “Cinnamon or butterscotch sounds good.”

“Ok, then which one do you prefer? Should the pie be made of cinnamon or butterscotch? Maybe a bit of both?”

“Both sounds good.”

“Well, then it’s decided.”

A smile widened on the monsters muzzle.

“Well I’ll be in the kitchen then,” he said and walked away.

Once he was in, Frisk heard the sound of rumbling through cupboards and a soft hiss of gas.

There is a working oven in a place like this? she thought.

“Now I honestly don’t think I’ll live up to my wife’s cooking!” the creature yelled from the kitchen. “But I’ll try my hardest at least! Make yourself at home in the meantime! Look around, play in the garden, do whatever you kids fancy these days! I’ll call you when it’s ready ok?”

“Whatever you say!” Frisk yelled back.

She sat down in the unoccupied sofa that had grown warm thanks to the flaming fireplace. She looked around. Frisk felt the place didn’t look half as bad now that she wasn’t getting somewhat used to it.

At least it’s not the freaking hallways , she thought.

She examined the sunflower that “sat” on the sofa chair opposite her. The orange flames from the fireplace returned familiar colour and light to the flower.

Frisk felt that this flower was perhaps the strangest aspect of the monster when it came to personality. There was nothing about it that made it stand out from other sunflowers, yet the monster seemed utterly convinced that this one was his son. Frisk couldn’t figure out why. Perhaps it was just a delusion on the monster’s part, possibly brought out by the immense loneliness of these ruins. But why this flower in particular? Frisk considered that maybe it was already put into a pot when the monster found it.

Or perhaps, as crazy as it would normally sound, maybe this flower really was his son. Maybe he was cursed and transformed by a witch or the like and the monster knew. Maybe these monster creatures just sometimes give birth to sunflowers, or maybe these monsters start like this until they grow into something else. Could it then be that the dozens of sunflowers she landed on earlier were also children? If that were the case, were they sentient? Is this singular sunflower in the chair sentient?

As Frisk kept staring into the flower and began to notice every detail of the leaves and the pistil, a strange sensation crept up from the back of her head. She didn’t know why but staring at this flower slowly filled her with dread, and a touch of… sadness? Frisk peered closer. There was something about it, she was sure now. Then she felt something else. A very unusual, dreadful feeling. The reason why, Frisk found it hard to fathom, but it was if… the flower was calling to
“Hey Frisk!” the monster yelled from the kitchen. “I just realized I’m out of butterscotch, and it’s too late to run to the store! I am dreadfully sorry but is it ok if I skip the butterscotch and just bake a cinnamon pie?”

The sudden disruption of the eerie quietness pulled Frisk from her the depths of her thoughts.

“Uhh yeah!” she yelled. “Cinnamon pie is ok?”

“Yes good to know!”

Now that she was back to reality, she looked back at the flower and saw nothing of note. She had no idea why she was so hypnotized by it for a moment.

*It’s just a dumb flower*, she thought and stood up.

She began to examine a nearby bookcase. Frisk felt somewhat bored now, which she still considered being a somewhat upgrade from feelings of utter dread. There was no internet signal to speak of, and the few books in the bookcase were unfortunately either mysteriously burnt up, illegible, or in a language completely alien to her. The only exception was a boring, old book that was nothing but a study of snails. The disappointment felt immeasurable to Frisk, as she now dearly wanted to learn more about monsters and the history of this strange new lifeform.

Frisk left the living room, wanting to explore the rest of the house. There were 3 other doors in the hallway and a staircase that lead down to what looked like a basement. She careful crept down the hallway as she felt the creaking floor could crack open with any large step, and also because she didn’t want to step into any of the holes formed by the missing planks. The first two doors were unfortunately locked, and Frisk expected the third and last one to be another disappointment. Fortunately for her, the door was open.

“Third time’s the charm,” she said to herself and wandered in.

The monster had evidently not been in this room since they got here since there were no candles making it pitch black. Not one to let much get in the way of her desperate curiosity, Frisk picked up her phone, turned on the flashlight and shone it around. This room was obviously a bedroom of sorts, possibly belonging to the large monster judging by the massive bed to the right and the large desk with a singular drawer to her left. There was also a large bookcase, which unfortunately proved to be empty.

Then she shone her light on the desk, and there was something on top of it which instantly caught her attention. She thought it was a large, painting canvas at first. Then Frisk shone her light on it and saw it. This was a map. A handmade map that was most likely drawn by the monster. Not only that but judging by the labyrinthian structure of the pathways and buildings, this was a map of the ruins. Frisk became almost overjoyed by this discovery.

*This is it*, she thought. *This could be the key to getting me home. I guess I should maybe tell the monster guy first. Kinda starting to feel bad for him.*

Growing more curious, Frisk opened the drawer of the desk, hoping to find something else of interest, which she did. It was a large diary which had evidently been used recently judging by how little dust covered it. Frisk checked outside the door and down the hallway to see if the monster was coming. She saw no signs of him, but distant burning candles. And so she sat down and began to peruse the diary, gently flipping pages as to not accidentally tear it.
The first thing Frisk noticed was that the first half of the book was torn out. Whoever did wasn’t subtle or careful about it either, as there were dozens of ripped residues left hanging inside. It was like the pages were ripped out in a rush.

Whatever content was left almost didn’t prove much of interest. Most of the entries followed similar patterns, in which they started with some coherent, although a bit clumsy, sentences written in pitch black ink. All of the entries started with the sentence “nice day today” and then they went into describing in quick successions the same mostly mundane activities of waking up, eating breakfast, grooming the sunflower, and then just perusing around the ruins. Frisk would have found it uninteresting, and most likely would have forgotten it instantly after putting it away, if it wasn’t for the fact that in almost each and every entry, the sentences became more and more incoherent until they completely devolved into chaotic squiggles, like the author had a stroke or suddenly began to freak out. From the little that Frisk could read near the end of the entries, just before they became illegible, she could see that there was always mentions of the monster waiting for someone. Like it would say something like him hoping that “he or she” would appear today or that today would be a good day for “him or her” to appear. The way it was phrased didn’t make it clear whether the monster even knows who he’s waiting for.

The last entry was the only one that didn’t turn illegible, but that was only because it was half finished, most likely because it was for the day today. Even then, there were some signs of the writing getting worse and uneven by the last sentence.

Feeling mostly disappointed, Frisk carefully closed the small book and put it into the drawer which she then promptly closed. She went back out to the hallway and stared down it. There was only one place she hadn’t checked yet, and that was downstairs. Frisk carefully crept down the hallway again, and once again the floor creaked with every step. She wondered on her way how so little of the floor had broken so far, considering the owner of the place must weigh a lot judging by large his size and build.

Once Frisk had reached the staircase, she looked down it and immediately learned what happened to those missing planks on the floor. On the end of the staircase was a singular door, and for some strange reason, the door was boarded up closed with the missing planks, as if to keep something in… or out. The planks weren’t nailed though, rather they were kept up with dangling, grey duct tape.

Either he doesn’t own nails, Frisk thought. Or he’s too unstable to operate them properly. Don’t know which one is more likely.

“Oh there you are my child,” the creature said.

Frisk looked towards his direction and saw that he was standing in the living room doorway and had dozens of white and brown stains on his robe.

“I couldn’t find you where I last put you,” he said. “I was afraid I might have to go look through the entire ruins again.”

“Do you… not have an apron or something?” Frisk asked.

“Oh.”

The creature looked down on his now unclean robe.

“Eh it washes off,” he said. “It always does. Oh and by the way, I came to inform you that the pie is almost ready. It just needs a little while in the oven and then it’s good to go.”
“Ok I’ll be right there,” Frisk said and looked back at the door.

The creature seemed to notice the way she examined it and smiled in a way like he was reminded of someone, someone who used to do the exact same thing Frisk was currently doing.

“Curious about this door my child?” he asked gently. “Heh, I would be too if I were you. But with all my heart, I advise that you will never, ever try to open it.”

“Why?” asked Frisk. “What’s down there?”

The creature went behind Frisk and put both his hands on her shoulders. Then he looked at the door for a while as if he was thinking how to proceed. The smile on his snout was gone.

“Down there...” he began. “Lay only the evilest things ever dreamt up from the dark deep imaginations of the most wicked monsters. An amalgamation yours and anyone's worst possible fears and nightmares made manifest. Famine, war, death, chaos, disease. Countless things a wicked soul can possibly think of. I have seen countless of friends, families, children even, let their curiosity best them and walk through there. None have returned.”

Frisk stood still and listened at the door. There were no sounds. Nothing resembling stirs or movements.

“Can’t hear anything,” Frisk said.

“Ahh, that’s the thing about evil,” the creature said. “It’s quiet, it’s subtle. It grabs hold of you when you least expect it, and then, more often than not, it will be too late to do anything. You see, it wasn’t this bad when we first arrived here, believe me. It was barely noticeable in fact, otherwise, I never would have made it my home. But through the years it has grown and grown even beyond my wildest fears. So I boarded it up, hoping that the tightness of the corridors would stop its growth and that no soul would ever again try to enter. Although, I do shudder when I consider, that my actions might turn out futile and that one day it will grow so large, that it will burst through these barriers and swallow us and the whole world whole.”

“Alright,” said Frisk, trembling. “If it’s so bad then why haven’t you destroyed it.”

“Destroyed it?” asked the goat creature. “Oh, my dear child. If only it were so simple.”

Suddenly, the eerie atmosphere was interrupted by a sudden ding sound. Evidently, a microwave had just finished baking something.

“Oh,” the creature said. “That must be the pie. You know what? I think we should just forget about this door for the time being and move our thoughts on filling up our empty stomachs with some delicious pie, don't ya think?”

“Uhh, yeah that sounds great.”

“Alrighty then.”

And so the creature went away to the kitchen, after wiping off the stains on his shirt with one hand. Frisk stayed behind and stared at the door for a good while. She was now terrified of it, but Frisk kept staring and listening out of morbid curiosity, hoping to catch some stirs or creaking or simply anything that could give her a hint, but she felt nothing. But Frisk found the stillness of it somehow more frightening.

“Are you coming Frisk?” the creature called from the kitchen. “You don’t want your pie to get
cold do you?"

“Just a minute!” Frisk yelled back.

She glanced at the door one more time and then left to the living room, trying her hardest not to think about it.

Chapter End Notes

So once again, here is another chapter that was originally one until it was split in two due to unexpected length. I am sorry if you find it too short or disappointing, but I promise you that in the next one a lot more development begins happening. Also, the next chapter is practically half finished so it will come pretty soon. It's also one of my favourite chapters so far, so that might hype things up a bit.

I don't have much else to say TBH. Just enjoy this fic, or not, and I hope you guys stick for the rest.
On the large living room table, there now stood a large and brown bread like object surrounded dozens of small candles formed in an irregular pattern. Occupying one seat was the strange potted flower. Frisk took a seat by one end of the table and examined the ugly thing, which Frisk could only guess was supposed to be the pie. It looked closer to a burnt, circular loaf of bread, clearly not meant for eating. Despite not really expecting much, Frisk still found herself disappointed.

“Is that the pie?” she asked.

“Of course,” the creature gently said. “What else would it be?”

“I dunno,” Frisk replied. “Looks more like burnt toast.”

“Well in any case, why don't you try it out? It’s good.”

He took out a large, dull kitchen knife and slowly carved out a slice. Then he put it on a small, unclean plate and let it slide across the table towards Frisk.

She then stared down at the dark brown object on her plate. Up close, it looked almost identical to dirt. Suddenly, this filthy thing on her plate brought back dozens of memories of old fairy tales with monsters and their unfavourable choice of food, and Frisk was now starting to feel apprehensive again.

“What’s in it?” she asked the monster.

“Oh, just sugar, cinnamon, that kind of stuff,” the creature replied. “You don’t… like those sort of things?”

Frisk looked at him doubtfully.

“Any other ingredients you forgot to mention?” she asked. “Anything of… the human variety perhaps?”

“Oh no none at all,” the creature reassured. “Try some. I hope it’s good.”

Frisk hesitated again, but then she noticed how the creature seemed so proud of his little creation. Also the large, almost fake, reassuring grin on his muzzle seemed to yell, “please”. And so, Frisk decided to take the monsters word for it, despite all that her instincts were telling her.

“Alright,” she said.

She picked up a small dirty spoon and prepared herself for the “pie”.

“It can’t be that bad right?” she mumbled under her breath.
She carved out a spoonful and felt how the inside seemed much softer than the exterior. Frisk let the bite hang on her spoon a bit, at examined the way it seemed to softly drip down on the table like mud.

*Here comes the aeroplane*, she thought and put it in her mouth.

Frisk gagged. It tasted more putrid than it looked, the way the dry bits mingled in her mouth alongside the mud like, semi-liquid that filled the insides made her feel like she was eating dirt mixed with mud. Either that or a long expired cookie found in some unclean back alley.

“Oh god,” Frisk said with her mouth full.

She couldn’t help herself. It tasted so awful, she couldn’t get herself to be the least bit polite about this. The creature was beginning to take notice.

“Is it not good?” he asked with a worrying expression.

“No, no, no, it’s fine,” Frisk lied. “It’s fine. It’s perfectly alright. I just… I just ate it wrong its all. It’s fine, see?”

Then she put another spoonful of the moist dirt into her mouth and she gagged again.

“See!” she said while attempting not to spit it out. “Perfectly alright!”

“It don’t look alright,” the creature said. “It’s fine. You can be honest with me. If you don’t like it, then I won’t get upset.”

Frisk gagged again and hurled the half eaten piece back onto her plate.

“Oh god I’m sorry,” she said and cleaned her mouth with the back of her hand.

“Don’t be,” the creature said. “You were honest. That’s what’s important.”

“Uhhh, ok,” Frisk replied.

“In any case,” the creature said. “I think I have something that's possibly much more to your liking. My boy Flowey will just eat the rest of the pie. I'm sure he’s gonna love it.”

Frisk glanced at the plain, empty sunflower.

“Yeah I hope he does,” she said with the faintest hint of sarcasm.

The creature stood up.

“Well just stay here for a while, I’ll be back in a moment,” he said and headed to the kitchen.

Once he was there, Frisk could hear the rumbling through cupboards and closets as if the creature was hurryingly looking for something.

“Now I don’t think I’ll ever match my wife’s cooking!” he yelled from the kitchen. “Now there was a great chef! Absolutely spectacular! She made some of the best pies, much to the envy of the other folk! Ahhhh, can’t wait for when she comes back home!. Home from... wherever she is now, Hope it’s soon though because I’m slowly starting to forget her!”

*Well, that’s sad*, Frisk thought.
Suddenly, she noticed something curious about the creature’s saying.

*Hang on, could this wife maybe be the person he said he was waiting for in the diary?*

“But since she is not here!” the creature continued. “I guess we just have to make ends meet! Now, where is it... aha, here it is!”

He back came from the kitchen, holding something that looked like a large doughnut, and placed it on Frisk’s plate. The doughnut looking thing was obviously not of the creatures making, as it looked a lot more polished and well made. Frisk felt completely enamoured by it.

“This looks good,” she said. “One of your wife’s cooking I’m guessing?”

“Oh, I wish it was,” the creature replied. “This piece of pastry was actually made by spiders in fact.”

“I’m sorry what?” Frisk asked in confusion. “Did you just say spiders?”

“Oh yes, spiders,” the creature said without a hint of irony within him. “They are charming little creatures. Innocent and can be found almost everywhere here in the ruins. But they are also not very bright and are easily fooled. Very easily on fact. One day I ran out of money during my monthly visit to them. So you know what I did? I tricked them by giving them a crown made of pure gold and all they gave me was this single doughnut.”

The creature chuckled proudly.

“Heh, silly little creatures. Such an object is worth more than a king’s ransom, but to them, it was no more worthy than a single penny. I still laugh about that moment till this day.”

“Uhhh... yeah,” Frisk said. “You sure showed them.”

She decided not to wrap her head around yet another of the monster’s twisted logic and instead turned her attention to the doughnut that sat in front of her.

The circular bread was ink black, and the thick glaze was coloured purple complete with a black overlay that formed a spider web pattern. Frisk took a small bite, just to check it. The black coloured dough was soft, and the thick glaze melted in her mouth and filled it with a sweet sugary flavour.

“Oh my god, this is so good!” Frisk exclaimed, and the creature smiled in relief.

Frisk wasn’t sure if the doughnut was actually that tasty or whether or not it was just so compared to the “pie” she had from earlier, but whatever the case, Frisk didn’t care and quickly took another bite. This time however she felt herself bite something hard and small with a strange juice interior. Frisk hoped it was some sort of chocolate chip.

“Well that’s good you like it,” the creature said in excitement. “Very good, very good indeed. Well, I’ll keep it in mind the next we’ll have a treat like this. Whenever my son here wants some pie, I’ll just jump out of here and visit the spiders for a moment. Just for you.”

Frisk smiled. Maybe this monster wasn’t so bad after all.

But as much this moment fancied her, there was something biting her mind. Something, she felt needed to be discussed.
“Uhhh old man?” Frisk began with a full mouth.

“Yes?” the creature asked.

Frisk swallowed the bite.

“Look, man,” she continued. “I appreciate what you’re trying to do here, I really do. But the thing is… I barely know you, and I kinda wanna go home.”

The creature looked bewildered.

“Home?” he asked as if he didn’t understand that word.

“Yeah home,” Frisk replied. “You know, where I am from? Up there?”

She pointed upwards with one hand.

“The surface?” she continued. “Like I said, you’re nice and all, but I have some things to do. I have some people up there and…”

She paused for a while.

“I have some people that are waiting for me. I don’t want them to needlessly worry, and I can’t contact them with my phone for some reason. I have to let them know I’m fine and things like that. But I promise though, I will try to visit you as much as I can. Once a month, at least. I swear, and I promise I won’t tell anyone else about this place if you’d like that.”

The creature leaned further back into his chair, and then put on a thoughtful posture.

“I see,” he began. “You have some other people waiting for you, you say? A family perhaps?”

Frisk’s face turned a bit melancholy after hearing that last question.

“I guess you could call it that,” she softly replied.

The creature chuckled a bit and smiled.

“Y’know it’s been so long,” he began. “I’ve seen so few people, and loved even fewer, so much so that I have almost completely forgotten what a family is anymore.”

The creature sat in thoughtful silence for a while and the quietness was starting to make Frisk feel somewhat uncomfortable.

“Oh goodness me,” the creature suddenly said and quickly stood up. “I just realized. It’s very late and it’s time for bed.”

Frisk snickered. She didn’t believe him.

“What the hell are you talking about?” she said and pulled out her phone. “It’s only-”

Frisk stopped mid-sentence when she looked at the phone screen, where it said in big numbers the time was almost eleven-thirty at night. Frisk couldn’t believe it. She could have sworn it was only morning when she fell.

*Have I been down here for that long?* she thought.
“This… doesn’t make any sense,” she said to the monster. “We’ve only been here for like what? 3 hours at the most?”

The creature shrugged.

“Time flies when you’re having fun,” he said and smiled.

He picked up the potted flower with both his hands, while Frisk was stuck in confused thoughts.

*Did I set the time up wrong?* She thought. *This all feels too convenient. Convenient for him that is.*

“We'll continue our conversation tomorrow ok?” the creature said. “Just get some rest for tonight and the next morning, where we're wide awake and with clearer minds, we'll discuss your departure.”

“Don’t I get a word in this?” Frisk asked.

“Of course you do,” the creature said. “It’s just a recommendation, is all. But you don’t really want to stay awake all night, do you? It’s not good for your health.”

Frisk gave out an impatient sigh.

“I’m not even tired,” she exclaimed.

“Bah, nonsense,” the creature said. “I see it in your face. You’re as wrinkly as my late mother. You’ll fall asleep easily, you’ll see.”

“Ok then let’s image that I actually am very tired in fact,” Frisk said. “So where the hell am I supposed to sleep ‘cause I ain't sleeping in your bed?”

“In your own room of course.”

Then the creature reached his hand underneath his cloak and pulled out a rusty, gold keychain.

“Wait,” Frisk began. “My room?

“Yes,” the creature said. “Let me show you.”

The creature walked slowly out of the living room with the keychain in one hand and the flower in the other.

*I guess I’ll follow him*, Frisk thought. *Don’t think I have much choice.*

Then she quickly ate the last doughnut piece and stood up.

The creature stopped at the first door in the hallway. Frisk noticed how his hand seemed to shake a little as he proceeded to put the key inside. It followed almost exactly the same rhythms as the way he shook in the dreadfully long hallway from earlier.

*Was he always shaking like this and I’ve just missed it?* Frisk thought.

But without much effort, the creature twisted and turned the key inside and opened up the door. The creature gave a satisfactory smile and looked at Frisk who stood still in the hallway.

“Come on in,” he said. “Take a look.”
Frisk stood still. Something felt off about this.

“Come now,” the creature said. “The door won’t bite.”

“You go in first,” Frisk said.

The creature looked at her confused, and then he just shrugged.

“I don’t see why not?” he said and entered the room.

Maybe he’s not trying to lure me after all, Frisk thought. But let’s not put down my suspicions just yet.

She glanced into the room and became almost stunned in surprise. She had expected a dirty and almost empty room with dozens of cobwebs and maybe a single mattress, but what she saw instead joyfully surprised her. It wasn’t the best looking room she had ever seen, but it was miles better than anything she had seen in the ruins so far, or even anything in this “house”.

Like the flower, this singular room was given a lot more care than any of the other of its kind, what with the wooden floors being almost spotless and clean, with a large red rug in the centre which colours matched that of the surrounding wallpapers. There were a few cupboards, a singular closet and a toy box filled with various toys.

Frisk walked inside the room, just make sure she wasn’t having some sort of strange illusion. It was like she had wandered through a portal that led to a completely different house. The way it paralleled to the rest of the ruins seemed completely unnatural.

“See?” the creature began. “There is nothing to fear at all. Now then, what do you think?”

“This is nice,” Frisk commented, and this time she meant it.

The creature smiled again.

“That’s good,” he said. “That’s very good indeed.”

Then the creature looked at the flower in his hand and his smile faded.

“Uhh Frisk?” he asked.

“Yeah?”

“I’ve uh,” the creature began. “I unfortunately only have one bedroom to spare.”

He raised the potted sunflower.

“I hope you don’t mind sharing it with my son for tonight.”

Frisk shrugged.

“Sure, sure,” she said. “I don’t mind, really.”

“Ahhh, good to know.”

He placed the potted flower on top of one of the cupboards.

“Don’t worry, he’s not a loud sleeper,” he began and patted the flower. “Who knows? Maybe you
sharing a room together will get you to know each other better. Now, let’s see if everything’s in order.”

The creature then began carefully perusing through the cupboards and toy box while mumbling softly to himself.

“Everything's in order here. Also here- wait, where is the green crayon? Oh, there it is. Now let’s check the…”

Meanwhile, Frisk’s interest was focused on a curious looking pink backpack laying on the edge of the bed. It looked average sized, like a high school backpack, and had no decorations or identifying markers. Frisk lifted it up. It was light and empty. It also looked somewhat clean and recent, like it was put here just a few days ago.

“Hey what’s the deal with this backpack?” Frisk asked.

“Pardon me?” the monster asked without looking from his perusings.

“This pink backpack right here,” Frisk said. “It looks pretty recent. Like, where did you get it and why’s it here?”

“Ahhh, you mean this little thing?” the creature said. “Hmmm, would you believe me if I told you I’ve completely forgotten?”

Of course, Frisk thought.

“Yeah, I guess so.”

“Well it’s because I have,” the creature said.

Frisk sighed.

Just another mystery to add to the pile I guess, she thought.

“Oh and speaking of forgetting,” the creature suddenly exclaimed. “I almost forgot about something important.”

He went to one of the cupboards and pulled out of it two small, golden boxes with white coloured ribbons.

“What is that?” Frisk asked.

“Presents,” the creature proudly declared. “What else?”

“Seriously?” Frisk asked. “For me?”

“Yes. And also for my son of course. I didn't want him to be left out you see. Now I forgot to mark them, so I think I may have gotten confused on which gift belongs to whom, but I hope you like whatever’s in there either way.”

Whatever’s in there? Frisk thought. He doesn’t know it himself?

The creature handed her one of the golden boxes, the one who looked the most used and crumpled. Frisk took it and shook it a little. It was very light, and inside there was something small with a clinking metallic sounding. Then she sat down on the floor and began to unfold it. The ribbon was very loose and Frisk found it curious how it felt like it was tied in a hurry.
When she was done, she laid the box on the floor, opened it, and then checked inside. On the bottom, there was a small, golden necklace shaped like a heart. Frisk picked it up and felt the rust and dozens of scratches on it hinting at its long age of use.

“Thanks for that,” Frisk said to the monster.

He smiled a proud smile.

“Alright, I’ll be going now,” he said. “I think I am going to go to bed early today as a matter of fact, but until then I’ll be in the living room and check out on you once in a while. In fact, I think I am going to lock your door so nothing but I can-“

“Hang on!” Frisk yelled in protest. “Don’t do that!”

The creature looked at her.

“Why not?” he asked in honest confusion.

“Because uh…”

Shit, Frisk thought. *This guy’s want’s to lock me in here. He must be planning to do something with me.*

“But…” Frisk continued. “…I just don’t like to sleep with the door locked. It, uh, makes me feel, um, locked out I guess?”

“You prefer it if I kept it unlocked is that what you are saying?”

“Yes, yes, exactly.”

The creature became thoughtful.

*Oh, I definitely messed this up* , Frisk thought.

But then the creature chuckled, smiled and said:

“Ah, it’s alright. I’ll leave the door unlocked just for you, ok?”

*Oh, thank god.*

“T’m mean…” the creature began. “Are you sure you’re ok with tha-“

“Yes! I’m absolutely sure!”

“Alrighty then. Is there anything else I can do for you? Would you like me to read something for you or…”?

“Nah, I’m fine.”

“Good. Then I’ll be going now.”

The monster headed for the door.

“If anything’s the matter,” he continued. “You can find me in either the living room or in my bed. I’m sure you know where that is. But in the meantime, good night and good rest.”

He left through the door and closed it. After a few seconds, Frisk check to see if the creature had
held his promise. Luckily, the door proved to be unlocked. She smiled.

Frisk went to examine the flower on top of the cupboard.

Yeah, I’m not gonna get used to that thing, she thought.

Frisk went to the lonesome bed in the room and let herself fall on it. It was immensely soft, perhaps the softest thing in this entire place.

Oh my god, I think I can sleep forever like this, she thought.

As she laid there, Frisk began wondering what was in the other package. She didn’t want to go open it herself to check though, as she was sure it would summon either the creature’s anger, disappointment or both.

Then Frisk realized that she felt immensely tired. A part of her considered that maybe the creature drugged her, but then she remembered all that happened the last few hours, all the walking, climbing and near death situations, and she realized what was even stranger was that she hadn’t gotten tired sooner. Either that or the immense softness of the bed was getting to her.

Frisk was now wondering about what she would do when she was out of here. Would anyone believe her? She doubted it. Maybe she could prove it by showing everyone the ruins. But she also promised the monster not to do that. But what if she decided to break that promise? What would be the ramifications of that? How would society change? To the fact that magic and monsters were truly real. How would people change?

I don’t think anything’s going to be the same anymore, Frisk thought, not sure if she was pointing at life in general or just herself.

Then, before she noticed, Frisk had closed down her eyes and fallen into a deep sleep.

Frisk felt herself floating. Or rather, she felt a part of her floating, as she soon realized that she didn’t have a body or any form to float with. She was just mere, incorporeal consciousness wandering through nothingness. Not through blackness or nothing in any metaphorical sense. Just, floating through literal nothing.

Then the voices, the whispers, and the chatter came. Frisk felt their minuscule vibrations rumble through her mind, and she believed if she somehow managed to reach out, she could touch the words and letters themselves. She thought at first that they were speaking to her, but then she noticed that the voices were rather speaking AT her. Frisk didn’t completely understand it, but the best analogy she could think of was like she was a large, impenetrable wall that stood in front of dozens of people that spoke in her direction, but they were speaking to whoever or whatever lay behind her.

Some of the voices Frisk seemed to recognize, Others she didn’t… and some she had yet to know, in some unforeseeable future. Frisk didn’t understand how she knew that last part.

Most of them seemed inaudible, and Frisk somehow could only comprehend a few of them.

Why did you come here?
Come now little Dora.

Take care of mom and dad for me, okay?

Fucking imbecile.

It is the only way.

Then came fire, the heat and the horrors. Frisk couldn’t see the horrors, but rather she felt them, crawling around and surrounding every inch of her “soul”, or whatever that could best describe her current state.

Then the voices grew faster, louder and more frequent. The audible ones even more so.

I was right. Your mother should have gotten an abortion.

You’d be dead where you stand.

When children hear my name, they weep.

We should have wiped them all out long ago.

… the demon who comes when you call its name.

The fires and horrors grew now overwhelming, and the calmest of voices turned into yellings.

Please don’t!

Come back here, little Dora!

I’ll kill you!

I don’t want to see you or your goddamn face ever again!

Down here, it’s kill or be killed!

The voices almost deafen her now.

Please help!

The mind has a tendency to make memories where none exist.

Human’s only answer to one thing! Fear! Fear and pain

SOMEBODY, PLEASE HELP ME!
And in the centre of everything, she saw existence itself. An utter, incomprehensible anomaly, where everything and nothing existed simultaneously, and it grew and grew and threatened to swallow her whole. Then as she looked into the centre of this ever-changing cosmos she saw... him. The man in black. The man who speaks in hands. The one, who like all souls and living things did not exist once but now had conquered and ascended beyond the very concept of existence. The void yelled out his name like an incomprehensible angelic choir of a primaeval, alien faith, and it echoed through the endless chasms and took on forms and colours which no man, monster or soul had ever seen. Then he... it... Gaster reached out towards the floating consciousness and waited. And Frisk screamed.

Frisk woke up panting and covered in sweat.

“Ho-holy fucking shit man,” she muttered.

She sat up and put her hand on her chest, and felt her heart rapidly beat as if she had just ran a marathon. Frisk had had her fair share of night terrors before, but none of them could even be compared to a fraction of what she had just been through right now.

“Oh, oh man,” she said. "I’m never going to fucking sleep again, eh?"

She chuckled at her own bad joke.

Suddenly, the door burst open and the nameless monster stood in the doorway, with a face of intense dread and terror.

“Gah, Jesus Christ dude!” Frisk yelled out in shock.

But before she could react, the monster had rushed towards and embraced her.

“Dear gods what happened?!” he said with a tone of immense urgency. “I heard your yelling! Are you hurt?! Did the bed hurt you?! Oh, gods did somebody one hurt you-”

“I’m fine, I’m fine!” Frisk said. “I’m not hurt at all! And the bed is alright, thanks for asking!”

“Then did you see someone?!” the creature asked. “Was there someone in this room. Someone who threatened you?!”

“There was no one!” Frisk said. “I swear. It was just... a bad dream is all.”

The creature looked at her with a surprised expression.

“Just a dream?” he asked. “Nothing else?”

The creature looked to the side seemingly thinking, and Frisk caught a hint of relief on his lion-like face.

“Yeah,” Frisk reassured. “Just a dream.”

But then the creatures face turned to Frisk with a sudden look of angry seriousness.
“You shouldn’t have scared me like,” he said sternly and stood up. “Don’t do that again.”

*Wait what? Frisk thought.*

“Shouldn’t have scared you-what the hell, do you think I asked to have a nightmare-”

But before Frisk had finished, the creature had left and shut the door, seemingly too stuck in his own twisted mind to hear a single word from Frisk, and she was once again alone in uncomfortable silence.

“What the hell was that all about?” she said to herself.

Frisk laid back into bed, her mind full of thoughts. She put her hand back on her chest and felt her heartbeat slow down.

She found herself unable to sleep again. She didn’t even feel tired anymore.

Frisk picked up her phone and looked at it. It was almost 4 AM.

*Does time flow faster in this place or something?* she thought.

Frisk’s train of thought now began to wander around with no path or purpose, going from things like wondering about the creatures sudden change of tone, to the purpose of those strange, mystical ruins, about monsters and magic… and even that dreadful nightmare. After about half an hour of laying there, she had fortunately completely forgotten everything from it. Except for one thing. That strange name, Gaster. Even here in the waking world, Frisk felt it echo constantly through her mind. Just what was that name, she wondered. She was certain she had never met or even heard of someone with that name. Did her mind just make it up randomly on the spot? She wasn’t sure whether that was even possible for the mind to do, but at the moment it was one of the most likely possibilities she could think of. But then why was it the only thing that stuck once she woke up? Not only that, but that name also filled her with slight dread, as if it belonged to or reminded her of someone she once knew and feared, but just couldn’t pinpoint on exactly who or why.

Frisk just stared at the ceiling again, thinking about that name, about this place and other things. She found it impossible to fall asleep again, despite having only slept for a few hours. Once again, like most things in this place, Frisk couldn’t figure out why. She felt it wasn’t natural. Nothing about this place was natural to her. Frisk felt as if she was still dreaming, and this place was some sort of weird dream world where normal rules no longer apply. And then there was that creature, which seemed lonely and hesitant in letting her go, possibly because it so was desperate for any semblance of company to the point it had anthropomorphised a single flower.

Frisk thought about these things for a while, and then came to a single decision.

*I’m going to get out of here*, she thought.

Frisk waited until she was sure the large monster was asleep before she proceeded. She slowly opened the door to his room and peeked in. As Frisk suspected, the monster was fast asleep in the large bed, and his purple robe was thrown into a pile by a corner. Judging by the silhouette, one of the monster’s anorexic looking hands was hanging down by the side of the bed, and Frisk was for once happy there wasn’t light for otherwise, she might see some uncomfortable details.

With the empty pink backpack hanging from her shoulders, Frisk crept into the room, fearing with every step that the creaking might wake the tall monster. The creature began to snore a bit once she
reached the desk. She slowly stroked her hand over it, feeling the rough texture of the large map of the ruins.

Frisk carefully rolled it up, glancing occasionally at the sleeping monster behind her just to make sure he wasn’t awake. Once she was done, she put the map into her jeans back pocket and gently headed back to the door. The monster suddenly rustled in his bed and for a moment Frisk heart stopped as she thought he was waking up. She turned around and felt immense relief to see him still sleeping. The creature then began to mumble in his sleep.

“Wha-what are you... get-get out of here you-you...”

Frisk had reached the doorway and looked back at the sleeping monster. He had now stopped moving and mumbling and now slept on his back with one hand on top and the other dangling by his side. Besides his breathing, he looked as peaceful as if he was once the happiest creature in the world.

Seeing him so calm and oblivious made Frisk start to feel somewhat apprehensive on not informing the creature about her decisions. This was perhaps the sanest she had ever seen him. But Frisk felt she had made her choice, and if not now, then maybe not for a long time. Her only regret at the moment was that she didn’t have a pencil or paper to write her goodbyes.

“Sorry old man,” she whispered and then slowly closed the door.

Chapter End Notes

Welp. Here it is. The next chapter of this fanfic. It’s been a long time coming if you ask me. Perhaps my longest hiatus yet I think, and also the longest chapter so far I think. Once again, I am sorry for the delay. There has just been a bunch of stuff happening in my life, and more often than not I just wasn’t up for it. Writing I mean. But I manage to finish it. That all that matters at the moment. Now, onto my short commentary about this chapter.

So far, this is perhaps my favourite chapter so far, both in terms of writing tone and character. There is also plenty here in terms of mystery and character development. There are some hints about Frisk's life on the surface and by the way, she looks at it with a melancholy tone. I obviously know what it's like, since am writing this story and have planned most of it out, but I like you, the readers that is, to also piece things together.

Speaking about piecing things together, let's talk about Gaster for a short moment before we finish things up for today. Now I was originally going to keep it a mystery on who the figure Frisk saw in her dream was, but then I realized that most of the readers would obviously guess right so I just cut the middle man and just said Gaster. Now how Gaster is connected to Frisk and all of this, I won't tell. You just have to wait patiently for an answer.

Hope you enjoy the story and see you soon. Please leave a comment if you want to as I always love reading them.
Once again Frisk found herself wandering alone in the labyrinthian ruins. Only now, she had a clearer path and goal ahead. Now, with a heavy backpack hanging on her back and with a large map in her hands, Frisk felt like a proper explorer. She held the large and brittle map in both her hands, carefully as she felt the lightest tug could tear it, only glancing from it occasionally to see if the road ahead matched the outlines.

After a while she found holding the map too much of a nuisance and rolled it up, believing she had memorized the surrounding rooms and pathways enough, and then she put the map into her jean pocket.

If Frisk could recall correctly, there was supposed to be a large open room nearby, which for some reason, the monster seemed to consider very important, judging by how it was marked with a large circle and near-illegible writing which Frisk could just barely read as saying *vantage point*. And after she went through the same doors and hallways as the map had said lead to this place, Frisk immediately saw why.

This wasn’t a large room as she had misread. It was a large balcony, and from this balcony, Frisk could see large dome-like buildings, gigantic greek like temples, and tall stony towers reaching almost to the top of the cavern, stretching far and wide. Frisk couldn’t believe her eyes and blinked a few time to make sure this wasn’t a mirage.

“Holy shit,” she exclaimed.

She had gotten so used to the claustrophobic hallways and low ceilings she had entirely forgotten that these ruins were once a city. Seeing these rows if ancient buildings from above, and in such large height, made the ruins feel for the first time like they were once a large and massive city.

Frisk looked straight down from the balcony and saw that there was a small climbable path on the tall, stone wall. She looked behind her, feeling suddenly as if someone was watching her, but she saw nothing but the dark shadows of the corridor. Frisk figured that maybe the sudden vastness of the place was just getting to her.

With that said and done, Frisk climbed down from the balcony and began her descent down into the ancient city.

“Goddammit old man! Why did your stupid map have to be as inconsistent as your… well, everything. Guess I shouldn’t have been surprised, huh?”

Frisk now sat on the edge of a large bridge connecting two building, trying her hardest to read what the map had to say about the surrounding area. She had been wandering in the old city aimlessly for a while now, and the map had now become incredibly untrustworthy. First it started with minor
issues like the angle of a street being wrong or a building being shown as slightly bigger or smaller, but the further she was away from the old hermit's home, more major issues began to pop up such as the map showing buildings that didn't exist, not showing buildings that DID exist, and visualizing hallways that in actuality lead to dead ends. With her only guide having become unreliable, Frisk was beginning to feel lost once again. She sighed and looked across at the rows and rows of ancient buildings that faded into the darkness. Frisk had hoped, if somewhat naively, that comparing the map to the city from above would somehow make it more coherent, but doing so just revealed even more inconsistencies and errors. Unless the city was magically changing shape every now and then, it was clear that it had become horrendously unreliable and broken this far away from the monsters home.

“Welp,” she began. “Let’s get back to it. No point wasting time fiddling my thumbs I guess.”

Frisk rolled up the map and headed back down the stairs she came up. Her footsteps echoed through the staircase with every step.

“I’ll just make things up as I go along,” she said to herself. “Has worked well for me so far. I think at least.”

Having reached street level, she adjusted her pink backpack and continued on her aimless path. As she walked, she thought on how for a long time the only sounds she heard in this dead city of colossal structures was the sound of her own voice and the echoes of her footsteps. Frisk looked up at the towers occasionally to marvel at their wonderful and eerie sight.

Unlike the dull and meaningless hallways from earlier, Frisk felt like this place actually was a city. She could imagine the busy, cobblestone streets with vendors and dozens of strange mythical creatures like trolls, goblins or even something similar to the old hermit. She could imagine the loud noises as strange looking children played in the street and older ones wandering from place to place, and as Frisk looked at some of the faraway windows she could imagine some monsters looking out to appreciate the view or to greet a beautiful morning. She could even imagine the countless families that lived inside these busy blocks, of creatures waking up one tired morning in an ancient looking bed and then going off to work or do daily chores. Frisk could even imagine the skies, for lack of a better word, being filled with wondrous flying dragons, hippogryphs and whatnot, carrying heavy boxes and carriages, or just enjoying the ride.

But whatever this place was like in the olden days, it was obvious that time was now long gone and all the monsters with it as they either died or left to some unknown place. And despite her attempts to imagine a more wondrous place, Frisk could never manage to shake off her feelings of utter fright. At every step, Frisk felt as if the countless empty windows harboured countless eyes staring at her, and that in the shadows lay untold horrors just waiting for her to slip.

Due to all this rising dread, Frisk was now believing to think she should have never left the strange creature’s home.

“Good job Frisk,” she said to herself. “Look at what you’ve gotten yourself into. You’ve abandoned the only guy who knows anything about this place, and now you’re all alone and lost in the middle of El-goddam-Dorado with no map, no guide, and no one to protect you.”

She sighed.

“Merde. This really was a terrible idea. Why the hell did I-”

Suddenly, Frisk heard something rustling just behind her. Frisk nearly froze in fear.
Then, having built up her courage, she slowly turned around and shined the light from her phone in the direction of the noise.

“Who-who’s there?” she asked.

There was no answer. Frisk waited for a few moments and then gave out a short panicked chuckle.

“There’s nothing,” she said. “Of course there’s nothing. I must be losing my freaking mind over her-”

Frisk stopped dead in her tracks as another strange sound appeared. This one, however, was a lot more frightening than the last. The previous one could have been simply a gust of wind or a scurrying rat, while this new noise, on the other hand, sounded unmistakably like it came from a living, breathing creature or person. It was the sound of someone crying. Someone that was just around the next corner. Frisk was now practically frozen solid.

Oh god, oh god, oh god, oh god-

The crying still kept going and grew louder. Frisk wanted to run, but she feared the echoes of her loud steps would alert whatever this was so instead she just stood there, shaking. But her morbid curiosity began to grow, and despite how ridiculous she knew it was, she wanted to take a small peak to see what it was.

Have I learned nothing from that fat, man-eating frog thing? she thought to herself as she crept towards the corner. The hell’s wrong with me?

Once she had reached it, Frisk, readying herself to sprint, looked around the corner to see just who or what was making this noise. There, she saw something completely different from any monster she had witnessed, perhaps the oddest looking figure so far. This was clearly not a froggit creature, as it had no visible feet or limbs, and it was also much bigger than normal, but then again, so was that fat froggit from yesterday.

The crying thing in question looked like a strange, white and almost completely transparent wide figure in an oval shape. Frisk wasn’t sure if it was laying on it’s back or not, but if it was, then judging from this distance, once it was upright the creature would’ve been most likely about Frisk’s size.

Is that a ghost? Frisk thought. Like what the monster guy mentioned yesterday?

Small white looking droplets seemed to roll down the visible side of it like teardrops on a cheek. The droplets completely vaporized once they touched the ground. But suddenly, the incessant crying and teardrops slowed down to a near halt. Frisk learned why in an utterly frightening way.

“Well, who are you?” the translucent figure asked.

Frisk felt her heart pounding and the sweat leaking down her head.

Oh god is this thing talking to me? she thought. I don’t see anyone else here, but… shit, how did it see me?

And then Frisk noticed how. The talking shape now had a strange looking face on the place where it’s side used to be. The face looked extremely minimalist, with only two black circles, and a small line that Frisk assumed was a mouth. She didn’t see the face at first because it was so dark, but
once she did it was impossible to ignore. With the full look of the figure now being fully registered, Frisk noticed it looked uncannily identical to those “sheet ghosts” you see in Halloween stores and classic cartoons.

“Who-who are you?” it asked again.

_Run_, said the thought in Frisk’s head. _For god's sake girl, just run. Just ignore it, and get the hell out of here. Don’t you dare feel sorry for whatever this thing is._

But, despite all her most logical senses telling her not to, Frisk began to slowly walk towards this strange, crying figure.

“Hey, hey, what’s the matter?” she asked in the gentle tone she could muster.

_What the fuck am I doing?_ Frisk’s thoughts began again. _Why the hell am I not running away like a sensible person? God. I really AM an idiot._

She shone her phone flashlight at the translucent creature and it seemed to shake in fear a bit. The light also seemed to completely pierce through it.

“Hey I’m not gonna hurt you,” Frisk said. “I promise ok?”

The figure now slowly “stood up”. It wasn’t really standing up since it didn’t have feet, but rather, it just hovered above the ground like a holographic disk.

“You… promise?” the figure asked nervously. “I mean… it’s not like you can actually hurt me since I have no body or mass… but umm, it would be nice of you if you didn’t though either way…”

“I promise,” Frisk reassured.

_This is a weird figure_, she thought. _Seems harmless though._

Frisk stopped about an arm’s length from it.

“My name’s, um, Frisk,” she said.

“That, uh, sound’s nice,” the floating, translucent figure said. “Kind of wish I had a name like that…”

Frisk felt curious and reached her hand out to touch the strange being. As she suspected, her hand went right through it.

“Can you, umm stop that,” the figure asked anxiously. “It kind of um, feels weird.”

“Oh sorry,” Frisk said and pulled her hand away. “Are you like a... ghost or something?”

“Of a sort yeah,” the figure answered shyly.

“Wait, what do you mean by of sorts?”

“It, uh, I can't really explain it sorry. I’ll, uh, try though since you’ve been so nice. It basically means I’m a ghost, but um, not really?”

“Ok let’s forget about that then if it’s so hard for you,” Frisk began. “So, umm, do you have like a name or something?”
“I have,” the ghost said. “My name… it’s not very good but um… it’s Napstablook.”

“I’m sorry,” Frisk said and chuckled. “Napst-what now?”

The ghost seemed hurt by this.

“Are you…” it began. “Making fun of me?”

“What? Oh, no no no no no! Nothing like that. Your name’s just… strange’s all- NOT like there anything wrong with that, it’s just how it is I guess.”

The ghost looked somewhat confused, with its mouth a bit open.

“Umm,” it began. “Thanks uh, you’re very uh, kind I guess.”

Frisk smiled.

“Uhh, thanks,” she said. “I’ve uh, learned from the best.

They both stared at each other for a few moments, and Frisk was now thinking just how spectacular this moment was. She was speaking to a ghost. An actual ghost. Not only did she see evidence of magic and monsters, but of creatures beyond death as well.

But as she stared at it, she noticed that the silence between them was becoming awkward.

Soooooo, um,” Frisk began after a while. “If you don’t mind me asking but uhh, why were you crying back there?”

The ghost looked at her utter dumbfounded.

“You mean…” it began. “You haven’t seen it.”

“Seen what-”

There came suddenly a loud clanking noise not too far away.

“God,” Frisk said and turned towards it. “That strange sound again.”

Then she turned back to the ghost and saw it utter frightened state.

“I-I’m sorry?” Frisk asked.

“It’s back!” the ghost said in utter panic. “Oh, gods! it’s come back!”

“What-who?!” Frisk asked and felt the immense dread crawling up her spine. “Who’s back?”

“I-I don’t know!” the ghost said, practically wailing. “I don’t know what it is! But it’s… it’s bad! Oh, gods, it’s so bad! Awful! Completely and utterly awful! We must get out of here! NOW!”

“What?” exclaimed Frisk. “Hey, WAIT!”

Before Frisk noticed it, the ghost had vanished. It happened so fast that Frisk wasn’t sure if it flew away in immense speed, or if it simply just faded away.

The clanking noise came again, this time much louder as if whatever was causing it was coming closer. Frisk looked at its direction and saw nothing but darkness covering the street. Then it finally dawned on her that she was alone again. The sound came again, much louder, and this time
Frisk saw subtle hints of a strange silhouette by a building only a few steps away.

“Oh fuck,” she muttered and began to sprint away.

Almost every single creature she met so far besides the old hermit seemed absolutely terrified by whatever was causing this noise, so Frisk didn’t care one bit about what it looked like this.

She panted as she ran in an aimless direction, still holding her phone. The sound kept coming, and it was always a few meters behind.

*Don’t look back, don’t look back, don’t look back…*

But Frisk’s frightful curiosity took over one moment, and she glanced back for a second or two. That one glance was more than enough for her, and she turned her head back forward more frightened than ever. It was dark, and it was only a moment so she didn’t see much, but what she did see was a strange, formless figure that seemed to constantly be changing shape and size.

Frisk had never run this much in her entire life, and her body seemed to not be strong enough for it, but she kept running despite that. The streets seemed to curve and bend constantly, so she was constantly changing her position which just made everything more straining for her.

But as she was beginning to think this chase would never end, Frisk noticed that noise from the monstrosity behind her was growing quiet and distant. A ray of hope entered Frisk. She was losing gaining ahead.

*Yes, yes, yes,* she thought. *Just a little more. Just a few more meters and—*

Suddenly, there was a massive hole in the ground, and Frisk almost stepped into it.

“GAH FUCK!” she yelled as she trying to readjust her balance.

Frisk had been so busy running she didn’t pay attention to her surroundings, and now she was flailing around while standing at the edge of the pit on one foot.

“Woah, woah, woah. No! Goddammit!”

She accidentally let go of her phone, and it seemed to fall endlessly down the pit until it came to a sudden halt, as it broke and small pieces of light began spreading in every direction of the hole before vanishing.

After a quick effort, Frisk managed to regain her balance.

“Oh fuck!” Frisk muttered. “*That was... *pant*... fucking close!”

But her celebrations were short, as the sound of the strange creature came closer.

“Oh no,” she muttered.

Frisk began to frantically look around. There were two large buildings with no clear entrance covering both sides of the hole and the street she was in, and running back the way she came was clearly out of the equation.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck!” Frisk said frantically.

She looked at the hole, trying to see if there was a way around it. The hole was extremely wide, so much so that Frisk couldn’t see the other side of the street. It also was clearly not intentionally or
carefully put there, as the edges were painfully uneven. It was like a piece of the ground was ripped off.

The sound of the monster came again which shook Frisk and made her turn back and face towards the street in fear. The monster was incredibly close, just beyond the darkness. She was sweating and shaking profusely.

“Oh god, oh god,” she muttered. “I’ll uh… maybe I’ll, no, no…”

Frisk heard something crack beneath her.

“What? OH SHI-”

The floor beneath her broke and she fell. Thankfully, she managed to grab the ledge with one hand. She was now hanging from it with her feet dangling in the empty air. Frisk looked down into the pit and saw nothing but an empty void staring void.

“Oh fuck, Jesus Christ.”

She tried to pull herself up with the singular hand, but she found it impossible. Then she felt something, a sensation that made her not want to get back up anymore in a million year. She felt breathing on the back of her hand. It was the heavy breathing of something big and heavy, and it was right on top of her. The formless monster was there.

Frisk dared not to look up, and she tried not to make a noise. Then she felt her arm tire and her stamina failing, and she realized her time was running out. She felt like her hand would dislocate from her shoulder.

Then she felt something touch her palm. Something, slimy and cold.

And Frisk let go.

She screamed as she fell into the seemingly unending abyss. Flashes of her life invaded her thoughts, as she fell faster and faster until the rush of air seemed to tear apart her flesh.

Then she saw the hard, rocky bottom only a few feet away from her, and the last thing Frisk thought to herself before her body splattered on the cold stones, was that she should have never left the old monster’s home.

Frisk felt herself floating again.

*What’s going on*, she thought. *Am I dead?*

In front of her, to her side and back, there was a strange star looking object, that seemed to constantly expand and shrink. There was nothing else in this void. Nothing but herself and the strange star. She felt as if it had always been there, but she also felt like it had just arrived.

Those two contradictory thoughts didn’t matter to her, and she didn’t question how she managed to hold them both in the slightest.

Frisk called out, but there came no noise.

Should I… touch it?
Frisk went closer to the star, and that was where she finally saw her entire form, the one she was occupying in this strange place if wherever she was could be called a place that is. Her form looked like a red heart.

_I don’t want to be dead_, Frisk thought. _I refuse_.

Then she, and the heart, touched the yellow star, and the entire void filled up with all her memories, hopes and dreams, and she felt herself pulled into some time or place unknown.

_I refuse_, she thought.

And then, Frisk woke up.

“What the- what?”

Frisk found herself back at the monsters house, sitting back on the bed she slept in earlier.

“How the… how the hell am I back here?”

She looked around the bedroom frantically, trying to see if this was some sort of strange illusion of sorts. She blinked frantically, but nothing changed.

Frisk felt utter disbelief. She could have sworn that only a moment ago, she was falling down a deep pit and then her body splattered on solid hard ground. She looked down at her body, pulled up her shirt, but saw no bruises or any sign of a long fall.

_I didn’t dream all that did I?_ She thought. _Did the large monster find me? Did he put me back here and then heal my wounds? Must be. I couldn’t have dreamt all that. It was too real._

Suddenly, as she was further examining her body, the door to the bedroom suddenly burst open, and the large goat monster was standing in the doorway with intense dread and terror on his face. Frisk couldn’t feel any more glad to see him.

“Oh, hi,” she said to him. “I’m uh-”

But before she could finish her sentence, the monster had rushed towards her and embraced her.

“He-hey knock it off,” Frisk said while almost on the verge of laughing. “I was only gone for like-”

“Dear gods what happened?!” the creature said with a tone of immense urgency. “I heard your yelling! Are you hurt?! Did the-”

“What no I’m fine,” Frisk reassured. “Shouldn’t you know tha-”

“Then did you see someone?!” the creature asked. “Was there someone in this room. Someone who threatened yo-”

“Wait, what are you talking about?”

Frisk was getting utterly confused.

“You- you don’t know?” the creature asked. “Strange, I could have sworn I heard your screaming. Did you dream something?”
“I don’t remember what I dreamt,” Frisk said. “But I don’t know what that got to do with-”

“Then why did you scream?”

“Why did I scream?! What kind of question was that?! Why did you think I was-wait hang on.”

Frisk realized something. A surreal feeling that had an uncanny dash of deja-vu.

“This all has happened before,” she said.

The monster’s expression was replaced by soft confusion.

“Pardon?”

“This moment,” Frisk began. “The one happening right now. Me sitting in bed and you bursting in here with immense worry. This almost exact scenario happened last time I woke up here. Down to some of the words even I think.”

The creature looked incredibly bewildered now.

“Last time you woke up here?” the creature asked sincerely. “But you just got her yesterday. This is the first time you have woken up here.”

Frisk looked at him, feeling almost as confused as he.

“Wait, how did you find me?” she asked. “After I fell, how did you find me.”

The creature chuckled.

“How else?” he asked. “I found you perusing in the sunflower garden.”

“What?” began Frisk. “Oh, that’s not what I meant. I meant when I fell in the ruins. After I snuck out. How did you recover me because I recall falling like thousands of feet and-”

She stopped as she realized her words weren’t going anywhere.

“You don’t remember do you?” Frisk said. “Finding me in the ruins?”

The creature glanced at her with a look of suspicion.

“You’ve only been here in my home for 8 hours at most,” the creature said. “Most of that time spent sleeping. I’m sure I would have remembered you sneaking out and then going to the ruins.”

The creature face suddenly turned back to a look of worry, as if an uncomfortable suggestion just entered his mind.

“Unless…” he said before falling into deep thoughts.

Frisk sighed.

“Yeah, you’re probably just having another one of your memory losses,” she said, “Y’know I swear that-”

Suddenly, the creatures face gave out a loud screeching noise as it twisted and turned in immense speed and countless directions. It all only happened in a few seconds, but it was still one of the most nightmarish things Frisk had seen.
When it stopped, the creature looked with a terrified and sorry expression at Frisk who was now huddled up to the wall in immense shock.

“What the fuck was that!” she exclaimed.

The creature was shaking and still had the expression as if he accidentally revealed something he shouldn’t have, and was now regretting it immensely.

“I’m… uhh… I…”

The creature quickly stood up and ran out of the room, shutting the door behind. Frisk now sat quietly in her bed, trying her hardest to process what just happened.

“What-what the hell,” she muttered. “What was… this place… everything’s messed up here.”

Frisk glanced at the nightstand and saw something surprising. Her phone lay there, fully intact.

“What? How did it…”

She picked it up and felt no scratches or anything that hinted that it had broken. Could the monster also fix inanimate object as it could with flesh, Frisk wondered.

She put the phone back on the nightstand and lay down into the bed. She listened to her surroundings and heard nothing but eerie quiet, like usual. She thought for a bit, and then Frisk uttered something she thought she would never say in a long time:

“Man, I wish I was home.”

She sighed.

“Ahhh,” said an unfamiliar male voice in the room. “Who doesn’t?”

Frisk hurriedly sat back up.

“Who’s there?” she said.

Frisk picked up her phone from the nightstand and shone its flashlight across the room. But even as she frantically shone her light at every corner, Frisk couldn’t find anything unusual.

Then, she heard something else. Something in this room that sounded like the movements of either leaf… or large pedals.

The flower! Frisk thought.

She shone her phone at the potted plant but saw nothing out of the ordinary. At first.

Then she noticed it’s strange movement. The petals seemed to close and open randomly and independently from one another. Then they suddenly stopped, and Frisk found herself hear soft laughter coming from its direction. Then it began to turn around, slowly as if it was alive and wanted to savour this moment.

“What the-”

Then the laughter stopped and the flower turned and faced her, and immediately, Frisk saw that there was something different about it.
The sunflower then opened up like it was conjured to life and on its pistil, there was something that uncannily resembled a face. Then, the “face” smiled.

“Howdy,” the flower said. “I’m Flowey. Flowey the flower.”

Chapter End Notes

Exciting cliffhanger isn't it? Frisk suddenly woke up back in the monsters home and now Flowey's a thing. Whatever could be happening. Unfortunately, while I have it planned, you guys won't know for a bit of a while.

You see, I'm kind of taking a break on fanfictions. It's not gonna be long. You guys aren't gonna have to wait for months on end.

It's just I've been kind of meaning to work on this one short story for a while. It's NOT a story that's related to Undertale or Deltarune, NOR is it a fanfiction of any kind.

This will be a complete, original short fiction with its own characters and own universe, and I want to move my focus on it for the time being.

I am not saying I don't like writing this fanfiction, FAR from it. It's just I kind of want to start working on something original and this is a story I kind of been having floating around in my mind a while but I've never bothered to write until now, and I kind of don't want to be an author that writes nothing but fanfictions, and I want to balance it out with *sigh* "real" writing for a lack of a better word.

But anyway, when I've finished with the short story, I'll come back to this fanfic I promise. Then I'm perhaps gonna jump around between writing fanfics, and "proper" short stories. Maybe I'll post the short story on some website and link to it from here. I'll hope you guys wait patiently and I'll see you around.
“What the- what the fuck?” Frisk exclaimed.

“I’m Flowey,” the flower said. “Didn’t ya hear me?”

Frisk didn’t know what to say at this point. Just when she didn’t think things could get weirder and creepier, the previously plain flower now had a face and was talking.

“We-were you alive this whole time?” Frisk asked.

“Really?” the flower asked with a condescending grin. “That’s the first thing you say to someone you just met? Not “hi I’m Frisk” or “I’m Francisca Monto-whatever-o, nice to meetcha”? How rude.”

“I- I didn’t really expect you to be alive-”

“Come now,” Flowey said in a snarky tone. “You really think a talking flower is the weirdest thing you’ve seen today?”

“No that’s what I meant!” Frisk exclaimed. “Can you please just… god, why is everything changing so much?! First I’m in the ruins and the next moment I’m not! I don’t even know what’s real anymore and-”

Frisk suddenly became very silent, and just stared at the rug with wide open eyes.

“Uhh, Frisk?” asked the flower, who had been patiently waiting for his turn to speak.

Confused, he looked down at the rug. There were a few easy to miss stains here and there but nothing really out of the ordinary.

“What the hell are you doing?” Flowey asked.

Then, out of nowhere, Frisk began to cackle.

“Of course, of course!” she said to herself and smiled. “This all makes sense now! These strange creatures, the abandoned ruins, and the idea that such a place somehow haven’t been found until now! And now this!”

She laughed softly.

“None of this is real,” she said with a mad smile. “I must’ve bumped my head when I fell down that hole! And now I’m either dying or laying in a hospital with wires stuck in me! While this… heh… this is all just some fucked up coma dream!”

Frisk began to laugh harder and harder, to the point where her laughs were beginning to sound
maddening.

Flowey observed her descent from afar and sighed in embarrassment.

Suddenly, Frisk was immediately shocked back from her momentary lapse by a sharp but quick pain on her cheek.

“Ow!”

“Was that real enough for you?” Flowey asked impatiently.

Frisk saw that one of the flowers vine, or “arm”, had somehow expanded in length to across the room. She stroked her cheek, feeling the fading red mark of the slap.

“God, you didn’t have to do that!” Frisk protested.

“Well, you’re convinced now right?”

Frisk wasn’t sure about that exactly, but the short pain was so real that she found it hard to deny.

“I guess so,” she said and shrugged.

“Good,” Flowey replied.

He then slowly retracted the vine back to its small size and groaned as he did.

“Gah, darn it.”

“Are you alright?” Frisk asked.

“Not really no,” Flowey said and winced. “Haven’t used my arms- sorry, vines, in what must be over half a decade now.”

Frisk looked at him in slight perplexity.

Strange to see a flower in pain, she thought.

“So,” she began. “You’re that crazy monster guy’s son right?”

“What?” replied Flowey “Oh gods no. That poor old man lost his wife and children ages ago and has been unable to move on. He must’ve mistaken me for one of his children simply because I share some of his… hmmm… let’s say qualities. But I am not his child no, not in the slightest. I don’t even have parents so to speak. I think?”

Frisk went silent for a while, thinking. It was clear that this flower knew a lot about the old hermit.

“Ok, so is there anything else you can tell me about this guy?” she asked. “Like is he dangerous, or something?”

“Dangerous?” Flowey replied as if he couldn’t imagine it. “Oh, he’s far from it. That old man may be crazy and a bit unstable, yes, but he’s perhaps the furthest thing from dangerous that a monster can be. At least, when it comes to kids like yourself.”

Frisk scoffed.

“I’m not a kid,” she protested.
“Well if it talks like one,” the flower said. “What are you? Like 12?”

“I’m 16,” Frisk said truthfully.

“Wait really?”

Flowey stared at her befuddled, failing to find a single hint of irony.

“Huh,” he began. “You humans seem to be growing younger by the minute.”

“What you’ve never seen a 16-year-old girl before?” Frisk asked.

“Well not a human one,” Flowey replied. “Now that I think about it.”

“Ok, it doesn’t really matter,” Frisk said, trying to divert the topic onto the things that were currently on her mind. “What I want to know is what the hell is going on? Like what is this place, how did the monster find me and bring me back here in time, and why you-”

“Oh slow down, slow down, one thing at a time, ok?” the flower said. “It's true I know a lot of things, thanks for assuming, but I’m not a supercomputer or anything. I can only take so many questions at once y’ know.”

Frisk went quiet for a short moment, now realizing just how anxious she was feeling. She also noticed she was shaking a bit.

“Alright then, sorry,” she said.

“Good,” Flowey began. “Now, I know this new situation you’re in may look and sound and feel completely weird, confusing, and unnatural… which it is, but can you at least give me a moment to explain the basics of this new and incredibly paradoxical reality before you go back to doing… whatever the hell you were doing back there?”

“Freaking out?” Frisk asked.

“Yeah,” Flowey said. “And then, with your newfound knowledge, you can navigate this world with much more ease thanks to me.”

“Wait a minute,” Frisk began. “Why are you helping me?”

Flowey stopped talking for a moment, and the smug expression on his face vanished. After a short moment, he said:

“Because… you saved me, and I’m in your debt.”

This answer just made Frisk more confused than before.

Saved him? she thought. From what? We’ve just met.

“What-what are you talking about?” she asked him and chuckled.

Flowey took a deep breath.

“Of course she doesn’t know,” Frisk heard him mumble under his breath.

“Ok, let’s put it this way” he began shortly after. “How about… you woke me up.”
“From what?” asked Frisk.

Flowey groaned.

“From that immobile state I was in, what else?” Flowey said sounding a bit irritated. “Gods, how dimwitted are you?”

“Sorry,” Frisk said. “It’s just that this is all so weird to me.”

“Alright, alright I guess that’s somewhat understandable,” Flowey said, sounding calmer. “Anyway, before you came along, I was practically stuck like that, immobile, for what must’ve been like 5 or 6 years. It was practically hell, having to be stuck with the same crazy old man for years who all this time thinks he’s your dad and you have to be groomed and smothered by him on and on, every day of every year while there is nothing you can-”

Flowey stopped himself from speaking further. His face had turned red and angry before he managed to calm himself down.

“Apologies,” he said. “Lost my temper for a moment there. Anyways, where were we?”

“Wow, you really hate that guy don’t you,” Frisk said.

“Somewhat,” Flowey confirmed. “I mean, how would you feel if you had to be stuck with and harassed by a crazed hermit every day for years?”

“Uhh, it would suck?”

“That’s putting it mildly. Now, we were just talking about how you saved me, right?”

“Right, how did I do that exactly?” Frisk asked. “And why are you sure it was me who did it considering I haven’t even touched you since I came here.”

With that, the flower opened his mouth to speak only to stop immediately afterwards as if he completely forgot what he was going to say.

“Well truth be told,” he said after a while. “I’m not really sure how. Now that I’m actually thinking about it, I realized I can’t actually understand the logistic behind it. But I do know it was you who saved me since you resetting in my vicinity is somehow what brought me back from limbo.”

“Resetting?” asked Frisk.

*Just as things couldn’t get even more confusing, she thought.*

“Correct,” Flowey confirmed. “You see before I fell suddenly into that helpless state, and even longer before you came along, I had the same power as you do now, that is resetting. Unfortunately, I seem to have lost that ability, even though I’m still able to keep the memories after someone else resets.”

“I, uh, feel like we are in different levels of mindsets over here,” Frisk said.

Flowey looked at her in confusion until his expression change as if he realized something.

“Oh, you don’t really know, do you?” he asked. “Of course you don’t. No idea why I assumed everyone who gained this power knows of it instantly, considering it took me some experimenting until I fully understood it.”
“Uh, what are you talking about?”

“Can you just wait for a moment?” Flowey asked. “I’m trying to find a way to explain this properly. Gods, you’re so impatient. So anyway, how do I put this? Mmm resets, are like uh… time travel in a way. You see in this world, that being the underground we are in, humans that fall down here often gain a hidden power of sorts, which allows them to manipulate reality in a certain way because of high levels of determination in them.”

“Woah, whoah, what are you talking about?” Frisk interrupted. “Time travel, manipulating reality, high levels of determination what?”

Flowey slapped his face with one of his vines, eerily similar to a person facepalming.

“Ugh, ok let’s try putting this another way?” he began “So, have you ever played a video game?”

“A couple, yeah, why?” Frisk asked.

“Good,” Flowey said. “So you know how in most video games whenever you “die”, you “reset” which basically just means you go back in time to your last checkpoint or save?”

Frisk nodded in confirmation.

“Well, it kind of works like that,” Flowey continued. “Think of determination as being like an unlimited memory card, and whenever your determination reaches a certain level, you “save” your progress in a way, and so later on when you die, or reset, you go basically go back in time to your last “save point,” and sometimes, more than just your memory of the now-erased event go back in time with you. Of course, there is a way to reset without dying, but that one is-”

“Wait, hang on! Are you saying I just died back there?!”

“Yes, that’s exactly what I’m getting at,” Flowey said in a casual manner. “Unless you found a way to reset on your own that is.”

Frisk stared at him, mouth agape, feeling utter disbelief. The amount of dread she felt from this revelation was almost beyond description. But the most horrifying part was that it was perhaps the best explanation she could think of as to why she was one moment falling down a deep pit with a hard bottom, and before she knew it she was suddenly back in the monsters home. Not only that, there was not a hint of irony in the tone or face of the flower.

At that moment, Frisk wasn’t sure if she was supposed to laugh or cry.

“I-I died…” she said to herself, trying her hardest to grasp it. “I have honest to god fucking died. I… ho-holy shit.”

“Look, it’s not that big of a deal,” Flowey said.

“Yes, it’s a big, fucking deal!” Frisk protested. “I-I… how does it work… is there an afterlife? Is there a soul? Is there-”

“Yes you have a soul,” Flowey said bluntly.

“THERE ARE SOULS?!”

“Oh lower your voice for the angel's sake!” Flowey said, sounding irritated. “Do you want the old hermit to come here and ruin everything? Do you want the entire ruins to hear you?”
“Sorry,” Frisk said. “It’s just… this is so much to take in, I… sorry, just… give me a few minutes to uh, absorb this alright?”

Flowey looked at her thoughtfully for a few seconds and then frowned.

“Fine,” he said. “Take your time then.”

“Thanks.”

Frisk put her hand on her chest and breathed heavy but slow breaths. She felt the heart in her chest, pounding. It slowed down after a while, but the anxiety crawling up her spine still remained, although to a lesser degree.

Frisk looked at the flower. Now that she was calmer than before, she decided to start with one of the questions she had.

“So you said that it was possible to, uh, reset without dying,” Frisk began. “Can you tell me how?”

“Well, it’s kind of hard to explain,” Flowey said. “I don’t think I can explain it if I were to be honest. It’s just something you have to know is all.”

Frisk sighed.

“Fine, later,” she said

Frisk let one of her foot dangle of the edge of the bed and finally managed to gather the last of her thoughts and question into a nice mental pile.

“So do you have any idea how I uh… gained this power?” she asked. “Flowey?”

“Oh sorry,” he replied, sounding a bit spooked. “I decided to doze off for a bit since you were doing… your thing. Anyway, what were you saying?”

“I was asking you how I got this power,” Frisk said. “The power to go back in time whenever I die I mean.”

“Well that’s simple,” Flowey said. “I… I don’t know.”

Frisk looked at him doubtfully.

“You don’t know?” she asked.

“Well, yes- I mean, no,” answered Flowey. “I’m sure I did know how at some point, but in case you haven’t noticed, my memory’s not up to snuff now, possibly relating to my coma. I think the power has something to do with the amount of determination you have, which is like a magic juice thing inside every human soul, and since you have more determination in your soul than any other being down here, you somehow gained the ability to cheat death? I think? I’m not sure. Anyway, are you done now? Calming down I mean?”

“Yeah I, uh, think so,” Frisk said.

“Great, good to hear,” Flowey said. “Now can we keep going?”

“Yeah, you said you could help me,” Frisk said. “How exactly?”

Flowey went silent for a moment, and then he chuckled.
“Well you want to go home don’t you?” he asked Frisk and she nodded. “Well, I can help you with that. Like I said earlier, I once had the same power as you do now, and with it. I explored the entire underground from north to south, east to west dozens of times. I’ve read every book, burned every book, bought everything, sold everything. I’ve even killed people, only to reset and become a friend to the same person immediately after. I have done practically everything down here I can think of. See where I’m going with this?”

“I think so yeah,” Frisk said.

“Good,” Flowey continued. “Because what I’m saying is, there is not a single being that knows the underground as much as I do. I am literally the best person that can help get you home, and you are immensely lucky to stumble upon me, and the fact that you saved me, although unintentionally, makes me feel incredibly indebted to you.”

Flowey’s face suddenly turned a bit dour.

“The bad news is,” he said. “That my memory isn’t up to snuff as I said earlier. I have dozens of gaps in my mind and of some events I’ve been through, I can only remember the basic outlines. Not to mention, lots must’ve changed in the underground during the past 5 to 6 years since I was gone, so even if my memory was perfect, it still wouldn’t be completely enough.”

Flowey looked up Frisk who was now feeling somewhat worried, and he gave her a reassuring smile.

“But do not fret though,” he said. “I still remember most of the layout of the world, including some places only a few have gone to. The underground may be magical in nature, yes, but I doubt there would be entire landscape changes and different placements of towns and or rivers in just half a decade. Now, with that said, shall we finally be off now?”

“Wait,” Frisk said.

She had just realized something she forgot to ask. Something important.

“How do I know if I can trust you?”

Flowey became silent again, and his smile waned as if he didn’t know how to proceed. He stared at her for a good few seconds before he chuckled and talked again.

“Well that’s the thing isn’t?” he began. “You don’t know that. And frankly, you don’t have to. Honestly, I really should have been clearer in my intentions here. You see, I’m not trying to make you trust me. I’m not begging or threatening your life for you to take me along. I’m merely presenting you the option to have me as your guide so to speak. Of course, we can all just… go our separate ways now and then this moment will be the last we ever see of each other, for the time being at least. Who knows, maybe you really don’t need my help or even any help for that matter. Maybe you can solve this puzzle and get home all by yourself.”

“But,” Flowey continued, and his tone seemed to change again. “I have to be perfectly honest. I would really appreciate if you’d at least consider my proposal. You saved my life after all, and I really want to reward it to you somehow, even if just a little. On the other hand, though, you are a young, although nearly adult by human standards, 16-year-old girl who just a few hours ago learned that magic and monsters exist in the world, so I don’t blame you for not trusting me immediately. Hell, you’re probably thinking that I could be lying about all of this. Then again, most humans and monsters didn’t make it far in their lives if they didn’t take any risk or two. So, with that said.”
Flowey slowly extended one of his vines until it was only an arm's length from Frisk. There he held it floating in the air like he was waiting for a handshake.

“Do you want my help?” he asked calmly.

Frisk stared at the floating vine, thinking. Normally, she would absolutely refuse help from a stranger, especially in this kind of situation. Once Frisk became a teen and was no longer considered a child, she believed she understood the world better than most.

But now, everything was different. Frisk now felt like the things and people she would normally trust or understand no longer held the same benefit of doubt and vice versa. It was as if the world had turned on its head just overnight.

As for the flower, Frisk felt he was sincere in his tone and that he truly wanted to help her.

He could also have been lying, about her power and everything, and now wanted to use her for some malicious purpose.

What could be the worst that could happen should I not take his offer? Frisk thought.

Well, the first that would happen, Frisk wondered, was that she would say bye to him and go back by herself into the ruins. Maybe she would do much better than last time. Maybe she would die again and fall right back into this place where the flower would ask her the same questions again. Maybe she would put him back into a coma.

Frisk also didn’t know how to “save” as Flowey put it, at least not consciously, so she could always fall back to this exact place and time over and over again and have to redo the same hours, maybe days. Or maybe she would accidentally save at some unfortunate moment and be stuck in an infinite loop with no one around to save her.

So many dark possibilities flew around in her head. All this was, of course, assuming Flowey was telling the truth about her powers.

But as strange as it sounded, Frisk found this hard to deny. She suddenly felt as if somewhere deep within her soul and mind, there was another mind where she knew and understood this power. Like a consciousness within her consciousness.

Maybe though. Frisk wasn’t sure. Of anything anymore. This was all starting to feel like a dream to her.

Maybe this really is a dream, she thought. Maybe I should just act like it is, and go through the motions, blindly.

“Well?” Flowey asked impatiently.

Then, as Frisk looked at the flower’s eyes, she suddenly felt the same imaginary place within her soul, stirring as if it was trying to speak.

Take it, she felt it say. Take it.

And so, despite everything her guts were telling her to, the deep parts of Frisk’s soul proved stronger

“Screw it,” she said out loud and grabbed hold of the floating vine and shook it. “I’ll take it.”
A huge, satisfied smile formed on Flowey’s face.

“Ahh, it’s a deal then,” he said, “Now hold still for a moment.”

Then, before Frisk could react, Flowey had lengthened the vine Frisk was holding to be even longer, and it crawled up her entire hand and all the way to the point it reached her back. Then Flowey used that same vine like it was a small, thin robe to pull himself out of the pot, which gave of a noticeable pop sound, and landed on Frisk’s hand.

“Hey! What are you-”

“Oh, you try walking again after not using your legs for who knows many years, or in my case, roots!” Flowey said while he crawled up her arm.

Frisk felt the flower and his vines tickle a bit as he crawled to her back where he used the same vine to tangle around her shoulder like a strap, and then he formed another vine to cover the other one. He now felt like a strange, organic backpack.

“Well, you could have at least asked me beforehand,” Frisk said, sounding somewhat irritated. “But anyway, what’s-”

“Oh, lords!” Flowey suddenly said.

The two vines around Frisk loosened and the talking flower fell limp of her back and straight onto the floor.

“Flowey!”

Flowey now remained nearly motionless on the floor, groaning in pain. Frisk turned around and looked at him. This was the first time she got a good look at Flowey’s “body”. It consisted of a single, long green stem with two vines to the side working as it’s armed. At his bottom was a large, brown root still dirty and covered in mould from being so long in the flowerpot.

Frisk kneeled down on the floor feeling a slight worry.

“Are you alright?” she asked.

Why am I worried for him, Frisk thought.

The flower groaned again.

“Ugh, no, not really,” he said. “I think I may have underestimated just how weak I am exactly. Didn’t consider for some reason that not moving for like 5 to 6 years might have some effect on my muscles and grip strength, or whatever it is that keeps my vines strong.”

He then looked Frisk straight into the eye with a look of complete sincerity.

“You’re going to have to carry me for the time being,” he said.

“What, no way,” Frisk said.

“Oh come on, it’s only for a short while,” Flowey said. “Just until I get my stamina back. Won’t take that long. Besides, it’s not like I weigh that much. Wait, are you even paying attention to me?!?”

Frisk didn’t seem to notice him anymore as she was looking at something in the corner of the
“I have a better idea,” she said.

“Oh, what could you-”

Flowey stopped as he realized what she was looking at.

“Oh no,” he began. “No, no, no, no.”

“What you got a better idea?” Frisk asked.

“Yeah, the one I just told you about!” he answered. “I ain’t gonna be treated like I’m a freaking tool or a plaything.”

“Well I ain’t gonna carry you with my hands for hours or days,” Frisk protested. “And it’s not like you can fit into my pockets either way.”

“But it’s… dark in there. And tight.”

“Then I’ll just keep it open.”

“But… but… oh fine!” Flowey said in complete defeat. “Just try to be careful and don’t make me it too uncomfortable for me ok? If it will be, then you’ll not hear the end of me complaining.”

“Deal.”

Frisk leaned down and grabbed Flowey by the stem.

“Hey, hey, gentle. Gentle!”

“Sorry,” Frisk said.

Holding the sentient flower in her hand, Frisk walked to the pink backpack and put Flowey as carefully as she could into the largest opening.

“Is this ok?” she asked.

“Yes, yes, stop asking with every inconvenience and hurry up alright?”

With the flower now placed inside the backpack like it was a large pot of pink leather, Frisk slowly picked it up and put her hands through the straps in a unique way as to not turn it over, which proved to be more awkward than she expected. When she was done with that, she adjusted and tightened the backpack to make sure it wasn’t too shaky or loose for her new passenger.

“Ok, what now?” Frisk asked.

“First things first,” Flowey said as he adjusted himself inside the backpack. “You should open that other box.”

“Why, what’s in there?” Frisk asked.

“Something that will be of much help to us.”

“Wait how do you know what’s in it?” Frisk asked.

Flowey replied that question with another question. A question that immediately put Frisk on edge:
“What, you think you’re the first human kid to fall down here?”

“What?” Frisk exclaimed.

She had suspected for a while now that she wasn’t the first human here, what with the stories of missing children that dated to even a hundred years ago, but the sudden confirmation was still felt completely out of left field and thus was very unnerving for her.

*Of course, I wasn’t the first, Frisk thought. I should have known. But wait, if I’m not the first human here then… why the hell has nobody returned from this place?*

“You’re really surprised?” Flowey asked condescendingly.

“Not really,” Frisk admitted “I should have guessed it though from all the stories and rumours. But wait, if the old man isn’t dangerous, then what happened to the others?”

Flowey went eerily quiet.

“Flowey?” Frisk asked.

“I don’t know,” Flowey confessed. “Maybe I did know the truth about it once, but if that’s the case then it’s, unfortunately, one more thing that I have forgotten. Eh, we’ll burn that bridge when we get there. Why don’t you go open that other box now?”

“Right,” Frisk said.

As she went over to it, Frisk couldn’t shake off that dreadful feeling, even though she tried to. All she could think of while she tore open the lacklustre packaging was of the other people who came before her. Because of it, she barely even noticed the metallic clanking sound that came as the box shook.

“Come on,” said Flowey. “Hurry up.”

“Calm down,” Frisk said, feeling a mild shock after being pulled from her thoughts. “I’m almost done.”

“Well can you keep it up a little.”

“I’m going as fast as I can. Besides, what could be so possibly important inside this-“

Frisk finally opened the box and saw the deadly, metallic instrument within.

“A knife?” she asked. “What the- why the hell would the monster give you a knife as a present?”

“Well, would you believe me if I told you this present was actually meant for you and the necklace was for me?” Flowey said.

“What, I mean no, maybe,” Frisk said. “I mean, he’s unstable as hell so I shouldn’t be surprised.”

“Well at least you’re not as surprised as the last kid who came here,” Flowey said. “That time, the old man didn’t mix it up as he did with you. Gods, you should have seen his face after the kid accidentally cut himself on the knife, just after opening the box.”

“Other kid?” Frisk asked. “Can you tell me about them?”

“Nah, I’ll tell you about him later,” Flowey said. “Once we are out, that is.”
“Alright then,” Frisk said. “I’ll keep that in mind.”

“Great idea,” Flowey said. “Because I’m sure to forget.”

*I feel like I keep getting new questions at every second*, Frisk thought as she pulled out the knife from the torn box which she then threw nonchalantly on the floor.

The knife looked somewhat inhuman and magical in design, despite being indistinguishable in size and shape from an ordinary combat knife and it fitted nicely in her hands. The handle was mostly plain, being nothing but black metal with some dark brown leather sewn on it. The blade, which had the most noticeable aspect, was mostly ebony coloured with an unmissable, blood red hue on it that seemed to glow like it was forged in some evil place.

“What’s the deal with this knife?” Frisk asked.

“Well, it’s a knife,” Flowey said. “What else.”

“It doesn’t look or feel normal, is all,” Frisk said.

*Is this just how knives made by monsters look like?* she thought.

“Anyway, what am I supposed to do with it?” she asked Flowey.

Frisk was starting to feel nervous, even more than she was already, at what could possibly be the purpose of needing a weapon like this.

“Well you need it to cut open the door out of here,” Flowey said. “And when we’re through, who knows? Maybe we fall into some vines or have cut our way through some thick foliage.”

Frisk felt a bit of relief hearing that answer.

“Also,” continued Flowey. “If the old man comes and tries to stop us, it would be nice to have this thing to, y’ know, shank him.”

“What?!” Frisk exclaimed

Despite having only known him for a few moments, she couldn’t believe what he was suggesting.

“Are you out of your goddamn mind?!” she asked. “I ain’t gonna kill him!”

“I didn’t say you have to!” Flowey replied. “I merely said it was a possibility that there be a situation where you have no other choice. And if not him, then maybe someone else you see?”

“Oh, I’m not killing anyone!”

“Fine then,” Flowey said with a hint of sarcasm. “Let’s go with your idea and be all willy nilly to anyone who hunts us down and tries to kill us. Who knows? Maybe we can be friends to them.”

“You- you do realize there’s like a fine line between killing someone and trying to befriend them!” Frisk said.

“Of course I know that!” Flowey said. “Just don’t be surprised when you hit a wall dozens of times because you keep being killed by the same person over and over again. Sometimes, you have to take drastic measures to survive in this world.”

“Alright look,” began Frisk. “We can waste our time here debating the morals and justification of
murder all we want, but it’s clear we aren’t gonna go anywhere with this soon and right now, I think I just wanna get the hell out of here. As you said, we’ll burn that bridge when we get there.”

“Fine,” Flowey said. “Your choice. But I will prove you right, no worries.”

“Whatever,” muttered Frisk.

She flipped the knife upside down and put it blade first into one of her pants pockets.

“Anything else I need to do in here?” she asked.

“No,” confirmed Flowey. “Not unless you wanna take home those books and toys for souvenirs.”

“No, I don’t.”

“Great, then let’s finally go.”

Chapter End Notes

Woah.
This was a really, REALLY, long time coming. Sorry

I really don't have a good excuse for this month and a half long hiatus. Except for maybe the fact that it was a terrible time to work on an original short story. Turns out, writing an original short story... is not that easy. When you are making your own world, you have to also remember the rules you made for it, and make sure it's cohesive as hell. I thought at first that it would take me at least two weeks to finish the first draft, but I've barely just finished the introduction to the story, and may I remind you, it's a short story for crying out loud. And then came the tests. Off the tests. Also took much of my attention this month.
But as I was just finishing them, I realized that it had been a long time since I made updates to this fic, and I really hate to keep people waiting.
On the bright side though, during this long hiatus, I was able to brainstorm dozens of ideas for this fic, and even fill in some gaps I wasn't thinking of. Honestly, though, I am not gonna abandon my "proper" writing at all. I am still going to finish the story I had in mind this summer, but that does NOT mean that I am going to abandon this fic any time soon, far from. I am just going to hop between my original stories and this one. The bad news is that it could mean that waiting may be a bit longer than usual.
But I'll try my hardest not to make it as long as the one between this and the last.
Thankfully, the next chapter won't be so long away since I have already finished a decent portion of it. Don't know when I can finish it so I won't promise any release dates, sorry.

And to make a long story short, thank you, readers, who haven't abandoned me yer and I'll see you guys soon. Adios.

Oh and one more thing.
Since you guys have been so patient, how about a little treat. I'm gonna tease something that I have been planning for a while. It's not a major spoiler, don't worry. I
am not giving away a plot twist or a vital scene, but it will be a large hint of what's to come., but to those who are desperate to avoid spoilers for anything, even if it's minor, I suggest those folk to stop reading from here on out.

Still here?
Alright, here we go.

There will be at least one (maybe 2), non-canonical ship later in this story.

I ain't telling who are involved, or even what kind of ship it will be except for that it's indeed romantical. I want it to come organically, and fit the tone of the story, and it also might not come until much later.
All I will say about is that it is a semi-popular Undertale ship that formed about the time the game first came out, and it's 100% consensual.
That's all I will say about so start speculating people.

And before you ask, no it isn't Frans. Sorry to disappoint you, but it's not really my thing. If you ship it though then fine. You do you alright?
Frisk carefully opened the door and peeked out to the hallway. The first thing she noticed was how eerily dark and quiet it was.

“How the hell has the old monster guy not come here yet?” she asked. “We must’ve made like a ton of noise yelling in there.”

“Ah, he must be too busy sobbing in his room to hear,” Flowey said. “He does that every time he has a breakdown.”

“Hey speaking of breakdowns,” Frisk began. “Can you tell me what the hell was up with that face shifting thing he did earlier?”

“I… really have no idea,” Flowey said.

“Really?”

“Yeah, I’m about as surprised as you. I’ve been with him for like half a decade yet he has never done that before.”

“Never you say?”

Frisk found that hard to believe. She could still see the utter regret the old monster seemed to express immediately afterwards like he accidentally revealed something he shouldn’t have.

“Yeah, never,” Flowey confirmed. “The only possible thing I can guess is that it has something to do with the whole resetting thing going on with you, which seems to be the answer for everything now. I don’t see how it matters to us though since we most likely won’t see him again.”

“I was just curious,” Frisk said.

“Of course you are,” Flowey said. “Can we keep going now because we're wasting time?”

“Right, sorry.”

Frisk crept through the door and carefully closed it behind her. She tried listening for any signs of the old hermit but heard nothing. Still, she thought it was best to go slowly and carefully.

As she was creeping closer to the entrance of this dwelling place, Frisk realized that she wasn’t as scared or nervous as before. In fact, she was barely scared at all. The truth of her powers was finally getting to her. Still, she also felt a bit bad for leaving the monster alone without telling him. But she also suspected heavily that if she did, the creature then might try his hardest to stop her. It was not a risk she was in the mood to take.

Once Frisk exited the hallway, she turned to the entrance. She was barely a step through when
Flowey interrupted her.

“No, no, no,” he said, “Not that way.”

“What do you mean?” Frisk asked, feeling confused now. “This is the only way out.”

Flowey went quiet, and the air around them was filled with a scent of smug disappointment.

“Of course you thought it was the only way out,” Flowey said. “Why did I assume anything else?”

“Alright jackass,” Frisk said. “If that’s not the way out then what is?”

“Well gee,” the flower began. “If only there were some other door in this very room. Fine, since you seem to be so dimwitted, I’ll tell you. I am in fact talking about the door down the stairs behind you.”

Frisk felt her heart stop once she heard that. The fears she thought she had vanquished had suddenly returned in an instant.

“Are you serious?” she asked nervously.

*He can’t be talking about THAT door, is he?*

“What, you thought it leads down to an empty basement or something?” Flowey asked.

Frisk turned around and walked to the side of the stairs. She looked down at the boarded up door and her heart pounded. Just looking at it filled her with unease.

“Why, what’s wrong with it?” Flowey asked.

“Th-the old man told me not to open it,” Frisk said. “He said there was some evil shit behind that door. Demons or something.”

Just after she said that the flower began to hold his breath, trying to keep himself from bursting into laughter. Frisk turned her head around to face Flowey, and she was starting to feel somewhat frustrated.

“What’s so funny,” she asked.

“You actually bought that?” Flowey asked, smiling a cocky smile. “Like for real? Gods, you really are an idiot.”

“Let me guess,” she began. “That door leads home right?”

“Of course it does!” Flowey said. “Why else would he make up that story?”

Frisk sighed. She couldn’t help but feel used by the old hermit.

“Alright, let’s get going,” she said.

She walked down the steps, carefully so that the steps wouldn’t creak. Not that it really mattered, as the old hermit wouldn’t have heard it either way. It was more due to a force of habit at this point.

“Gods, can you move on already?” Flowey complained.
“Calm down,” Frisk replied. “We’re halfway there.”

“And we would be there now if you actually walked properly.”

“God, can you stop complaining? At this point, I am considering whether taking you was a bad idea.”

“Alright then, take your time. Just don’t be shocked if the monster takes you while you're still on the next step.”

After an unnecessarily gruelling journey down the steps, filled with Flowey’s occasional impatient groaning, they were now standing in front of the large, boarded-up wooden door.

“Finally,” Flowey said. “Now the next thing you need to do is cut those tapes off.”

“Wait, is this the door you mentioned?” Frisk asked. “The one that the knife is supposed to be used on?”

“Yeah, why?” Flowey confirmed.

“I dunno, it feels kind of a downer,” Frisk said. “Judging by the design of the knife, I just expected the door to look more mythical and ancient. Like a large, house-sized, stone slab decorated in glowing runes or something”

“Well it was the only knife that’s in this house,” Flowey said. “Oh by the way, can you hurry up already? Or are you just gonna stand around and ponder every five seconds or so?”

“Ok then, geez.”

She put her hand on the door and used the other to cut down the duct tape with the knife. The first plank loosened and dangled on the door. Frisk carefully took it off and put it on the bottom step, slowly as to not make a sound.

“I think I could have just ripped the tapes off with my hands, y’ know?” Frisk realized.

“Ehh, it’s too strong,” Flowey said.

“C’ mon, it’s just duct tape,” Frisk said. “How hard can it be?”

She put her knife in her pocket for the time being and attempted to pull off the tape of another plank. It proved to be extremely ineffective. The tape was unnaturally strong. She tried again and groaned a bit before giving up.

“Told you so,” Flowey said condescendingly.

“God, what are these things made of?” Frisk said.

“Well the old guy used some magic on it,” said the flower. “I saw it with my own eyes, or rather with whatever it was that made me able to see back when I was in that state. He didn’t think to make it knife proof for some reason.”

“Magically enhanced duct tape,” Frisk said, realizing how weird it sounded out loud. “Got it.”

Frisk then went back to the original plan and cut off the tapes of another plank. This one was diagonal, so it proved very awkward to cut, especially the top part where Frisk had to stand on her toes to reach. After that, there were only a few dozen more.
A few planks later, there came the sound of a door opening, somewhere in this house.

“You hear that?” whispered Flowey.

“Oh shit,” whispered Frisk.

Frisk began to frantically cut out the last remaining planks, which thankfully proved to be much easier as most of them were hastily put and disorganized. After a while, the bottom steps were covered in a pile of loose planks.

Then, after she removed the last plank, which was very large and heavy and covered the entire door horizontally, she stopped. Standing in front of the large, wooden door, an uncomfortable sensation was starting to grow in her gut. She was suddenly reminded of one thing the old monster had told her.

*Down there… Lay only the evilest things ever dreamt up from the dark deep imaginations of the most wicked monsters.*

“What in the angel’s name are you waiting for?” Flowey whispered, sounding somewhat agitated.

“The old man can be here any second now. Open it.”

“This… doesn’t feel right,” Frisk admitted.

*What if the monster was telling the truth?* she thought. *What if this is a trick?*

“I don’t care how you feel right now,” Flowey whispered, sounding irritated. “If you want to go home, then the only way to get there is through that door. You’re not actually buying what he said right?”

*This feels weird,* Frisk thought. *It feels like a trap*

“You seem awfully keen on opening this door,” she told the flower.

“Because it’s the only way out of here,” Flowey said, almost breaking his whispering in frustration. “I’ve told you like a gazillion times already. Now lay down your stupid suspicions and open that gods-dammed door.”

Frisk stared at the door, feeling strong and conflicting emotions crawling and biting at her mind.

*An amalgamation yours and anyone’s worst possible fears and nightmares made manifest,* the creature’s voice said in her thoughts. *Famine, war, death, chaos, disease. Countless things a wicked soul can possibly think of.*


That last line was what made Frisk finally come to a decision, although hastily and unsure. But it was not the decisions Flowey was hoping for. Frisk walked a few steps backwards and felt the stirring of the confused flower on her back.

“No,” Frisk said, filled with certainty and determination. “I refuse.”

Flowey now looked absolutely befuddled. His mouth was wide open and his eyes spoke utter confusions. If he had eyebrows, they would surely speak frustration and anger.

“What?” he said, almost yelling it at this point. “Are you- ugh, for the angel's sake! Fine! Let me!”
“Hey what are you-”

In barely a moment, Flowey had extended one of his vines, making him wince in pain, and before Frisk could finish her sentence, he had wrapped the vine around the doorknob and gave out a painful groan as he swiftly yanked the door open.

“Oh fuck!”

Then, as if on instinct, Frisk closed her eyes and cowered on the ground, and she felt an immense gust of wind rushing over her body.

She laid still for only about half a minute, but it felt like an eternity. At every moment, Frisk expected to feel horrible things, like perhaps dozens of teeth biting her skin like countless man-eating insects, slimy tendrils grabbing her and attempting to pull her into an incomprehensible hellscape, or waves of horrible, loud screeching or laughter from countless, inhuman terrors.

However, she waited. And waited. And waited. And yet, after a few moments, she felt nothing. Nothing at all.

“It’s ok Frisk,” Flowey said and sighed. “There’s nothing here you scared idiot.”

Frisk frightfully opened her eyes. If there was any, she thought that perhaps she could glance at the eldritch monstrosities before being devoured or worse. Maybe the “evil” was waiting for her, waiting for her to look at it so it could savour her suffering. But, as she stood up and finally mustered the courage to glance through the door, Frisk was instead filled with shocking relief, and anger.

All there was through the door was a simple, empty corridor.

“See?” Flowey said. “No demons. No evil magic or whatever vague nonsense he was spouting. Nothing. Just a simple hallway that leads out of here.”

“He lied to me,” Frisk said, feeling betrayed. “The old bastard lied to me.”

“Oh, you’re surprised?” Flowey asked sarcastically. “Well, gee. It’s not like that old man is crazy and suffers from incredible loneliness issues or any-”

There came the sound of loud steps and crashings from above. Frisk listened for a while. The steps were becoming louder and closer.

“FRISK! FLOWEY! WHERE ARE YOU!” yelled the old monster.

“I think he’s coming this way,” Frisk said in frightful realization.

“Well, then what the heck are you waiting for?!” Flowey asked anxiously. “Run. Run!”

And so she did. She ran, ran as fast as she could down the dark corridor.

“At the end of this hall, there is a left curve that leads to another door!” Flowey said. “It’s much larger than the one back there and made of pure stone, so it will be extremely heavy and much harder to open!”

“How am I supposed to open it then?!” Frisk frantically asked, now seeing the curve ahead.

“Push it!” Flowey said. “Push it as hard as you can!”
Frisk quickly turned the corner without slowing down which caused her to crash on the walls a bit before getting back on her feet. At the end of this new path, a tall door made of pure stone indeed loomed closer. The door had a strange distinct rune marked on it, and it opened in the middle like an old castle gate. Behind her, Frisk heard the sounds of loud, running steps of a large figure.

“Hurry, up Frisk!” Flowey said anxiously. “I think he’s down here!”

“I know, I know!” Frisk said and increased her speed.

She was now running just as fast, if not faster than she did in the old ruins. She didn’t even have time to stop before she slammed headfirst into the stone door.

“Gah.”

“Ok,” Flowey began. “Now push!”

“Got it, got it!” Frisk said.

Frisk put her hands on either side of the opening and groaned as she put all her weight into opening the door.

“God, why is this so heavy?!” she complained. “Flowey, can you give me a hand?!”

“Sorry, I’m too small and weak!” Flowey said. “Keep it up though, you’re doing great!”

Frisk wasn’t sure whether he was sarcastic about that last sentence, but she didn’t care. She felt the sweat run down her brow and cheek as she pushed. Still, she groaned and pushed as hard as her body could manage.

After a while, Frisk managed to get a small crack in the centre. It was big enough to peek through, and inside she saw another, long hallway that seemed to stretch further than any she had encountered so far. She pushed a bit more, and now the opening was big enough for her to squeeze through.

“Almost there!” Frisk said. “Just a little bit-”

“My child!” yelled the creature behind her on the other end of the hall. “You shouldn’t be down here! It’s dangerous for a child like you!”

Frisk stopped doing everything at that moment. She glanced at the half-open door and knew she could just squeeze through and then close the stone door behind her. But her anger, her feeling of disappointment at the old monster, overtook her, and she knew there was most likely not another chance to confront him.

She turned around and saw a frail, decrepit monster in tattered clothing standing at the edge of the hall with a maddening glare and frown of disappointment. With the immense bravery she felt due to the knowledge that death was not final for her, Frisk was filled with immense determination.

“You just had to peek inside didn’t you?” he said. “Couldn’t let your curiosity lie in wait, is that it? Well, now you know what’s inside here. Now you know the real reason I had to board it up. Couldn’t let you two get into danger, could I? Now, why don’t you and your little brother come back upstairs-”

“You lied to me, asshole!” Frisk yelled, and the monster seemed incredibly thrown aback by it. “You told me there was nothing down here besides some vague bullshit about something evil in
order to scare me from it! You didn’t let me know this was the only way home!”

“Tha-that’s not a nice way to speak to me like that,” the creature said, sounding confused and worried.

*Has he no guilt or shame even after being caught?* Frisk thought.

“Are you daft?” Frisk asked.

“You-you’re right,” the creature admitted. “I did lie to you about the door, and I’m sorry. But, it was for the best I… I only did it to protect you!”

“Oh, that’s bullshit!” Frisk said. “I thought you were nice! You were crazy, yeah, but I thought you were trying to help me! But it turns out you just wanted to keep me here, forever! So I could pretend to be your dead child in your little fantasy like I was some fucking toy to be dressed and played with!”

“That’s not true,” the monster said. “Not even close.”

“Well, whatever the case!” Frisk said. “I’m leaving! And I’m taking the flower with me!”

She turned towards the half-open door.

“Stop!” the creature shouted after her. “Listen to me! If you go through that door, you are putting yourself in far more danger than you can imagine! You have no idea what’s out there. If you leave the ruins then they… he… *Mickey* … will take you.”

Frisk turned around to face him again.

“Really?” she asked him sarcastically. “*Mickey*? That’s the best name you got? Yeah sorry, but I’m not buying it.”

“He’s telling the truth Frisk,” Flowey told her. “This time that is.”

She turned her head towards Flowey to see if he was joking or not. Once she saw no hint of irony on his face, Frisk felt a sudden discomfort.

“Flowey…” the creature said, seeming to have finally noticed him. “My son.”

“I’m not your son,” the flower said to him with disgust in his voice.

“I-I know you’re angry at me,” the creature said. “I shouldn’t have lied to your friend like that. Or to you for that matter. But I’ll make it up for you. I promise. I’ll even bake you your favourite pie, just the way you like it. Just come upstairs, and we’ll go through this issue peacefully.”

He took one step towards them. That one step was just enough to put Frisk into panic and instinctively pull out the knife. The creature expression turned into shock at the girl now pointing the knife at him.

“Don’t!” Frisk said. “Don’t come any closer.”

“My child, where did you get that?” the creature asked. “You shouldn’t be playing with that thing. It’s dangerous.”

He took another step.
“DON’T!” Frisk yelled, and the tone in her voice became more worrying. “Please, I don’t want to do this! Just let us go, that’s all I’m asking you!”

The creature became silent for a few moments. Suddenly, his face took on a look of understanding as if the last remaining echoes of sanity within him came rushing forth.

“I understand,” he said. “I understand that you want to go. These ruins are dark and lonely, and you might not like it here. But it’s the best place for you. Here you are safe with warmth, food and companionship. Out there, it’s cold and lots of untold dangers. You won’t last very long. Please, Frisk, I am trying to protect you. Come back up here and- and I’ll try to be better. I’ll make this please as good and nice for you as I possibly can. We can even be... a family.”

He reached towards her with an open palm.

“Please,” he begged.

Frisk stared at the open hand, still holding the knife in her hand, and she felt a surge of guilt and sadness swell within her. The way the creature spoke with complete sincerity touched her like a gentle parent she never had. It made her realize just how awful she had acted. She slowly pointed the knife at the floor and looked at the begging monster. But she had made her choice, and she was gonna through with it, no matter how much she knew it would hurt the monster.

“Remember?” Frisk began “What you told me yesterday? You said I had the power and will to make my own choices in this world. That I could make my own paths. I understand what you are trying to do here, and I appreciate that. But I want to go home as well. I know of the dangers that are out there, but I don’t want to spend the rest of my life in this place because of that. Sorry old man, but I’ve made my choice. We’re going.”

The creature looked at her and his face seemed to take in a hint of sadness. He put down his hands and closed his eyes as if to hold back tears. Then he opened them, and they had taken on a look of understanding.

“If you really want to go so bad,” the creature began. “If leaving the safety of this place will make truly you happy, even while knowing of the dangers that are out there, then frankly… I won’t stop you.”

Frisk felt a slight rush of relief.

“Thank you,” she said. “I’m sorry for-”

“But please…” the monster continued. “I beg of you with all my heart, just do one thing for me.”

Oh boy, Frisk thought.

The creature put out his hand again.

“Give me back my son,” he said. “Please.”

Frisk felt the flower stir in her backpack.

“Don’t do it, Frisk,” he said. “Please don’t leave me alone with this madman.”

“I just want my son,” the creature said. “That’s all I’m asking for and then you can go and do whatever you want.”
Frisk turned her head back to the flower who looked extremely afraid.

“Don’t even think about it,” he said. “You know I am the only one who can get you home.”

“My son is very weak,” the creature continued. “Very fragile in fact. He can’t even walk. He will not last long out that grim world. So please, if you can find it in your heart, give me him back. Please. I am not able to live with myself after losing two children at once.”

“Frisk!” Flowey said. “Please.”

Frisk saw how it seemed powerless and begging. Then she turned to the monsters and saw the exact same glint of pleading in his blue and orange eyes. But it wasn’t a hard choice for her to make though, even though it hurt a little.

“Sorry old man but no,” she said confidently. “He’s coming with me.”

Frisk heard Flowey sigh in relief.

“Thank you, Frisk,” he said.

“You…”

It was as if in that exact moment, everything surrounded them changed. Every element around them took on a drastic turn. The air became uncomfortably thick, and the warmth ever increased like a fire was burning the walls. The creature face turned dark and bleak, and his skinny hands shook like bare hands in the winter snow.

“You…” he repeated. “You dare… to take my son from me…”

“Oh shit,” Frisk said.

The creature’s hands began to glow orange, and his eyes seemed to light on fire.

“Oh that indeed,” Flowey said. “Let’s get the heck out of here!”

Without even thinking about it, Frisk turned around so quickly that it might as well have been in an instant and began to squeeze herself through the door as hard as she could.

“Come back here!” the creature yelled after her.

Fireballs appeared in his hand, and he launched them in Frisk’s direction like missiles. Frisk felt the warmth of one that just passed above her head, and she saw it fly distantly into the long corridor.

The creature then gave out a loud roar which echoed loudly through the corridor, and suddenly, he began to run inhumanly fast towards.

“Frisk hurry the heck up!” Flowey yelled.

“I’m almost there!” she replied. “Almo-”

She felt something heavy grab her backpack and it was pulling her inward.

“FRISK!” yelled Flowey.

Before being completely pulled in, Frisk managed to grab at the edge of one of the doors. She
groaned as she resisted the immense strength of the large monster, and Frisk felt as if she was in a hurricane. The blade of the knife in her hand was squeezing at her fingers, and she felt the blood leak down her hand and drip on the floor.

“I gave you a home!” the creature said furiously. “I gave you comfort and food, and I have gone so far as to allow you to go! And you repay me with this?! By stealing my only child?! You ungrateful brat!”

“LET ME GO YOU-”

There came a distinguished ripping sound from behind Frisk. She was pulled back as the backpack was torn from the sleeves. She quickly and loudly hurled on the floor as loads of torn pieces and contents of the backpack flew in the air. The creature also fell on his back, due to the unnecessary amount of strength in his pull.

Frisk felt like the world was spinning. The impact of her fall was incredibly sudden, and she landed with the back of her head. Still, she fought and tried with all her might to stand up. It was harder than it seemed, and it was like the world was going in slow-motion. She closed a fist around the red-hued knife still in her hand and rolled onto her stomach where she managed to pull herself up on all fours with her knees on the ground. She saw the monster laying in front of her, groaning and surrounded by torn backpack pieces, and in the middle of them both, there lay a single dazed flower.

Then without any consideration, Frisk sprang up and ran towards it.

“NO!” she heard the creature yell.

Just as Frisk managed to grab the flower, the creature launched at her like a hungry bear and the flower and knife flew from her hands. There came a loud thump as they crashed on the floor. It happened so fast it took Frisk a moment to absorb it. When she did, she was filled with fright as the large creature loomed over her and forced her down with his hands.

“Don’t you dare take my son from me!” he growled.

Frisk looked around and saw the knife to her side, the red hue seeming to glow in the dimness. It was very close, yet just out of reach as if it was mocking her.

“Why?!” the creature said to her pitifully. “Why do you want to hurt me like this?!”

Frisk wasn’t sure but for a moment, she thought she felt a tinge of sadness in his voice. But all that was immediately forgotten as she tried her hardest to grab the knife.

Almost there, she thought. Just need to reach further.

“You are nothing like the others,” the creature said sadly. “That’s what I liked about you at first.”

“Let go of me!” Frisk yelled.

She felt herself touch the handle.

Yes!

“What are you-”

“LET GO!”
Frisk grabbed the knife, and in a rush of either adrenaline or instinct or both, she used all her strength and impaled the large monster under the armpits. The creature then stopped, and he stared at her in utter confusion and disbelief.

“What?” Frisk said.

She noticed her hand felt strange like it was elbow deep inside a wet and gooey cake. But she was more surprised by the monster's reaction, or lack thereof. Frisk expected him to maybe wince in pain or yell. Instead, he just stared at her like he had no idea what happened. Then the creature began to cough up a little blood.

“What?” Frisk yelled.

*I only stabbed him lightly*, she thought. *Is this a trick? How is this possible?*

It was at that moment that Frisk realized the horrible mistake she had made. She looked at where she hit him and gasped in terror. She hadn’t just stabbed him, but her hand had somehow pierced through him with the knife, and now she was as deep with her elbow inside his chest. To make things worse, the point of the knife was now coming out the other side.

“W… why?” the creature managed to ask feebly.

“I-I didn’t mean to,” Frisk said.

*This can’t be happening*, she thought. *This can’t be happening*.

“Ho-hold on,” she said. “M-maybe I can fix this I.. just need… uhh…”

She began to pull out her hand with all her might. It proved slower and much more uncomfortable. She felt the sides of her arm touch dozens of slimy organs and hard bones, and she was sure she even felt a lung beating.

She groaned as she pulled out the last of her hand and knife, and the speed of her pull caused volumes of blood to spew on the walls and ceiling. It also caused the creature to let go of her, and he fell limp with his back on the floor beside her.

Frisk quickly stood up, breathing heavily and panicky, not even noticing her arm and hoodie sleeve was covered in wet blood.

The creature stared at the ceiling with wide open eyes. Frisk felt tears begin to form in her eyes.

“You-you can heal yourself right?” she asked in desperation. “Like you healed me. Back when you found me. You remember that right? Right?! You remember?!”

The creature looked up at her with eyes filled with sadness. Blood was spewing from his mouth and his side so a large red pool was forming slowly around the monster. Frisk felt herself growing sick.

“I-I’m so sorry m-my child,” the creature said as blood spewed from his mouth. “I’ve… cough … I’ve been a… a terrible father. Please… cough … forgive me… for… everything… Cha-

He coughed up some more of the loose blood which now filled up his throat.

“Char-”

He coughed again, and he began to choke. But it was only for a short moment, since almost as
quick as defusing a candle, the creature gave out one last gurgle before he seized all movements and his eyes became lifeless, dull and empty of life. The last thing they looked at, was at the frightened girl who had killed him.

Frisk let the knife fall from her hand, and it gave out a loud clang as it touched the floor. She didn’t even notice or care that the blood on her was turning into dust particles which fell lightly on the floor like a slow waterfall of a thousand tiny feathers. Then the creature’s yellow beard turned grey, and the horns became like sand. Afterwards, the fur and blood followed suit. In the end, all that lay on the floor was a dirty, ragged robe filled and surrounded by colourless dust.

Frisk fell down on her knees. She put her hands on her head and gave out a high pitch sounds similar to a person about to scream. Then she felt something crawl up her throat. She couldn’t stop. She couldn’t muster the strength to hold it in. It was coming up from her stomach like an avalanche of disgust. Frisk looked down on the ground and began to puke. She could identify her breakfast, her candy bar from yesterday and some brown mud amongst the foul pile. She felt another pull, and Frisk put her hands on her stomach and gave out another hurl.

It hurt, hurt plenty to empty her stomach like that, yet Frisk found herself unable to care for the pain. So many thoughts were in her mind, yet she somehow found herself also unable to think. It was like her mind was an empty train station surrounded by dozens of carriages, all heading its way but then taking a turn at the last moment.

She looked down at grey, dust-covered hands and it just dawned on Frisk these were hers, and thus her eyes began to water.

“Wow,” said Flowey, breaking the immense silence of the room.

Frisk didn’t bother to look at him. To her, it was like he wasn’t even in the room.

“That was… something,” Flowey continued.

He tried standing up before being reminded just how weak he was. The best he managed to do was crawl on the floor with his vine hands. It proved to be somewhat painful for him, yet he did it anyway.

“How is this possible?” Frisk asked no one in particular. “How did my hand manage to go through him like this? He was like 3 times my size and weight.”

“Oh yeah I forgot about that,” Flowey said. “Monster’s are apparently super weak to humans. Generally, that is. Human bodies are mostly made of water and mass, while a monster body is magical in nature. It also strengthens or weakens depending on their mood and will to fight. Unfortunately, most monsters are kind-hearted.”

He crawled in front of the pile and looked down at it analytically.

“Seems like deep down, he didn’t want to fight you after all,” he said. “If he did, he wouldn’t have fallen so easily.”

What Flowey said now just made Frisk feel infinitely worse. She began to sob and tears were falling faster down her face.

“Shame,” Flowey said. “Eh, it happens. So anyways let’s get going on.”

He turned around and crawled a few steps while grunting in pain before noticing the bag was in utter tatters.
“Looks like the bags gone,” he said. “Well, we’re back to my idea then eh?”

“Is that all you’re gonna say?” Frisk asked without looking up.

Flowey turned back around towards her.

“Excuse me?” he asked in confusion.

“I… said,” Frisk repeated, and this time there was a hint of fury in her voice. “Is that all you’re gonna say?”

She turned her head around and Flowey saw a young lady he barely recognized. Her eyes were red from tears, and her expression spoke grief and frustration. Flowey frowned condescendingly.

“Well what do you expect me to say?” he asked.

“I don’t fucking know?!” Frisk said, almost shouting. “Maybe something like “it wasn’t your fault Frisk” or… or… “I know this was bad, but it was either him or you” or… or just anything but-”

Frisk stopped mid-sentence and turned around to look down at the pile of dust on the floor. She put her hands on her head and began to shake lightly.

“I killed him,” she said. “I just… killed someone. Someone I-I didn’t mean to, and you’re acting like I only spilt some fucking milk or something.”

She turned around, and Flowey was shocked by the fury in her eyes.

“Have you got nothing for me?” she said to him.

Then Frisk went quiet, and the fury in her eyes faded like wind and returned to utter sorrow. She turned around back to the dust pile, and put her hands on her face and began to sob.

“I’m so sorry,” the murmured amongst the tears. “I’m so sorry.”

Flowey looked at her state and felt immense discomfort. He wasn’t sure what it was or why, but looking at her like this was extremely uncomfortable for him.

He sighed and began to crawl towards her, barely paying attention to the pain it gave him.

“Look,” he began as was beside her. “You’re right ok? This wasn’t your fault. You couldn’t have had any idea that humans were immensely strong compared to monsters.”

His voice became more stern.

“But accidents happen.” continued said. “We learn from now. No matter how big it was, the best thing to do is move on. What happened, happened. If you want to stay here and skulk then, by all means, be my guest. But we need each other alright? And I’m not leaving until you’re leaving.”

Frisk didn’t reply. She wasn’t crying anymore. Just stared at the ground in thoughtful silence.

“Alright,” Flowey said. “Ready when you are.”

He turned around and crawled a few steps away, and he noticed that the pain wasn’t as bad now.

“Hey my hands are getting stronger it seems,” he said. “Or vines in my case.”
There came a sound of something metallic being pulled up from the ground.

“Frisk?” Flowey asked curiously.

He turned around to her and saw an unusual sight. Frisk had picked up the red-hued knife and was now staring. It took a few moments for Flowey to realize what she was planning.

“No,” he began. “No, no, no, don’t you even dare thinking about doing it.”

“You said that when you had my power,” she began without looking up like she was speaking directly to the knife. “Resetting that is, you killed some people only to go back and befriend them afterwards.”

“Yes!” Flowey confirmed. “But then I knew how to load without having to do… well, THAT.”

“Well this is just the same, isn’t it?” she asked. “Just more painful.”

Flowey sighed.

“You have to move on sometimes y’ know?” he said. “You can’t just erase every single misstep you make.”

Frisk chuckled a bit.

“Why not?” she said and finally looked at him. “If I had the ability to, why not? Didn’t you do that often? Please don’t tell me you did. When you had the ability to cheat life like this without consequence, don’t tell me you didn’t use it on every opportunity.”

Flowey became quiet like a child caught in a lie.

“Yeah,” he admitted. “But that was then, and-”

“Please,” Frisk begged. “Just let me have this. Just this once, ok?”

Flowey looked at her in an almost loss of words. He was scared off this idea. Things were so much different now that he wasn’t sure of the full consequences of resets. But it was clear that Frisk would do it with or without him. He sighed in defeat and shrugged.

“Don’t have to get my permission,” he said. “Just be quick about it alright?”

Frisk breathed a bit easier after hearing that.

“Thank you,” she said.

She turned her head back around to face the knife. She felt a bit of relief of this choice, and dread at what she had to do to make it. She put both her hands on the handle and pulled the knife into the air, ready to strike.


“What?!” Frisk said and turned around.

Flowey waited a short moment as if he was trying to find out what he was going to say. He looked extremely nervous about it.

“If I don’t wake up again,” he began. “If I go back to stasis after you reset.”
Frisk was surprised when she noticed fear in his expression.

“Please don’t leave me behind ok?” Flowey said. “Don’t leave me alone with the old man. And even if I never wake up again while in your possession… still ok? I don’t care about which places you go, just take me with you either way. Can you do that for me? Please?”

Frisk looked at him in silence. Even though he had been a bit of a pain, she couldn’t find it in herself to refuse. Not one bit.

“Ok then,” she said. “I promise.”

Flowey looked immensely more relieved.

“Well I’ll leave you to it then,” he said.

Frisk turned around again to face the knife. She had had it floating in the air, ready to strike at any moment. Yet it felt hard. Hard, even though she knew she would be fine afterwards. She took a deep breath and prepared herself.

“Here goes nothing,” Frisk said to herself.

She closed her eyes and pierced herself through the throat. The pain and sudden impact forced her eyes back open. She dropped the knife on the floor as she fell down on all fours. She had expected her death to be much faster.

Frisk choked and choked while volumes of blood began to leak out her open throat. She instinctively put her hand over the wound, but even if she wanted to stop it, it was no use. She tried to speak, tried to say something, but all she did was gag and gag. The world became blurry and unclear, and she saw her life flash before her.

Frisk fell down face first into the pool of her own blood and vomit, and she gagged a bit more before the last parts of her life faded from her. She lay down on the floor, with open and expressionless eyes like the old monster. After a painful while, she stopped, and she felt the world go dark and cold. And then, she was gone.

Flowey looked at the now dead girl lying down in front of him. He felt unnatural vibrations build up in the walls, ceiling and air like the world was collapsing on itself.

“Welp, here we go,” he said to himself and closed his eyes.

...  

**Surprised to see you here Frisk. Didn’t expect to see you show up.**

**Well, it’s mandatory. Better this then having to go through detention again.**

...

**Is something the matter?**

**Nah. Haven’t been much into parties. You know that.**

**Well, you aren’t going to have much fun by just standing in a corner. Why don’t you try joining a little? Dance or even socialize a bit. I always say you need more friends.**
Thanks, but no thanks. I’ve got other things planned either way. I’m uh, waiting for someone.

A bit too young to start dating don’t you think eh?

Come on, I’m *****. Besides, it’s nothing like that ok?

I was just trying to be funny is all.

Well, that failed.

…

Who are you waiting for anyway?

…

You know who it is. Who else can it be?

…

“Stop! Listen to me! If you go through that door, you are putting yourself in far more danger than you can imagine!”

It took a while for Frisk to comprehend her new surroundings. She turned around and saw the old monster standing in the hallway. Frisk smiled as she felt immense relief.

*It worked*, she thought. *It fucking worked*.

The only bad thing, she didn’t go as far as she had expected or hoped.

“You have no idea what’s out there,” the creature continued. “If you leave the ruins then they… he… **Mickey** … will take you.”

Frisk felt a large amount of stirring in her backpack.

“I’m awake!” Flowey said in ecstasy and laughed. “I’m awake! Oh, thank the angel and the gods or whatever’s actually up there! Finally, some mercy in this miserable life!”

“Flowey…” the creature said, seeming to have finally noticed him. “My son.”

“Oh yeah,” Flowey said. “We still have to deal with this guy again.”

Frisk’s mind raced around at this moment as she tried her hardest to find something in the room that could stop the monster. Something that didn’t involve either the knife or killing him. That’s when she looked down at her feet and thought hastily of a crazy idea. She knew there was most likely a better idea, but in her panic, it was the best she could think of.

“I-I know you’re angry at me,” the creature said. “I shouldn’t have lied to your friend like that. Or to you for that matter. But I’ll make it up for you. I promise. I’ll even bake you your favourite pie, just the way you like it. Just come upstairs, and we’ll… Frisk? What are you doing?”

Frisk had pulled her left foot up and removed her shoe from it. She lost a bit of balance ripping it
off. Now she stood in front of the half-open door, with one bare foot and a shoe in her arm.

“What are you doing?” the creature asked gently.

“I’m terribly sorry in advance,” Frisk said.

Then she chucked her shoe at the monster’s face. The impact was larger than she expected, but a bit more than she hoped for. The creature wailed and fell on the floor, and blood began to spew out his snout. It took Frisk a moment to realize what she had done. She had broken old the creature’s snout.

“Great thinking Frisk!” Flowey exclaimed. “Now go!”

Frisk didn’t bother stopping to bewail on what she had done, and turned around and attempted to squeeze herself through the crack. She did feel a bit sorry, but she knew there was a better time for it.

At least he’s not dead, Frisk thought.

The opening was tight, so much so that she couldn’t even turn her head around.

“NO!” she heard the creature yell, followed by quick footsteps.

She was so close now, perhaps closer than last time.

“C’mon!” she grunted. “C’mon!”

But then she felt the large hand of the creature touch and pull her backpack again.

“No!” Frisk exclaimed. “Not again!”

But, as if God or the angels or whatever it was that was guiding her had decided to be merciful, the creature suddenly let go and fell backwards while an unnatural sound which sounded like dozens of voices screaming at once came from him.

“I knew it!” Flowey exclaimed.

“What’s happening back there?!” Frisk asked fearfully.

“He’s doing the face shifting thing again!” Flowey answered. “Now’s your chance! Go! GO!”

Frisk groaned as the last part of her squeezed through the opening. She almost fell on the floor once she came through.

“Close the door!” Flowey yelled almost immediately after they were out.

“Got it!” Frisk replied.

She turned around, put her hands on either side of the door, and began to push. It was a bit easier than opening it, but not by much. Frisk could feel her back was starting to ache now.

“Oohhhhh, hurry up Frisk!” Flowey said anxiously.

“I’m trying, I’m trying!” Frisk said.

As she continued to push, Frisk looked through the crack and saw the old monster stand up, with a
bloodied snout and fury in his eyes. He was like a demon rising from its hot. The creature’s hand began to glow and then they lit on fire.

“Oh god!” Frisk said instinctively.

She pushed much harder now. She was close now. The crack was so small, only a mouse could squeeze through. Frisk yelled and pushed harder, and the creature yelled back as he launched towards the door.

At precisely that moment, the large door closed on him, and he instead landed on a solid, stone wall. Once he got back on balance he began to pound the door with his fist, screaming like an angry ape with every punch.

Frisk stopped in her tracks and looked around frantically for something to keep the door shut. She noticed there were two handles on either side of the door. Then she saw a large, bronze crossbar, laying on the wall.

Frisk didn’t stop to consider or care why the crossbar was on this side and not the other one and quickly put it down on the handles. The creature pounded on the door again. It shook the door, but the crossbar stayed still on its hinges, and that’s when Frisk turned around and ran down the hallway.

“You want to leave!” the creature yelled. “Fine! Get out then! Get out! GET OUT!”

He gave out a loud scream and punched the door with all his might. The impact left a large crack on it.

The creature then fell down on his knees, tired. He breathed heavily and angrily, not seeming to notice the blood leaking down his snout. He noticed that the hallway was quiet, dark and indistinguishable from the rest of the ruins. His fury faded as he fell back into reality, and he could feel was shame.

“Fr-Frisk?” he feebly asked. “Flowey? Are you still there?

There came no answer.

“P-please don’t leave me. Ple-please don’t. I-I’m sorry I…I don’t know what came over me. I didn’t mean to be so angry. I uh… I-I don’t want to be alone again I… Please don’t let me be alone again. Not again. Not again!”

The creature began banging the door, to no avail. He then tried to push the door open, but it proved useless as well.

“Flowey! Frisk! Don’t leave me alone down here! I’m sorry! For everything! I didn’t mean to scare you or… or be so mad I…I… FLOWEY! SON! FRISK! ANYONE!

The fur on his cheek became wet with tears, he began to pound on the door so hard his knuckles began to bleed.

“COME BACK! IM SORRY, JUST PLEASE COME BACK! I DIDN’T MEAN TO! I DIDN’T MEAN TO! PLEASE DON’T LEAVE ME! PLEASE! Please! Please…”

He sank down on his knees in defeat, his face wet in tears.

“Oh gods,” he wailed.
He put his bloodied palms to his face and began to bawl.

“Oh, gods… I’m… I’m so alone,” he muttered. “Chara. Asriel. Don’t leave me again. Please don’t leave me again. Please, I-I can’t do this again. Please don’t leave me. Please don’t. Please. Please…”

“Wow he’s making a lot of noise back there,” Flowey said, looking at the door growing ever more distant. “Man, I knew that creepy face thing had something to do with your resets. We got incredibly lucky back there, eh?”

Frisk didn’t answer. She didn’t chuckle or even sneer. Just walked forward emotionlessly like a soulless automaton. Flowey noticed it and couldn’t understand why. He also realized that Frisk didn’t seem frightened anymore. In fact, she seemed confident to walk now. Flowey couldn’t ignore it. He felt he had to address her strange behaviour somehow.

“Frisk is there-”

“Let’s just keep going,” she quickly said, cutting him off.

Flowey frowned and looked back down the hall. The door was so far away now. You could barely see it.

“Is it because of what happened earlier-”

“Stop,” Frisk said softly. “Just… stop. I just… it's just that…”

She sighed.

“Sorry,” Frisk said. “I just don’t wanna talk about it. Let’s just keep going and… focus on what’s ahead for now, ok?”

“Alright. If you say so.”

Flowey looked at the distant door behind them, which was so far away now that it would have been nearly impossible to spot if you didn't know about its existence. But Flowey’s thoughts were elsewhere now, on something that had been growing for the past few minutes that he now found impossible to ignore. It was an awful sensation he was feeling, not an exterior one like the discomfort of a bug crawling up his stem, or the sting of a leaf falling off him. The pain was inside of him, yet it was not of the physical sort. He felt it crawling in his soul like fear did before he knew his powers, but the strangest aspect of it was that it was also utterly familiar. Like he knew this sensation very much in a previous life. Could this awful sensation be… guilt?

No, it couldn’t be. He couldn’t feel any guilt. Not for another person that is. That would mean empathy and empathy was something he absolutely shouldn’t be physically able to have, no wanted how much he wanted it. Yet, he felt different. Different ever since he fell into a coma, and much more after Frisk woke him from it. Could his missing emotions be growing again? Was the universe finally kind enough to give him back what he had been wishing for in over a decade? For the first time in a long while, Flowey felt incredibly hopeful. But he dismissed it almost immediately. Not much good came from hope he thought. Not in this world at least. But for the time being, Flowey felt in a strange sense, happy for feeling so bad.

Frisk emerged from the hallway, and entered a large open area, not unlike the one she was in when
she fell. Only now, Frisk didn’t have the energy to wonder about it. At the other end of this large opening, there was another large stone door. Frisk sighed once she saw it.

“Another door?” she said. “Alright. Let’s get to pushing.”

Thankfully though, this one was much lighter than the last one. After only pushing it a little bit, a heavy dose of cold, fresh air blew through, and both Frisk and Flowey realized just how heavy the air in the ruins had been.

On this other side of this door was snow. Snow, and dozens of trees reaching far, far away. For a moment, Frisk felt a bit overjoyed she thought she had finally made it out of the mountain. But then she looked up from out of the door and saw a distant cave ceiling. Not to mention, Frisk knew it was only September.

“Still underground are we?” Frisk asked.

“I’m afraid so,” replied Flowey.

Frisk sighed.

“How far does it go?” she asked.

“As far as our eyes can see, if I recall,” Flowey said. “These caverns are much wider than the mountain would suggest. That’s because it reaches deeper, and farther, and if that’s not enough, the air is made of magic and so some of the rules don’t work the same here as on the surface. For example, east down here could mean west above, and going right could mean going up. and so on and so forth”

Frisk took a deep breath, taking all this information in.

“All right,” she said. “So where are we headed.”

“The exit we are looking for,” Flowey continued. “Is near the end of the caverns, at the top of the king’s castle in the capital. It will take a long time to get there. Days if not weeks. You might die. A lot. Be it by some monster that wants to stop you, or some deadly traps or hazards. My memory is unfortunately still not complete, so I don’t know much of what we will encounter besides the general gist of things. Not to mention, lots must have changed for the past 5-6 years so even if my memory was perfect, it might have still not been enough. But I still remember the map of this place from top to bottom. Landscapes don’t change in only half a decade. I can tell you, the king’s castle will be one of the hardest points, but from what I recall, it will not be the hardest obstacle of this journey. That belongs to Mickey.”

“Who is this Mickey anyway?” Frisk asked.

“Wish I could tell you,” Flowey said. “I don’t remember much about Mickey besides his name, unfortunately. All I know is that we have to stay clear of him, no matter what.”

“Can’t be that bad,” Frisk said. “Not with my powers I mean.”

“Well see about that,” Flowey said. “Hope it won’t be too much of a nuisance though.”

Frisk smiled a little now. She looked down at the wide open and snowy area and felt a rush of determination.

“Alright,” she said. “Let's go.”
She took a deep breath and walked out the door. It was clear to her that their journey had just begun.

“Y’know?” Flowey began as she stepped on the snow “I got a feeling. A feeling that this is perhaps just the start of something wonderful.”

Chapter End Notes

So I finally discovered the real reason as to why I write so long.
I am just very lazy.

But anyways, after a long while, I am finally done with the ruins arc. This chapter here is the longest by far, spanning over 17 pages on my Drive. I was to be honest, I am not really sure about it. After I finish every chapter, I have a tendency to go over it from beginning to end to see if there is something I don't like and change it, or maybe see if there are some typos of sorts. It is perhaps the most boring part of this hobby, but since I don't have an editor, I basically do it all by myself.

Now since this chapter was like super long, I basically spent the last hour just going over it and, I kind of became tired and skimmed through a big part of it. So in short, there may be something I am not happy about later, and I'll probably go back to this story and edit it a bit. I'm also afraid that I made Frisk a bit too unlikable in this, but I just wanted to portray an emotional teenager discovering that someone she was beginning to like betrayed her, so I'm hoping I achieved that.

But anyway, we are finally done with the ruins arc after a few moments. The next chapter though, won't be for the Snowdin forest though. Not yet at least. You see, in between the end and beginning of every "arc" so to speak, there will be a short interlude chapter. These chapters will follow different characters, and they all relate to the main story somehow. Maybe they are foreshadowing future events, or they'll introduce characters that will appear much later or both. But they all relate to the story. You'll just have to figure out how by yourselves. At least until it's revealed of course. I ain't telling what the first interlude is about, except that it will be a bit... well... magical.

But anyway, I hope you guys and gals stick around in the future and updates will come soon.
Interlude 1: An old "man" named Gil

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Interlude 1: An old “man” named Gil

London 14th November

The year 2115

Gil sat down in his cushioned couch, frowning like usual, while in front of him stood Melissa, his apprentice, with her hands folding in irritation. Melissa was a young woman of 21, with dark ebony skin and long raven black hair let loose on her shoulders. She was dressed in a blood-red sleeveless shirt, and inconspicuous sky-blue jeans of cheap, organic material. In short, nothing that really made her stand out from a woman of her age.

If she looked like the average girl of the modern age, then Gil was like the residue of an old century that refused to die, which would also describe him nicely to anyone who knew him properly. It was hard to believe that these two people were even from the same time period, much less being in the same room.

Gil had the look of a decrepit old man in his 80s. His long, dirty hair was like white seaweed, his sickly skin was elderly and bony with a soft green hue on its pale complexion, and his fishy sea coloured eyes looked wide and squinty. His attire was on a much fancier side, however, consisting of a complex looking night robe of smooth silk fitting an old king coloured violet with yellow patterns and markings on it, while on his foot wore simple, yellow sandals. He leaned a bit forward, holding himself still with a cane of dark brown wood, which seemed to show no signs of splinters or any imperfections.

Gil looked at the young woman in front of him, noting the way she seemed upset not at what she had done, but at the fact that she knew he didn’t approve of it, and he gave out a deep sigh.

"This is why I never had any children", he thought.

The heavy November snow splattered against the windows like rubber bullets and melted into wet patters that overlayed on top of each other over and over again. The neon lights of the city shone in the night in all the rainbow colours, and in the distance could be heard the sounds of cars and other vehicles breaking through the snow. Not many cars came through this neighbourhood though, since it was old and in ruins with most of the buildings being abandoned, filled with squatters or used as gang hangouts. This building, in particular, looked from the outside as broken down the rest of the ones in the street. On the inside though, it looked as fancy and clean as a rich man's manor, although much smaller and with only one floor.

In the living room of this house stood the current duo, staring at each other in silence. Both knew what was going to come next, and neither of them looked forward to it.
“So,” began Gil. “I guess I don’t have to remind you why we are here, having this conversation do I?”

Melissa didn’t answer. Just stood in silence, her arms still folded. Gil shook his head in shame.

“How many times did we go over this thing in this very room?” he continued. “How many times did I have to remind you of the consequences that the reckless use of your gifts could entail? Never, though, has this discussion mattered as much as it does now. Frankly, I had suspected you would do something like this sooner or later, yet still, I am deeply disappointed in you either way.”

Melissa scoffed as if to say that she expected him to make those exact words.

“It’s not like anybody saw,” she said.

“Of course no one saw,” replied Gil. “Except for the 10 or so bystanders. And the boy you rescued of course.”

“You know I erased his and all their memories the first thing afterwards,” Melissa said.

“And that was good,” Gil replied. “Very smart and quick thinking of you in fact. But do you know what can’t be erased so easily? Do you know the type of memories that in this day and age can’t be removed as simple as flicking a wrist, no matter how powerful a mage you are and even after the person making them has long since died?”

He leaned a bit forward as he wanted her to especially hear this next part.

“Photographs,” he said simply. “Photographs and videos.”

“Look, even if some guy manages to record this thing and upload it online, no one is going to think it’s real,” Melissa said.

“I am not talking about some random sod with a cheap phone recorder!” Gil said strongly. “And you know that of course. There are live cameras everywhere in this city. In this country even. You can’t go piss in an alleyway in this day and age without risking your entire ordeal being uploaded live to the government’s database.”

“I’ve told you already, there were no live cameras pointing in his direction, I checked,” Melissa said, sounding frustrated. “How many times do I have to tell you this?”

“So if there was a camera pointed in his direction, you definitely wouldn’t have saved him either way eh?” Gil asked sarcastically.

Melissa went quiet and looked away.

“Don’t lie to me,” Gil said. “I know you would have.”

“So even if I saved him in front of a camera, so what?” Melissa asked.

Gil looked incredibly insulted by what she just said.

“So what?!” he asked. “Have you learned nothing in these past few months?! Have you learned nothing your entire life?!”

“I really doubt that within the countless minutes of footage that’s uploaded every day,” Melissa began and looked back at him. “They would have even noticed anything wrong in the few seconds of a guy laying down then standing up when some random woman touched him a bit.”
“Even if it was just an inkling of footage,” the old wizard emphasized. “Even if only a single person saw, we can’t risk anything we do getting out. Not after all this effort to conceal it.”

“So you are saying I should have just let him die?” Melissa asked.

Gil became silent.

“Should I have?” Melissa pressed him.

“Yes,” Gil said simply. “Yes, you should have. He wouldn’t have benefited us in the least, and so you were in no position to help him. You didn’t even cause his state, not even indirectly. He would have died, and neither he nor anyone around would have had any knowledge of the existence either of us. This thing we share here is more valuable than the life of a single boy.”

Melissa scoffed and rolled her eyes. She had suspected him to say something like that, yet she hated hearing it nonetheless.

“When I came all the way here to be your student, all those months ago” she began. “I expected you to be better than this. My father—”

“Amal may have been a great man,” interrupted Gil and stood up from his couch. “But he was also stubborn, dimwitted and incredibly short-sighted for a man of his age. His kindness and sense of justice was an admirable trait at times sure, but due to it he also constantly risked everything I, his mother, and all the other had built this past millennium. Yet every time we tried to warn him about it, about the dangers the reckless use of his powers could bring to the order of the world, he just smirked looked the other way. And now, many years later, tell me. Where is he now?”

Melissa looked at him, mouth agape in shock. Off all the insults and complaints Gil had ever given her these past few months, this was without a doubt the worst thing he had ever uttered to her so far.

“How dare you?!” she asked him. “He was my father!”

“So?” Gil said simply. “Just because he was your father doesn’t mean he’s above criticism, alive or dead. To his credit though, he taught you well in terms of the arcane, but his way of life, the way he has drilled into your brain, is outdated. Hell, it was outdated long before you were even born. The world changes, and thus the rules have to change as well. If you don’t approve of my methods, then you can go. Go. I’m not stopping you.”

He leaned uncomfortably close to her, so close that you could barely squeeze a palm between them.

“And if you do,” Gil continued with much more emphasis on his words. “Then good luck finding yourself another magician.”

He walked past her and headed for the living room door. Melissa unfolded her arms and turned her hands into fists by her side. She wanted to shout at him, maybe insult him with the vilest insults her deep heart could manage, but Melissa knew that there would be no good from it. She was taught that a long time ago.

Gil opened the fancy door to his room and then stopped in his tracks. He turned his head slightly around and said:

“If you want to stay as my pupil, then we’ll continue your training at 12 o’clock in the morning. You know where to find me. Let me know when you come to a decision until then. You are
dismissed. Good night.”

With that said, he went through the door and closed it behind him.

About an hour had passed since that moment, and Gil was now sitting by his lonesome in the living room chair. The snowstorm had gotten calmer and was now just a light drip on the windows. Gil had also turned off the holographic fireplace, and the ticking antique style digital clocks. Gil always liked the silence. It reminded him of when he was young, a long long time ago, before the era of bustling cities and worldwide connection. Partly why he picked such a desolate place to be his home. He considered picking an abandoned farmstead as his place at first, but this house had a deep personal meaning to him.

Gil tried not to think about what had occurred in this very room not so long ago. Gil was a very patient man and could handle more than a single outburst. He believed that this patience is what had kept him alive for so long, that it’s what kept him determined.

He looked outside the windows at the buildings covered in multicoloured lights. He found it hard to believe that this was the same world he was born in. He reflected on how much it changed in just a few centuries, and now he wished he could live to see how it would change in the next few. Unfortunately, his magic seemed to be reaching its limits, and his age was now finally starting to catch up with him after all this time. Gil began to realize that fully once his eyesight became worse and worse in the past decades. He calculated that he had only about a century to live, two if he was lucky. But Gil had accepted that fact. He had accepted it a long time ago, that he was one of the last fading sparks of a long-forgotten era.

There were no active cameras outside pointing in the direction of the house, Gil noticed. Still, just to be sure, Gil walked up to the red velvet curtains and closed them. Then he walked back and sat down his cushion chair and gave out a short sigh. It was finally a good time for him to shed this disguise.

He removed his shoes with his feet and loosened up his gown. His grey hair turned greener and oily, and his skin became and paler. The gills on his stomach were the first to appear. He felt them open up to his lungs, and breathe out some loose air. Next, his feet began to lengthen and the toes fuse with one another, forming what looked two like flesh coloured fins. His hands then followed suit and became webbed. His ears became fin-like, and his mouth began to elongate like a fish head. Then his teeth became sharp as a piranha, and at last, his transformation was complete as his skin took on a scaly texture. Gil gave out a nice relaxing sigh as his veil had been taken off finally, like socks he had to wear all day. He leaned his head on the top of the cushioned chair and dozed into a short sleep.

There came a sudden knock on the living room door, and a well built looking man wearing a suit with clay looking white skin came through.

“Apologies,” the man said immediately with a stoic tone. “I didn’t know you were shedding tonight master.”

“Wallace,” replied Gil, awake again now. “It’s ok, you may come in. What is the matter?”

“Not much really,” Wallace replied, still showing no emotions. “Just came to let you know that Melissa has informed me through the phone that she is going to stay here as your apprentice.”

“Hmm, that’s great,” Gil said. “Is there anything else?”
Wallace became unusually quiet for a moment.

“Yes,” he said after a while. “In fact, there is one more thing.”

_Oh boy_ , Gil thought.

“Alright, out with it,” he demanded.

Wallace walked into the room proper and stood besides Gil in his chair. There he turned his entire body around and leaned down a bit to his master.

“I couldn’t help but overhear… the dialogue you had with miss Melissa in the last hour,” Wallace admitted.

“Are you eavesdropping again, Wallace?” Gil asked.

“Apologies,” the butler replied. “It was not my intention to. My hearing is unfortunately too good, so I could hear everything that occurred between you two even behind two walls.”

“Nah it’s ok,” said Gil. “So was that all you’re gonna say or is there more?”

“There is more,” said Wallace.

Gil sighed, sensing what was coming.

“I passed by Melissa as she came from the living room and headed outside,” Wallace continued. “She seemed to be in a hurry as she didn’t seem to notice even bumping into me. Either that or she was in much emotional distress, which I am more inclined to believe as I had managed to glimpse her face before she left. It looked like she was a bit angry and sad, most likely related to some of the things you said about late sir Amal, her father, just a few minutes before. So I know I wasn’t made to give such advice, but if I may dare suggest, for the sake of not just her wellbeing but yours as well, that the next time you meet her, which could be tomorrow if the next hours will be without any issues, that you should perhaps find it in you to apologize to her and-”

“That’ll be all Wallace, good night,” interrupted Gil.

Wallace adjusted himself back without hesitation and gave out a small bow.

“I’ll be in my quarters if you need me,” he said. “Of course, you can always just call me from your room if it’s an emergency. Or if you just won’t bother standing up like usual.”

“That’ll be duly noted, thank you very much,” Gil said and chuckled.

The clay skinned butler bowed again and left the room, leaving Gil alone once again.

Gil gave out another sigh, this one more exasperated than the last.

_What would I do without you Wallace?_ he thought. _A lot of things maybe. But you keep me sane at least. That’s all that matters about you in my eyes._

Gil lay his head back on his chair and closed his eyes. He didn’t dream much, not anymore that is, but he at least knew the value of sleep. This was a long day for him, and he hoped that the next day was at least a lot less tiring.
Barely ten minutes had passed until there was a knock on the front door. Gil opened his large eyes immediately and sighed in frustration.

“Wallace!” he yelled. “The door!”

“On it!” the butler yelled back.

“If it’s yet another of those preacher drones!” Gil yelled. “Then tell it to shove off! I’ve got enough problems as is!”

Gil lay his head back to try another attempt at sleeping. After about a minute, there came a knock on the living room door and Wallace peaked through.

“There is a young man out here,” he said. “Irish judging by his accent. He says he wants to speak to you personally.”

Who the hell could that be? Gil thought.

“Tell him he’s picked the wrong house,” he told his butler. “I’ve got no meeting planned with anyone.”

“Sir,” Wallace continued. “He says he knows you’re a magician.”

Gil turned his head around in shock.

What? he thought. Did someone see Melissa’s dumb hero act? Of course, someone did. That someone must’ve tracked her down and followed her to me.

Gil sighed.

“I warned that lady,” he said. “I told her something like this could happen. Fine, I’ll say hi to him for a moment. Shut him up if I can.”

He stood up from his chair and went out of the living room, but not before quickly putting back on his human guise.

“I should warn you though,” Wallace said after him. “This young man had some strange, unfamiliar aura to him. Might be magical in nature-”

“Yeah, yeah,” Gil said as he headed to the front door.

This man is going to be a perfect example to use tomorrow; Gil thought. She might now think twice before using her powers in public again.

He opened it up and a breeze of cold air followed by some snow came blasting through the door, and Gil saw a strange figure on the other side. What Gil poor eyesight could only make out at first was a strange black silhouette with blinding lights in the background. Then he blinked a bit, and the silhouette turned into a clearer figure. The figure was tall and dressed top to bottom in a thin, dark green winter jacket, and his face was hidden from a large hood he sported. Both his hands were inside the jacket pocket.

“Who are you?” Gil asked grumpily. “What do you want.”

“I’d like to come inside, first of all,” the mysterious man spoke.

The man spoke with a deep voice that had a tinge of an Irish accent in it, just like Wallace
suspected.

“Look, if it’s something you can tell me right now then out with it,” Gil replied.

“Well aren’t you impatient,” the man said. “Funny. I had heard that patience was your strongest
trait. Or did I confuse you with some other wizard?”

*Wait, he can’t be talking about soul traits, is he?* Gil thought. *And what does he mean by heard of
me? Haven’t I’ve been perfect in erasing any traces of my life?*

“Did you just call me a wizard eh?” Gil asked back, trying to sound befuddled. “ Aren’t you a bit
too old to believe in fairy tales?”

The strange man chuckled in response.

*Is he amusing himself?* Gil thought.

“You don’t have to pretend Gil,” the younger one said. “I already know who you are.”

Gil felt a fear growing within him.

*How does he know my name?* Gil thought. *How does he know any of this?*

“Look boy,” he said with a tone of confidence. “You are not the first crazy or junkie to come
 barging on this door, asking about some… voodoo magic or shit, and you definitely won’t be the
last. Whatever you heard of me, it’s bullshit. Plain and simple. Now shove off, and have a good
night.”

But just as Gil began to close the door, the wind suddenly increased in power and the door blew
wide open, nearly off its hinges. Next, the mysterious man pulled up a strange stick from his
pocket and aimed it besides Gil. Before Gil could react, the stick suddenly turned into a spear
which extended to unnatural length and impaled the wall on the other side of the front door. Gil
watched all this unfold in confusion and shock.

“How did you do that?” he asked.

The man’s spear pulled backwards and shrunk back to the size of a stick.

“You tell me,” he replied. “I thought you were an expert in these sort of things.”

Gil was suddenly reminded of what Wallace had just told him which he dismissed.

*This young man had some strange, unfamiliar aura to him.*

He looked at the mysterious stranger and raised his hand to sense his soul. At first, there was
nothing unusual about it, despite the incredibly high determination in it which was still possible in
normal humans. Then he felt something else. Something that he had almost forgotten the sensation
of. It entwined the stranger’s soul and seemed bound to it like a conjoined twin. Yet, Gil found it
hard to place what it was. Then he looked into his past to try and find something he could
remember resembling it. Then after a few moments, he found it and was hit by an immense shock.
This sensation was that of a monster’s soul.

*No*, Gil thought. *It can’t be*.

“You are… a halfbreed,” he said in disbelief.
The stranger chuckled.

“Hope so,” he said. “Never knew my father. It would make my life a lot more interesting.”

“I thought we wiped out the last of your filth ages ago,” Gil said.

The man chuckled again.

“Looks like you missed a few,” he said. “Funny you should refer to them like that. *Filth.* Especially since that if the stories are true, you are only half-human yourself eh? It doesn’t look like they called you The Merman because you had a tail for legs. Doubt they were referring to the one between your legs either.”

*How the hell does he know about my silly title?* Gil thought.

“Well, what makes you think I won’t simply kill you right here and there?” the old man asked.

“Fine then,” the man said nonchalantly. “Do it. Of course, the cars passing by here in a while might wonder why there is suddenly a dead man covered in blood lying on your doorstep.”

“You’ll just turn to dust,” lied Gil. “And then the fools will think you’re snow.”

The young man became quiet for a moment and then chuckled once more.

“We both know that’s not how it works,” he said. “That is, of course, assuming you're right and I am in fact a “halfbreed” as you say. But even if halfbreed corpses really do turn to dust, I have a feeling you wouldn’t kill me either way.”

“Why not?” asked Gil.

The man became silent once again. This time, it seemed like the silence was due to the fact that he was looking for the right words to say.

“If you really wanted to kill me,” the man began after a short while. “You would have invited me in the second you suspected I was a halfbreed and then done it in quiet. I am no match for you, and you know that. In fact, you could burn me to ash right here and then let the wind take the remains. And yet… you haven’t. Why?”

Gil didn’t speak. He sensed that it was true of the stranger in that he was much more powerful than him, yet it was also true he did nothing. He tried to think of a justification why but realised he was stumped. He wasn’t sure he even knew the answer himself.

“You feel lonely don't you?” the man suddenly asked.

Gil felt those words suddenly hit him in a place he didn’t know he had. It was like the stranger managed to grasp the reason for his actions before Gil even knew of it himself.

“What makes you say that?” Gil asked.

The stranger shrugged.

“Why wouldn’t you be?” he asked. “Stories say that ever since the great purge, you decided to keep your life so you could use your powers for the good of the world, even though you were one of the so-called “filth” yourself. For a long time after that, you have believed that you were the last of your kind. The last halfbreed. It truly must be lonely to wander the earth for dozens of lifetimes with no-one that can share your experience.”
“But now,” the stranger continued. “Suddenly after a long time, comes a mysterious person, a possible halfbreed not to mention, into your life. I have come for your help, and your help in particular even while knowing of your infamous reputation with your own kind, and yet I have shown you no ill will. Not only that, as I said earlier, I know I am no match for your powers. And yet…”

The strangers spread his arms wide in the air.

“Here I am,” he continued. “So, what will it be, old man? Will you help me?”

Gil became silent again. He felt a bit angry at this stranger, mostly due to his cocky nature and the way he seemed to know so much about him somehow, but not just when it came to his history. The stranger was right, as much as Gil didn’t want to admit it. He really did feel lonely, and the way the stranger spoke about it sent a strange sadness into him. Gil gave out a short sigh, and for the first time in a while, he decided against his usual best interests.

“You talk much don’t you?” he began. “Fine. You win. For now.”

The stranger chuckled.

“That wasn’t so hard was it?” he asked.

“Yeah, yeah,” Gil replied. “So what do you want?”

The stranger became quiet like he felt uncomfortable answering that question. He put his hand on his hood and pulled it off finally revealing his face. From what Gil could discern with his weak eyesight, he looked for the most part like he was a normal-looking man in his thirties with a trimmed beard and clear blue eyes, but there seemed to be something strange about his head, which the growing fog and Gil’s weakening eyesight made it hard for him to discern what it was. What it seemed to resemble though, was that it looked like the man a pair of hairy brown tentacles growing out of his head.

Then, the stranger said:

“I want to become your apprentice.”

Chapter End Notes

Well, this is perhaps the fastest update I have ever made.

Anyways, here is the first interlude of the Shattering. I have been looking forward to writing this part for a long time. Now how it actually relates to the main story, I ain’t telling. It will become clear later, but in the meantime, you may theorize what the deal is with this weird old man and his companions. And what is up with that stranger in the end (assuming the implication I made wasn't obvious enough).

As for the main story, the next chapter will obviously be the Snowdin forest, no major spoilers there I hope. We’ll also meet a bunch of popular characters, and there are one or two surprises I have planned there. But unfortunately, yet again, you'll have to wait a while. Many of you that follow me may have noticed that I am "rebooting" the politics bear story, which will be the main reason for the delay. The first chapter won't
be that different however, it's just that it's been so long since I've made updates to it that I thought I might as well just call it a reboot at this point. So that's another story you can look forward to, and I will work on that as soon as I can.
I am also still working on my original short story, which I'll try to finish before the spring break is over.

So until then, I'll see you next time.

Late edit, December 1st, 2019:

I fixed some typos and spelling issues I noticed as I checked over this chapter again. I also added a few more extra words where I thought it was appropriate.
Chapter 2: The Forest - Part 1

As the cool air touched her cheeks and the heavy snow filled her autumn-boots with each step, it just dawned on Frisk that she had never been in such a snowy place her entire life. Every tree, every rock, every breeze in the air seemed to just scream winter, or at least what Frisk imagined winter used to look like in her world many decades ago. To her, this forest and air felt incredibly enchanting and unreal, and these things mixed with the distant cavern roof above with glowing gems looking like stars made the place feel incredibly vast and open. It was no longer a cavern at this point, but rather a whole new world.

On the other hand though, with its vastness came the fear of the unknown, and like in the old city in the ruins, Frisk felt like there were eyes at every corner, and inside every dark place looking back at her. It, strangely enough, made her feel more dread than the claustrophobic hallways, as in those she at least knew all possible exists and vantage points. This time she wasn’t alone though, and she was very happy about it.

“You, uh, remember this place Flowey?” she asked, mostly to break the eerie silence.

Flowey didn’t answer, but Frisk knew he was still there as she felt him stirring in her backpack. He was stirring unusually much.

“Uhh, Flowey?” she asked. “What are you doing?”

“Oh, n-nothing,” Flowey said, trembling. “Just, uh, freezing my stems off over here. Gods, I always hated this place. The cold is unbearable for a flower like me-no especially for a flower like me! We are summer creatures for crying out loud. Made for heat and water, not this meddlesome cold and ice! Ever see a sunflower growing in the winter? Hmm? Of course not!”

“Wait are you gonna die?” Frisk asked, feeling a bit worried.

“Obviously not,” Flowey said. “If I was weak enough to wither in this breeze, I never would have asked you to take me with you out of here. Thankfully, I am not just an ordinary sunflower, far from it in fact. Now if you’ll excuse me, I think I am going to close myself off from the world for a while.”

“Wait what are you-”

But before Frisk could finish her question, she was immediately answered by the sound of the flower rumbling and a zipper closing in her bag. Then he stopped.

“Ahh, that’s a bit better,” said a muffled voice in her bag. “Still not perfect though. Still just a tiny bit of breeze in here though, and dark. But hey, better to be in complete darkness than in complete... uh, coldness or whatever it’s called. But anyway Frisk, if you’re lost and need me, then just shake the bag or pull me out or something. The cold here is not much, but it will most likely
“Alright, I’ll keep those things in mind,” replied Frisk.


“Forget it,” Frisk said to herself.

The road ahead of her was distinctly carved out, so not only was it hard to lose your way, but it also signified that this underground forest wasn’t completely abandoned. Once Frisk realized that she just felt worse. Even though she knew that death was not final for her, the mystery and fear of the unknown still got to her.

Then she stopped in her tracks as she noticed that there was something unusual on the road. It was hard to spot normally, but since there was not much going on around at the moment, Frisk noticed it as soon as she looked down.

“What the hell?” she muttered to herself.

There were strange, small footprints on the road. At first, Frisk thought that these were her footprints signifying that she was going in circles. Feeling a bit nervous at this thought, Frisk put her foot on top of one print to test this theory. Fortunately for her, the footprints didn’t match her size, proving to be much smaller, likely belonging to a young kid or someone with dwarfism. But then she looked closer at the footprints and realized they were fairly recent. A tinge of dread filled her insides.

“Ok, that’s not good,” she whispered to herself.

Frisk continued her walk down the road. After a few more meters, she noticed that the strange footprints seemed to curve a bit. She stopped and examined their path and saw that they now curved outward from the road and led to somewhere far into the forest.

She looked back down the road ahead and saw that it ended on a large, wooden fence. Next, she looked at the beaten path and saw it lead into the depths of the forest. Now despite her growing worry, her curiosity also grew, and Frisk felt an urge to at least check. Then, even knowing how dangerous it could be, Frisk couldn’t resist her curiosity and headed off the path.

“What’s the worst that can happen?” Frisk said to herself, as she trudged through the thick snow. “Well, I could die for one. Not that it matters anyway. Yeah… still not used to that fact.”

The outward path grew thicker and thicker with snow, making hard for her to navigate. With every step, Frisk could feel the snow fill her boots and wet her socks and jeans. After a while, she stopped, ankle-deep in snow and feeling tired from the effort.

“Fuck it,” she said to herself. “Not worth getting lost over.”

But before she turned around, she noticed something in a bush ahead beside one tree. The footprints led to it, and there was clearly something inside. Some sort of weird shape. Frisk could once again not resist her curiosity now and continued to follow the prints. As Frisk closed in on the bush, the first thing she noticed was the terrible smell that grew all of a sudden. It smelled like something, or someone was rotting.

Frisk didn’t think much of it, at first. Then she saw the strange thing in the bush much clearer, and her mind went immediately into dark places. It seemed to resemble a figure wearing piles of dirty
Is that... what I think it is? Frisk thought.

Frisk felt she had to know. She was frightened, of course, but she felt she had to know if her mind was right. So she crept closer, and closer, till she was right above the bush. Then she looked inside and gasped.

“Oh my god!” she cried and backed a few steps away in shock.

There was a skeleton in the bush. A human skeleton, no doubt, about the size of a young child. It wore a blue winter jacket with a grey hood and a plain white t-shirt underneath, visible since the jacket was open. It also wore black, short sport jeans and grey slippers. The bones were unusually thick, and the rib cage swelled outward suggesting that in life, the owner of it used to be fat.

“What’s going on out there Frisk?!” Flowey yelled from the bag, having heard her shocked cries.

“Th-there's a dead body here!” Frisk said. “A human kid I think!”

“What?! Are you sure?!”

“Yeah!” Frisk confirmed. “It certainly looks like one! I mean, monster’s turn to dust when they die right?! Or at least, that’s how I seem to understand it. Do they even have skeletons?!”

“Well, sort of! They don’t really work or look exactly like human ones do though! Plus, the bones dissolve once they are no longer in the body! Just like all the other things inside of them do!”

“Oh, it’s definitely a human then!” Frisk said, feeling a lot more uncomfortable now. “God, poor kid.”

“Any idea what caused it?!”

“No clue! I’m not really a forensic expert or anything! I can tell though that he or she’s been dead a long time, obviously since they are a skeleton, and judging by the smell… ugh … they seem to be still rotting! But… that makes no sense! The footsteps leading to it were fairly recent! If they’ve been dead a long time, then- wait! What the hell?!”

“What is it, Frisk?!” Flowey asked. “They’re not standing up or anything, right?!”

“There’s… something weird about the eyes!” Frisk stated. “Or eye sockets rather! Don’t know why I didn’t notice it until now, but it’s like they are… closed!”

“Closed?!”

“Yeah, it’s kind of hard to explain!” Frisk said. “I’m gonna take a better look!”

She crept closer to the body, trying to get a better understanding of this strange thing. As she did, she noticed another strange thing about the body. It was like it was moving up and down similar to a person breathing in their sleep. Frisk ignored it, assuming it was simply the soft wind.

Then she came closer and could finally see clearly what the things on the eye sockets were like. They seemed to resemble something eerily familiar.

“Hang on,” Frisk said to herself. “Are these… eyelids-”

On exactly the moment before she could finish her sentence, something happened. It took Frisk a
few moments process what exactly what was happening, and even then she wasn’t sure what it was.

First, the skeleton suddenly began rumbling. Then there came a loud, yet strange noise from deep within it, sounding incredible like groaning. It was enough to make Frisk freeze in her steps. This strange movement of the body made it seem like it was a living being, and the human girl stared at the entire event in confusion and fear. Then, just as abruptly as it began, the body seized all movements and became almost still again.

“The shit was that!” Frisk said.

Then the skeleton opened its “eyelids”.

“Gah!” Frisk cried in surprise.

The shock hit her like a truck, so much so that she lost her balance and fell back first onto a thick pile of snow. The flower in her backpack took immediate notice of it since the fall nearly crushed him.

“What the heck Frisk?! Are you trying to kill me back there?! Frisk?! Frisk?”

Frisk didn’t even notice the flowers whines and complaints, as she stared at the skeleton. It was beginning to stand up.

“What the fuck!” Frisk yelled. “WHAT THE FUCK!”

“Frisk?! What the hecks happening-”

And without hesitation, she began to run. She waded clumsily through the piles of snow as best and as quickly as she could. The weight of the snow was immense, much more than any snow or winter Frisk had ever experienced, and it caused her to occasionally stumble, but she always managed to push herself back on her feet.

“Frisk, what’s going on-”

“The thing’s alive!” Frisk said immediately. “The thing is fucking alive!”

Just before she reached the road, she turned her head around just to peek and saw the skeleton standing upwards, with snow falling off and out of it. It stared at her with pitch black eye sockets that looked like they had no bottom.

Then before she could turn around, Frisk found herself falling. She whined again as she felt herself fall onto solid snow.

“Gah, fuck,” the winced.

Frisk looked up and saw that she was back on the road. Then without even thinking about it, she stood up and began to run towards the fence. The wooden fence grew taller and taller ahead, and Frisk now saw that there was a gate where the road led. Whether it was open or not, Frisk didn’t care at the moment. She was just gonna smash through it if possible.

As she closed in on the fence, she glanced behind and saw the living skeleton in the distance just about reaching the road, and it looked at her. To Frisk, there was no doubt about it now. It was after her.
Frisk turned back to face the road and saw that the gate was just a few steps away, and at that moment, she braced and positioned herself to burst through. But even with all the strength she had managed to muster at the last moment, the fence proved stronger, causing her to just hurt herself as she clumsily smashed into the wood it like it was a solid, stone wall.

“Oh, fuck!” she winced.

In her panic state, the next thing she did was to try to pull or push the fence gate open. It was locked, as she suspected, and so it proved useless. Frisk backed away a bit, panicking to find a way through like when she was trapped by the hole in the ruins.

“Shit, shit, shit!” she said. “Maybe, I could uh, climb up. Yeah, that’ll work. Let’s try that-”

Frisk froze completely in her tracks after she had backed a bit and felt her backpack bump into something behind her. The air was also suddenly filled with the same, disgusting odour of the skeletal corpse.

_Oh my fucking god, the thing is right behind me, _she thought. _How the hell is it behind me? I was like half a mile away._

She heard heavy breathing behind her, so there was now no doubt it was a living thing.

“Buddy…” said a calming male voice.

_Holy shit, it talks, _Frisk thought. _How the fuck does it talk?_

There came a short chuckle from the male voice behind her.

“Is that how you greet a new friend?” it asked. “Why won’t you turn around and shake my hand?”

Frisk stared at the gate, not daring to look behind her. She didn’t know what to do, what the thing behind her was, or even what it wanted. All she knew was that she was trapped between a gate and a weird, inhuman thing. There was only one way out of this, she thought.

She slowly pulled the knife from her pocket.

“Buddy?” the skeleton asked.

Frisk took a deep breath, put on a confident face, and turned herself around in a complete half-circle. As she suspected, the skeleton of the small figure was standing right there behind her, wearing the same clothes and the emptiness in the eyes seemed to have a slight, white glint in them like a distant star. Somehow, despite having no muscles, he managed to have a somewhat surprised expression on the skull.

“Get back!” Frisk commanded, pointing the knife down at him.

“Woah, Woah, Woah,” the skeleton said with his arms in the air.

“How the FUCK back!”

“Geez kiddo, you speak to your mother with a tongue like that?” the skeleton said casually.

The grin on its dead face now seemed unusually wide for a skeleton. Frisk didn’t care much for it. She just stood there, pointing her knife down at him with both hands.

_How the hell is this thing even alive? _Frisk thought.
“Just what the hell are you and what do you want?!” she asked.

“Well if you’ll just put your knife away and calm down then I’ll explain it to you ok?” the skeleton answered with the same, casual tone. “I mean, I know you're scared but if you think that’s bad then geez, look at me. You made me literally jump out of my skin.”

At that moment, Frisk fear began to wane, and be replaced mostly by utter bewilderment.

“Oh, what…?” she asked. “Wha-what are you talking about?”

The skeleton put his arms down, and his face shifted into an expression that said: “Really?”

“It was a joke, kiddo,” he said. “Y’know, because I am a skeleton? I have no skin and… eh, it kind of ruins it when you have to explain. It wasn’t that good either, to be honest. It needed a bit more of a… more of a backbone into it eh?”

Frisk didn’t laugh. Just looked at him unamused with her knife still pointed at him.

*Why the hell is he just making terrible jokes*, she thought.

“Ok, just what in the angel's name is going on out there, and who are you talking to?!” Flowey yelled from the bag. “Screw it! I’m coming out!”

Frisk heard the sound of zippers being open in her bag, and Flowey peeked out, shivering slightly.

“Now just who the heck are… are… you?”

Something made Flowey stop in his words, and that something was the skeleton in front of them. It wasn’t fear that filled up in him, but rather confusion, and he stared at the skeleton like he was trying to figure out what in the world it was. Similarly, the short skeleton seemed to have taken a similar interest in Flowey.

“Frisk, who is that?” Flowey asked.

“How would I know?” she asked without moving her eyes from the living corpse.

“Hey you look familiar,” the skeleton said, eyeing the flower. “Haven’t I seen you somewhere before? Like, at a bar or something?”

Frisk didn’t see it, but at that moment, Flowey’s eyes lit up like a Christmas ornament as a memory struck him. But as soon as it faded, his expression turned into one of disappointment and annoyance.

“Crap, it's you,” he said.

“Oh yeah,” the skeleton said with the same tone of remembrance. “You’re the talking flower that harassed my brother all those years ago. I had almost completely forgotten you.”

“Same here,” Flowey said bitterly as if he wished he had done that.

“Oh, Flowey?” Frisk began, who felt completely out of the loop. “You uh, know this guy.”

“Yeah, that’s just Sans,” Flowey said. “The local comedian. Or as I like to call him, Mister Smiley Trashbag.”

“Heh, nice to see you too,” replied Sans with a tone that said: “Is that the best insult you got?”.
Flowey sighed.

“It’s alright Frisk, you can put your knife down,” he said. “This guy is a pain, but he won’t hurt you. Not his style.”

“Well, at least you have some sense.”

With that said Frisk reluctantly put the red knife back in her pocket. Even though Flowey assured her he wasn’t dangerous, she couldn’t find herself to completely trust him.

“Now that’s better,” the skeleton said, his expression not changing in the slightest.

“What do you want?” Frisk asked without hesitation.

“Oh nothing,” Sans replied. “Nothing at all. Or at least, nothing from you at least. In fact, I would like perhaps a nice bed, a good tv, and perhaps some snacks if I can.”

“Right…”

Since so many weird things had happened to her in just a span of a day, Frisk didn’t bother thinking about why a skeleton wanted snacks in the first place.

“Hey, you’re a human aren’t you?” he suddenly asked.

As soon as he asked that, all of Frisk’s suspicions and distrust came boiling back up.

“How do you know that?” Flowey asked. “I thought most monsters had forgotten what a human really looks like.”

The skeleton shrugged.

“I’ve read a book or two,” he answered. “Or rather, just looked at some pictures from a book or two about humans. Besides, not many monsters come down this road. Not after The Royal Hunt put up this fence here at least.”

Frisk backed away a few steps from him and began to slowly back for her knife.

“Woah, Woah, kiddo,” Sans said immediately. “You think I am gonna hurt you just because I know you are human? Geez. I’ve only known you for a few minutes and already you think so little of me.”

Frisk stood still, with her palm stretching for the handle. She turned her head towards Flowey to see what he thought.

“Don’t,” he stated. “He’s not gonna hurt you. He has no interest in hurting humans in fact, and even though I’d like to see you stab him in his smug face, making an enemy of him and his family is not worth it. Trust me.”

His family? Frisk thought nervously.

Even though she was still a bit uneasy by the skeleton, she decided to take the flowers word again and put her hand away from the knife.

“Hey, looks like I underestimated you, flower” the skeleton said in a gleeful tone. “Looks like you have actually more sense in you than I thought. Twice as many in fact.”
Then using one of his weird, bony eyelids, Sans blinked, and Frisk thought that slightly disturbing.

“Making it two senses,” he continued.

Flowey sighed as if he expected a joke of this calibre. Frisk, on the other hand, felt a bit confused, until she noticed the punchline and chuckled a bit. She felt it was perhaps the most she had chuckled or even laughed in a while.

“Woah is that a smile I see?” Sans asked sarcastically. “Good job kiddo. Continue this up and you might learn to laugh a bit.”

“Ok, now you’re just being an asshole,” Frisk said bluntly.

Sans became stared at her quietly for a while as if he was thinking something and then he gave a simple shrug.

“Yeah didn’t think this joke through,” he said. “Sorry about that. Would promise to not make such jokes again but eh, never been good with promises.”

“Nah it’s ok,” Frisk said. “I was kind of joking too. I’ve… never been good with jokes.”

“Frisk, can we get the hell out of here now?” Flowey asked impatiently. “Please?”

“Right,” Frisk said. “So it was nice to meet you and all, but uh we kind of wanna continue on our own right now.”

“Really, but we just met,” Sans said.

Alright, mister-

“I was just joking kiddo,” Sans said, interrupting her. “I’ll just go back to my spot. You seem to be sure that you can handle this on your own so... See you around kiddo.”

“Yeah, see you too.”

With that said, the skeleton turned around and began to walk away. After he had gone far enough, Frisk turned back to Flowey.

“You don’t like this guy eh?” she asked him.

“Are you surprised?” Flowey replied. “Tell me you didn’t feel one bit annoyed by him?”

“Nah, he seems alright,” Frisk said.

"Really?" Flowey asked in surprise. “Not even after he made fun of you? Well, let's agree to disagree then."

“Hey, you said something about his family earlier,” Frisk began, changing the subject a bit. “About how it was not a good idea to make an enemy of them. Why, is he like a… mobster or something?”

“Nah, he’s nothing like that,” Flowey said. “It’s just that… ah, it’s a long story. I’ll tell you later.”

“Alright then.”

Frisk turned around to face the tall wooden gate. Up close, the tallness of it looked a bit
intimidating. She tried the knob but as she suspected, it was shut tight.

“You don’t uh, have a chance to know of any ways through this gate thingy right Flowey?” she asked.

“Don’t ask me,” he said. “I’m about as stumped as you.”

“Great.”

“I may not know of any proper ways,” Sans said behind them. “But I do have an idea.”

Frisk turned back around once more, feeling utter shock and surprise.

“Jesus, I thought you were gone!” she said.

“Are you just gonna keep sneaking in on people like that?!” Flowey said.

“Well I decided to come back here to watch your progress a bit,” Sans said casually.

Well, that sounds a bit stalker-ish, Frisk thought.

"Looks like you need some help," the skeleton added.

Frisk didn’t think much through his sudden appearance since he pulled a stunt like that earlier. She just assumed it was something he was just able to do. Either way, she felt a bit desperate for any ideas at this point, so she decided to bite.

“Alright then,” Frisk said. “What do you have in mind? With getting through this gate I mean.”

The skeleton grinned seemed to widen a bit.

“Watch,” he said simply.

He walked towards Frisk and reached up towards her shoulders with one of his bony hands and Frisk felt him eerily resemble a little kid looking up to an older guardian.

“Now hold still,” the skeleton said. “Or you might get sick.”

“Wait what are y-”

It was as if time itself had blinked at that moment, for Frisk found herself suddenly facing the gate, even though she not only had her back to it just a second ago but also she didn’t move one bit. Or that was what she thought she was looking at first. It took her a while to notice it though since much of the trees and areas looked so similar, but then she looked around in bewilderment and realized she was actually now standing on the other side of the gate.

“Wha-what just happened?” Frisk asked in confusion.

She heard Flowey cough immensely behind her.

“Gah, please warn me before you do that again!” he said angrily.

“Wait, did you just teleport us?” Frisk asked.

“Nah that wasn’t a teleport,” Sans answered. “I just… squeezed ourselves through the fence super fast.”
“Really?” Frisk asked.

“Of course not,” replied the skeleton. “It was teleport obviously.”

Frisk looked at him with a puzzled look.

*I think I’m never gonna get this guy*, she thought.

“Thanks,” Frisk said. “But why?”

“Well, it’s a lot better and faster than climbing over ain’t it?” replied Sans.

“I meant why did you help us?”

The skeleton shrugged.

“Why not?” he answered. “You were in need and I helped you. Think of it as a charity.”

Frisk didn’t really buy his words, and she was sure Flowey didn’t either. She felt like he had some other, hidden agenda. But he helped them either way so she didn’t really care much about his true motives at the moment.

“Ok then,” Frisk said. “Well, either way, thanks for your help. Sans wasn’t it?”

“Yep that’s me,” he answered. “Sans the skeleton.

“Well, Sans, I think we’ll be going now,” Frisk said. “Oh and I forgot to mention earlier but sorry about that whole… knife thing.”

“Eh that’s fine kiddo,” Sans said, “Already made up.”

“Ok, thanks for that,” Frisk said. “Now as I said, I’ll guess I’ll see you around.”

“You too, kiddo,” the skeleton replied and made another wink. “Even though you’re a human, I’ll promise to keep an eye socket out for any dangers coming your way. But like I said before, I’m not good with promises.”

“Alright then,” Frisk said softly.

With that said, she turned towards the road and continued down the path, and Flowey gave a sigh of relief. But it was only after taking a few steps that the skeleton suddenly called after her.

“Hey kiddo,” he said.

Frisk turned back around and could hear the flower give a subtle, but clearly frustrated sigh.

“What is it?” she asked.

“I was wondering if you could maybe do something for me,” he began. “Since, y’ know, I helped you after all. Now it is not much. Like you don’t have to carry any boxes for me or anything. In fact, you don’t really need to do anything when you get down to it.”

Frisk felt like she had expected something like this and gave out a short sigh.

*Of course he wants some payment in return for helping, she thought. Thought as much. Well, let’s see what it is at least.*
“Ok, what do you want?” she asked.

“Just getting right to it eh?” Sans began. “Very well, so here is the thing. My brother, Papyrus, has been feeling very down lately. He’s been feeling down for a long time actually. Like years. But it has gotten worse these past few months. Ever since I took and hid away all his… uh… stuff that he used. Mostly because he became addicted to it and so kept spending all our monthly allowance on it, and once I gave him the talk, he just kept buying and using it in secret.”

He gave out a short sigh as if to say: “how far you have fallen”.

“But my brother has never seen a human before,” he continued. “He also makes no secret that he really wants to. Many monsters do in fact, but especially him. So I was wondering if maybe before you continue on your quest, you could perhaps stay a bit while I give a call and then my brother comes running over to say hi.”

“So in other words, you want me to just hang around here for a while?” Frisk asked.

“Yeah, something like that,” answered Sans.

Frisk thought about it for a few seconds. This felt a bit suspicious, but Flowey had been very adamant so far about him being unhararmful, despite his clear annoyance at him. Then she shrugged and said:

“Sure I can do that.”

Suddenly, Flowey began to stir immensely in her backpack. It was perhaps the most stirring he had ever done so far.

"Uhhh, Frisk?” Flowey said awkwardly. "I think I just um, remembered something. Y’ know what? Just ignore everything I just said about him, I take it all back. That skeleton is actually super dangerous and untrustworthy. Oh, and he's also one of the most powerful beings down here, so I suggest that if we simply run away right now, we'll-"

“You’re a shit liar you know,” Frisk said, looking straight at his face.

Flowey stopped in his words and looked at the girl with an expression that was half frown, half disappointment.

"Was it that obvious?” he asked.

"I mean… yeah," Frisk replied. "You went on and on about how harmless this dude is while also being less than subtle on your annoyance, and now that he's offering to hang out with him a bit you suddenly began to contradict everything-"

"Yeah, I know what happened these last few minutes, I don't need a recap," Flowey said bitterly.

"Ok look, I kinda wanna do this,” Frisk said. "I'm just really curious about this world and people, and if it makes up someones say in the meantime then what's the catch?"

"I just want to… get out of here as fast as we can, alright?” Flowey said.

“C’ mon, it’ll just take a moment!” Frisk said. “Can’t we just do this one nice thing? Please? I mean, what’s the worst that could happen?”

Flowey didn’t answer. Just looked away from her with a full frown on his face like an upset child.
“If you can’t bear it so much then why don’t you go back in the bag for that moment?” Frisk asked.

Suddenly, a realization dawned on her.

“Hang on,” she began. “You’ve been out of the bag for a while now. I thought you couldn’t stand the cold.”

Flowey’s frowned turned into an expression of worry. Worry of that of feeling caught in a lie.

“I… uhh…” he began.

“Wait, were you actually… scared?” Frisk asked.

She smiled as that thought came to her. That smile then turned into a chuckle, which then turned into a small laugh. It was not a laugh of mock or amusement, although she felt some of it, but rather a laugh of surprise, although the flower clearly didn’t take it that way.

“Hey, that’s not funny!” Flowey said angrily. “Stop laughing!”

“I wasn’t laughing at you,” Frisk said smiling.

“Hey if you two wanna sort some things out between you two then we can just do this thing later ok?” said Sans, who was still standing there.

Frisk looked back at the skeleton and Flowey followed suit. In her bickering with the flower, she had almost completely forgotten him.

“Oh uh, yeah we are totally ready to do this thing,” Frisk said. “Right Flowey?”

“Ugh, yeah,” he said begrudgingly.

“Ok good,” the skeleton said.

The skeleton then reached into his jacket and pulled out an old looking smartphone.

Wow, that phone looks ancient, Frisk thought. Not as old as the one that the old man had, but still. Is everything down here just over a hundred years old or something?

Sans then began to type in some numbers with his bony fingers and Frisk wondered how he could use a touchscreen without fingerprints since that was always how she assumed those phones worked.

Then he put the phone up to his ear, or rather where his ear would be located, and began to speak softly into it.

"Hey Pappy, it's me," Frisk heard him say. "Oh did I wake you? Sorry. The time zones here are weird…"

"I still think this is a dumb idea," whispered Flowey.

"Yeah yeah," Frisk whispered back.

"...hey so I got something for you," Sans continued in the phone. "It's a little surprise, something I'm sure will brighten up your day. What? No, it's not a herb or anything of the sort. But it is something alright. Heh, it is something. Oh, I'm at the gate, in the forest. Set up by… you know who…"
"Gods he is still talking," Flowey whispered.

"Yeah, no shit," Frisk whispered back.

"...so are you coming? Really? Oh, that’s good to hear. Good that you've finally decided to leave your closet for a bit eh? Yeah, I know you're not literally in a closet. Yeah, I know that we sold it a while back. Anyways, it's good that you're making progress either way and I look forward to showing you the surprise. Uh-huh. Aha. I know. I love you too bro. Goodbye."

At long last, the skeleton turned off his phone and put it back in his jacket.

"Good news," he said. "My bro says he's up to it and is heading his way here right now."

"Yeah we figured that much," Frisk said.

"Good."

And so the trio turned quiet as they waited. For a while. Frisk and the skeleton just stood there in the exact same spot as if they were rooted in them. In this silence between them, the only sound Frisk heard was a soft gush of wind and her occasional exasperated breaths.

The skeleton, on the other hand, seemed unnaturally quiet and still, and would've been easily mistaken for a standing corpse that was held up by invisible strings.

"How long is this gonna take?" Frisk asked, beginning to feel impatient.

"Don’t worry, he’s fast," Sans stated. "Very fast indeed."

"Alright then."

A few moments passed, and the silence returned. Still, they waited. Flowey was now shaking immensely, either due to fear, cold or both, and so he wordlessly let himself sink back into the backpack. Frisk then heard the zipper of the backpack run closed.

“He’s probably gonna be a while,” Sans said, breaking the silence. "Must be out of shape or something."

Frisk tapped her foot on the snow and shivered as the cold was finally getting to her. Her current clothing was clearly not made for winter.

"I have a place not far from here," the skeleton said. "It’s not really a house or anything. More of a… campsite than anything. Used to work there for a stand before it went out of business. Should we wait there perhaps? I'm sure the fireplace still works."

"Did you just say a fireplace?" Frisk asked. "If you did then I’m definitely sold."

Chapter End Notes

So here is the first part of the second chapter. The forest chapter as I call it because it takes place in a forest. Yeah not the most original title, but hey neither is "The Ruins".
It'll be the shortest chapter so far, or at least the one with the fewest parts.

As for the part, it's self? I think this is perhaps the most humerus (heh) part I have written so far. I thought it was fitting because we are finally introduced to Sans Undertale himself. Took a while for him to show up in this AU (unless you've read the prequel story where he is one of the two POV characters).

Here comes the bad news though. After the next part or the one after, I will, once again, be taking a short break. I don't know how long it'll be, but I'll try to be done with not only the chapter till then, but also the upcoming "reboot" of the politics bear story. That one won't not a big story mind you, or even that long. It's just an idea I thought of and wanted to explore.

But until then, hope you enjoy the story and more is coming soon.
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The Forest Part 2

The campsite didn’t prove to be much of a campsite in the end. Frisk assumed that it was perhaps much better in its heyday, but now there were only two wooden houses, one which was so torn down, with no roof and had so many holes in the walls and floor that it could perhaps no longer be considered a house by definition. In one place, there was a pile of planks with some of them standing upright in the snow, and Frisk could only surmise that this was once a shack that used to keep tools and such.

As for the fireplace itself, whatever wood was left in it was either dry or completely covered in snow, but Frisk managed to light a little flame from it based on her minuscule memory of her time at summer camp. It was very little, and not very warm, but Frisk was content with whatever she could get at this point.

She sat on a small boulder in front of the fireplace, while Sans sat opposite her on a bench so small it obviously made for kids, but since he was so short he fitted almost perfectly.

“Yeah it’s not much,” Frisk said, staring at the fire. “But it’s the best I got.”

“She’s fine,” Sans said. “Us skeletons aren’t really bothered by heat or cold anyways since we don’t have any skin that is.”

“Well that makes sense,” Frisk said.

She turned to Flowey, who sat in the pink backpack which was now placed down beside her.

“What do you think Flowey?” she asked him. “Is this fire good enough for you?”

“Define good enough,” the flower said. “Because if to you it means sitting by the most minuscule amount of heat possible while sitting opposite the most annoying creature in the underground, then yeah maybe.”

“Looks like someone has a cold shoulder,” Sans said.

Frisk snickered a bit while Flowey just rolled his eyes. She didn’t really find the joke funny or even that clever, but rather it was the delivery and cheapness of it that she couldn’t help but feel slightly amused.

“Well, at least there is someone around to laugh at my hilarious jokes,” Sans said.

“Yeah,” Frisk said. “So anyway, uhh what’s your brother like?”

”Slightly better,” Flowey said.

“Well I might be biased, but I think he’s cool,” Sans answered, not giving Flowey any heed. “He’s also kind-hearted with an… well, let’s say an average sense of humour. Also kind of an introvert
these days and he doesn’t really get out of the house anymore much unless it’s something important. If I had to describe him in word, it would perhaps be ‘chill’. No pun intended.”

“Well thanks for that disclaimer,” Flowey said. “Can never tell with you.”

Sans smiled a cocky smile.

“Hard to believe it,” he continued. “But he used to be much more social and crafty just a few years ago. My brother that is. He even made his own armour. Said it was for a costume party he was suddenly reminded of, which was strange since there was no such party being held anywhere near us, and we were especially not invited to any such party or even any party in general. Once I asked him about it, he later claimed that he had actually dreamt it. But since he was clearly having fun making it, I didn’t think it necessary to stop him. Nowadays, this armour is basically just gathering dust in his basement, alongside a bunch of his other things.”

“So what happened?” Frisk asked.

Sans took on a dark expression as if an awful memory resurfaced. Even though she had no idea what it was, Frisk knew that look very well.

“Sorry,” she said. “You don’t have to tell me.”

“Yeah, let’s talk about something else now ok?” Sans said.

“Either way, I can’t wait to meet him.”

“Good. I can promise you won’t be disappointed.”

Frisk looked around the campsite, not really taking any of it in as she was thinking about all that had happened in just the past day. It was still hard for her to believe that all this was really happening. After a moment of pondering, Frisk was suddenly reminded of a question she wanted to ask the skeleton ever since he first spoke to her.

“Hey if you don’t mind me asking,” she began. “But um… how did you die?”

Sans, who was looking away prior to the question went and stared straight at her in a way as if she suddenly grew four arms.

“Uhh what?” he asked, sounding confused.

“Oh forget about it,” Frisk said. “Shouldn’t have asked. I’m sure it’s a sensitive topic for you.”

“Uhh, it’s more weird than sensitive,” Sans began. “Because unless this is some boring afterlife, I’m pretty sure I’m alive. I think. To be honest, I haven’t checked in a while. But seriously though, do I really look like a dead person to you?”

Frisk chuckled a bit, then stopped once she realized that he wasn’t being sarcastic.

“Are you serious?” she asked. “You don’t know.”

“Know what?” Sans asked with no hint of jest in his voice.

He turned towards Flowey, who was smiling in amusement. For the first time in a long, long time, Sans felt himself to be utterly baffled by someone.

“Pothead, you know anything about what’s she’s on about?” he asked him.
“Yeah I do,” Flowey said. “But I ain't telling ‘cause this is hilarious.

“I… don’t know how to break this to you,” Frisk began with sorrow in her tone. “But… you being nothing but a skeleton is uhh, it’s not normal.”

“Sounds pretty normal to me,” Sans said.

Now Frisk was the one who felt confused.

“This isn’t strange to you?” she asked him. “You have no skin, no organs. You are practically a walking corpse, and where I’m from, that means dead.”

“Ah, I see,” Sans said with a tone of realization. “Look kiddo, I think you are the one who is misunderstanding this situation.”

“What are you talking about?”

“You see I’ve always been a skeleton.”

“What?!”

“Since birth.”

Frisk stared at him for a good few moments. A moment later she chuckled. But she stopped once she saw he wasn’t joking about this either.

“Wait, are you… saying that you died at birth or something?” Frisk asked.

“No, I was born a skeleton,” Sans said. “Me and my brother. We were both born as skeletons. In fact, our mother was a skeleton as well. As is our dad. And our granddads and grandmothers”

Frisk looked at him, now feeling utterly baffled. She didn’t know whether he was serious and confused, or if it was some sort of an elaborate joke on his part. It was like he was a walking enigma.

“What?” she said. “Wha- what are you-”


Frisk stared at him, slightly more confused than ever before. Then the realization hit her like a boulder, and she felt like a complete idiot.

“Oh!” she said loudly. “Oh! Oh god, I am so sorry for that I… Jesus Christ I am such an idiot!”

“Nah it’s fine,” Sans said and chuckled. “It’s fine. You didn’t know any better but now you do. That’s what dad always used to say to me.”

Suddenly, Frisk heard something sort of unexpected. Not only that, but Sans was seemed somewhat surprised by it as well. The sound came from Flowey. He was laughing.

“You knew about this?” Frisk asked him.

“Of course I did!” he said admits smiles and laughter. “But gods. Seeing you make a fool of yourself was so worth it!”

“Ok, we are now even from me laughing at you back there,” Frisk said.
“Eh, fat chance,” Flowey said and smiled.

Frisk turned back towards Sans, and she felt like there were now plenty of more questions on her mind.

“Wait so if your entire species, or monster type or whatever, is like you then how do you work?” Frisk asked him. “Like why do you resemble human skeletons so much?”

“Ehh, not about that myself actually?” Sans said. “Then again, I don’t expect you to know everything about how humans work just because you are one yourself.”

“Oh, that’s a good point,” Frisk said. “But you have to know something. Like, how the hell does your kind reproduce if you don’t have any organs and such.”

“Heh, you’re not the first person to ponder that,” Sans answered. “Many people believe that it’s some sort of complicated ritual or magic. But actually, the answer is surprisingly simple. You see, when a skeleton—”

At that moment, there came a weird sound from Sans’ pocket that barely lasted a second. It sounded strangely enough like a ‘ding’ noise a microwave makes.

“Oh, that’s my phone,” Sans said. “Must be Papyrus. Funny, I was starting to wonder why he was taking so long.”

With that said, Sans reached into his pocket and pulled out a plain, old school looking black flip phone and looked at the screen. He stared at it for a few good moments, and then the expression on his skull seemed to frown in subtle displeasure.

“Well that’s a shame,” he said, sounding mildly disappointed.

“What is it?” Frisk asked.

“It looks like he’s not coming after all,” Sans said and put the phone back into his pocket. “Claims he’s not feeling up to it anymore.”

“Oh, ok,” Frisk said, feeling a bit let down as well. “That’s too bad. Kind of was excited to meet him.”

“Yeah,” Sans said. “But eh. Anything can happen, that’s life. If my brother is not in the mood then I don’t wanna force him.”

He looked at Frisk as if an idea suddenly popped up in his head.

“Of course,” he began and his grin widened. “I could always shortcut you straight to my place and surprise him there.”

Frisk felt a sudden surge of suspicion in her chest after he said that.

“Uhh, thanks but I think we’re good,” she said, feeling a bit uneasy.

Sans looked at her, a bit surprised by her answer, but then he shrugged.

“Well whatever you say,” he said. “Now, back onto my daily schedule. Where was I? Oh right.”

With that said, Sans stood up from the bench, stretched his arms a bit only to then let his entire body fall back on the bench, his front now facing the air. Then he put his skeletal hands on the
back of his skull and closed his eye sockets.

“Uhh, what are you doing?” Frisk asked.

“What does it look like?” Sans asked sarcastically, his eye sockets still ‘closed’. “I’m resting.”

“Ok then…” Frisk said, feeling a bit weirded out.

She stared at his resting skeleton. If she didn’t know any better, Frisk would’ve assumed he was a very old corpse.

“Umm, what am I supposed to do now?” she asked him.

“Dunno,” Sans answered. “Go to sleep, take a walk. Do whatever you want I suppose.”

With that said, Frisk stood up from her seat and looked around the empty campsite, trying to think of anything to say or do. She felt like there was one thing she wanted to ask him, but she couldn’t quite place it. After a while of pondering, Frisk came out blank. Whatever it was, she thought it was perhaps not that important.

“Well I’ll guess we’ll be going then,” she said.

“Or you can do that too,” Sans said. “I would tell you to be careful but, to be honest, you came here at a pretty good time. The Royal Hunt isn’t doing any patrols in the area this week so you can be as suspicious as you can for the moment. But of course, if you’re heading deeper into the kingdom, it might be smart for you to be a little bit careful in the least.”


She couldn’t tell why, but that name filled her a bit of unease.

“Oh right, you’re new here,” Sans said. “Well, in short, it’s a group filled with a bunch of knights, mercenaries, warriors, you name it, who’s job is hunting down humans for the king. Or what’s left of him anyway.”

“The king?” Frisk asked curiously.

Sans became strangely silent for a moment.

“You are very curious aren’t you,” Sans said. “Well sorry kiddo, but I while I would really like to stay here and chat awhile, I am kind of busy at the moment.”

“What, napping?” Frisk asked.

“Yes,” the skeleton answered. “But those questions you have? I’m sure you’ll figure them all out down the road, trust me.”

Frisk sighed a bit. She really wanted to know more, but she didn’t want to bother annoying him too much either.

“If you say so,” Frisk said, sounding unsatisfied.

She looked around the campsite once more, almost as if she was expecting it to change.

"Well thanks for the company," Frisk said. "And uh, I guess we'll see you around."
"You betcha," Sans said, eye sockets still closed. "I'm almost certain we will."

"We better not," Flowey muttered inside the backpack.

Frisk paid no heed to what he said and headed down the road. Suddenly, the forest now felt much livelier despite nothing about it having changed. Once Frisk was gone a decent length from the camp, Flowey peeked his head out from the backpack once more.

“Well that was a complete waste of time,” he said.

“Yeah, yeah,” Frisk replied.

The forest grew a bit thicker the further they went in and after a while, Frisk had sort of grown used to the atmosphere. There was still barely any sound, although small breezes could sometimes be heard.

This was perhaps the most wintery place Frisk had been through, she thought. She only wished winters were more like this on the surface. Nowadays days that is. Nowadays, you could barely see any snow, even in the winter. She was sure it was common in the past, and that the people back then must’ve taken it for granted. Frisk felt a bit envious of the people back then.

"Y' know, I'm kinda surprised you didn’t take his offer back there," Flowey said after a while. "To teleport I mean. Could've skipped this whole walking business."

“Yeah, about that,” Frisk began. “He was nice and all but… I don’t think I really trust that guy one-hundred-per cent.”

“Really?” Flowey asked seriously. “Even though I told you like a million times he was harmless and the one time I didn’t you immediately saw through my lies?”

“Aren’t you the one with the memory loss?” Frisk asked back.

Flowey shrugged.

“Good point,” he said. “Still, it was a bit paranoid of you don't ya think?”

"Maybe, but still, I just felt like he was hiding something," Frisk admitted. “Hey, speaking of paranoia why didn’t you just tell me you were scared back there?"

Flowey sighed.

“You wanna find more ways to laugh more at my misery is that it?” he said.

“What? Oh no, no, no, no,” Frisk said, almost panicky. “That was… God, I’m so sorry for laughing at you back there. It was just… so unexpected from you I couldn’t help it.”

“What it’s unexpected that I have feelings?” Flowey asked sarcastically.

“No, I didn’t mean that,” Frisk said. “I just… sorry.”

“Apologies accepted,” Flowey said. “But if you really want to know, then here is the gist of it. The reason I was scared was that… the place made me… gods how do I explain it … there was something about this forest that just didn’t sit right with me. Like, I felt like there was something I was missing about it.”
“Like a bad memory?” Frisk asked.

“I think so,” Flowey said. “Yeah, I think that’s it. There was something I was forgetting. Something, or someone, that we might need to keep out for.”

“Could… could it be The Royal Hunt?” Frisk asked worryingly.

“Maybe,” Flowey said. “Or it could be something to do with that Mickey fella the old hermit mentioned.”

“Oh shit!” Frisk exclaimed and stopped in her tracks.

“What is it?” Flowey asked with a slight hint of concern.

“I had almost completely forgotten about that,” Frisk said. “How the fuck did I forget that?!”

“Yeah, how in the… F did you forget about that?” Flowey asked.

“I don’t know,” Frisk said. “Maybe it’s because so much shit has happened in just these past few hours, or maybe I’ve caught some of your memory loss or something.”

“Yeah, I don’t know the extent of it so… maybe?”

“God,” Frisk said, feeling slightly exasperated. “I could’ve asked that skeleton guy back there whether he recognized that name or not.”


“He’s probably long gone by now,” Frisk said.

She sighed and stood still for a moment. After a short pause, she turned around and continued walking down the road.

“It’s fine,” she said. “I’m sure we’ll encounter someone else down the road and then we can just ask them. Who knows? Maybe this Mickey is a popular guy or something.”

“Yeah let’s hope,” Flowey said.

Frisk had only walked a few feet further before Flowey thought of an idea.

“Hey, if you really wanted to,” he began. “You could always just stab yourself right now and we have another chance to ask the skeleton about it.”

Frisk turned thoughtful for a bit as she pondered it. A few moments later, she came to a decision and shook her head.

“Nah,” she said. “I don’t really know how far back we go. We could go to just a few seconds ago, or we go could all the way back to the ruins. Besides, even if death is not permanent, it still hurts like a son of a bitch..”

“Oh, I agree,” Flowey agree. “I agree with that very much.”
So I think I have discovered 3 reasons for why I have such unfrequent uploads.

1. I have a shit ton of games to play, and they always keep me from doing my "job".

2. I am not really in the greatest mood these days so that might have some effect on it.

3. I am lazy as fuck.

Anyway, I know it's been like... god, how long has it been exactly? 2 months? I know I can just check, but I'm sure that will just make me feel worse. But whatever's the case, I don't think it really matters right now because guess what? I have finally gotten a new chapter out. I am sure this is great news for like my, 6 remaining readers or whatever. But it's here, finally, I am gonna keep going because I have a shit ton of ideas for this AU and I don't want them all to go to waste.

Either way, for now just enjoy the currently available chapters, and more will come soon. I promise. I am already halfway through the next part. I think.
Deep in the snow-covered woods, the air was silent and still while the cold breeze dwindled into a cool chill. Frisk, carrying Flowey, had been walking for just over half an hour since their meeting with the quirky yet suspicious skeleton, and during that entire time the duo didn’t speak much, as the flower spent most of the time hiding in the backpack while Frisk focused more on the path ahead, just as Flowey had commanded her to. She had obviously many questions to ask, but for now, she didn’t want to be too much of a bother for him.

After a while, Frisk began to have a growing worry that she was starting to get lost, even though Flowey had told her just a short while ago to “just keep following the road”. Still, she felt uneasy. Not to mention, her legs were beginning to tire. She was not used to walking for such a long time, especially not through hard snow while wearing only a single shoe that was clearly not made for winter, with her having lost the other one after she threw it at the old monster in the ruins. That foot was now wearing nothing but a soggy sock, and every other step was painful as she felt dozens of rocks or twigs pierce through it. To make matters even worse, Frisk hadn’t gotten a good rest in a while, not counting that time in the ruins where her sleep was interrupted by a terrifying nightmare, and all she wanted to do now was let herself fall on the side of the road and sleep.

Thankfully, her wish for rest seemed to have been granted a while later when she came across a large tree log that had fallen on the side of the road.

Thank god, she thought.

It was thankfully not too small for her to sit on, or too wide and tall so that she couldn’t reach it. The log looked so perfect that Frisk felt suspicious for a moment as if it was placed there specifically for her.

But in her tired stupor, she didn’t think to care much, and so she sat on top of it and immediately felt dozens of splinters through her jeans, and noticed thus it was perhaps not so perfect altogether, and so her suspicions began to dwindle. Then she loosened the bag, still holding Flowey, and placed it on the ground by her dangling feet, and positioned it so that it lay against the log.

“Why are we stopping?” Flowey asked and peeked out of the bag.

“No real reason,” Frisk answered and shrugged. “Just wanted to take a short rest. It’s not like we are in a hurry or anything right? Plus, my legs are starting to ache.”

“Do you also want it to be my turn to carry you from now on, eh?” Flowey asked sarcastically.

“Oh please, it’s only a short pause,” Frisk replied.

“Well I’m just more worried about something sneaking upon us from these woods,” Flowey admitted.
“Eh, we don’t need to worry about that much,” Frisk replied. “Thankfully I just discovered that I am a time traveller who travels through time whenever I die. God that sounds even weirder out loud.”

She stared into the deep woods in front of her and gave out a short exasperated sigh.

“Man I wish I had wifi or something,” Frisk said. “I only have like offline 2 apps on my phone and one them such garbage.”

“Yeah that should definitely be your number one concern right now,” Flowey said sarcastically. “Hey while you’re basking in your grief up there, I’m gonna sit back and ponder back to all the choices I made that led me to this exact moment.”

“Ok, you do that,” Frisk said, not really paying attention to him.

“Why waste my breath?” Flowey muttered to himself very softly.

Frisk kept staring for a while at the white, snowy trees ahead of her. Now that she was focusing on it, she saw that deeper in the trees and foliage grew so thick that they practically formed an organic wall. Frisk felt a bit unnerved when she imagined in her tired mind that maybe there was something behind there, watching and listening in on her and Flowey.

It also unnerved her a bit on how there wasn’t a single sound. No birds chirping, no blowing of the wind. That and the utter stillness of the place made it feel like the place was frozen in time. Yet, even after living her whole life in a cramped and noisy town, where she lived for years in a noisy cramped board school, Frisk had somewhat gotten used to the quiet. The bareness of life down here felt so predictable and familiar, yet it also felt strangely nostalgic. It was as if she had once lived here before, for many years. It was a strange sensation, and she couldn’t fully understand it herself.

After a while, she decided she had enough of staring at the dull, dark woods and so she laid down with her head on the log. The log was just long enough for her legs to dangle off the other end, and she put one of her palms behind her head like a fleshy pillow. If she didn’t wear a good enough hoodie, the splinters would’ve most likely been of much annoyance for her arm. Once she was done adjusting herself, she stared at up at the “sky” above. The distant crystals were almost indistinguishable from stars, and Frisk was sure they were put there on purpose to emulate the night sky on the surface. Yet, even though she knew they were just crystals on a cavern ceiling, she was utterly absorbed by the sight.

“Wow,” she simply said. “I’ve seen a night sky full of stars only once before, but this… this might just take the cake for second best.”

“Hang on,” Flowey said and peeked out of the bag in curiosity. “Have you really only seen the night sky on the surface once?”

“Well, no millions of times actually,” Frisk said. “I’ve only just seen it once when it’s filled with stars. At least once that I can remember. Most of the time it’s just empty darkness.”

“That’s strange,” Flowey said with a hint of intrigue. “I was always under the impression that stars were still objects.”

“Oh, they are,” clarified Frisk. “They are. Well, if you want to get technical, stars really are moving, just slowly and so far away that we can’t see it.”

“Oh, but then what happens to them?” Flowey asked like a curious boy asking his grandmother questions during storytime. “If what you are saying is true, then why does the sky so often turn
empty as you say?”

Frisk smiled a small grin.

*So this is what it feels like?* she thought.

“You seem to be very interested in stars.”

“Well, why wouldn’t I be?” Flowey said. “So few monsters these days have lived to see them that it’s practically mystical. Hell like most monsters, I’ve been interested in them ever since I was a young kid. Although, perhaps in my case more than others.”

“Since you were a kid huh?” Frisk asked with a feeling of curiosity. “Speaking of which, how old are you exactly.”

“Oh, I am… not really sure exactly,” Flowey confirmed.

“Let me guess,” Frisk began. “You don’t remember?”

“Yeah that’s it,” Flowey said and sighed. “Although if I had to guess, I’d say that I am… um… about 15 or so.”

“Really?” Frisk asked. “Are you sure? You sound older than that. Like, judging by that voice I’d say you were at least in your twenties.”

“Well it’s just how I feel,” Flowey said. “By the way, you didn’t answer my question on why the stars vanish.”

“Oh sorry,” Frisk exclaimed, as she had almost forgotten that question. “Well umm, they don’t go anywhere. We just can’t see them because of all the light pollution. At least that’s how it is in most places here in Ireland. I’m sure there are dozens of places here on earth left unspoiled.

“Ireland?” Flowey asked, sounding obviously confused. “What? Is that some sort of human drink or something?”

“Ah right,” Frisk said. “That’s the uh, country we are in. Or under rather. I don’t know why I assumed you guys would’ve heard of it considering you’ve obviously been down here for like a thousand of years or so.”

“Two thousand actually,” Flowey corrected. “At least from what I’ve read.”

“Huh.”

Both of them turned silent as Frisk began to think.

*Two thousand years without seeing the sun and stars?* she thought. *Sounds awful.*

Flowey looked at her for a moment, and then he joined her in looking up at the “stars”.

“It’s so weird,” he said. “I’ve always just assumed this was such a normal thing for humans. Seeing the stars. Weird to hear it’s seemingly just a special commodity.”

“Ehh it’s not that special,” Frisk said. “Most of the time, you just need to hitch a ride to the countryside and there you go. I’ve just never had such an opportunity. Me and most others.”

As she kept staring at the cavern ceiling, Frisk began to yawn. The sleepiness was finally getting to
“Man I’m tired,” she said. “I think I haven’t slept properly in like…2 days or something.”

“I thought you fell asleep in the ruins back there?” Flowey said.

“Yeah but, only for like 15 minutes or so,” Frisk answered.

“You slept for at least an hour,” Flowey said. “Trust me I was there.”

“Oh really?” Frisk said, feeling mild shock. “Huh, nevermind. Time down here is so frigging weird. But either way, I am not sure if you know it or not, but an hour of sleep is barely enough for a human, especially if I hadn’t slept the night before.”

“You didn’t sleep the night you came down here?” Flowey asked with a hint of curiosity.

Still staring at the ceiling, Frisk sighed. What Flowey had asked was something she really didn’t want to get into it at the moment.

“It’s a long story,” she simply said. “Tell you later.”

“Alrighty then,” Flowey said. “Y’ know. There is a town not so far from here.”

“You mean… a town of monsters?” Frisk asked, feeling a mixture of unease and excitement at that idea.


“Do uhh monsters still live there?” Frisk asked. “In that town I mean. And are they all sane like you or have they all turned… well crazy like the guy from the ruins?”

“Nah they are all fine monsters, last I remember,” Flowey said. “It’s a poor town, but the monsters there have managed surprisingly well. Then again, it’s been a few years since I’ve been awake so things might have changed a bit.”

“So you are saying that it might not be there anymore?”

“Ehh maybe, but I am cautiously optimistic. There is also a nice inn there owned by this nice bunny lady and-”

“Wait, did you just say bunny lady?!?” Frisk asked and turned her head sideways to him in surprise and intrigue. “Seriously? You have bunny people down here.”

Flowey looked up at her, with an otherwise bland expression hinting at slight annoyance.

“Really?” he said. “Is that what weirds you out? After everything you’ve seen so far?”

“Oh, good point,” Frisk said. “It’s just how casually you said it felt so… I don’t know. Go on.”

“Alright,” said Flowey. “So anyways, normally it costs money to rent a room for the night, but I am sure she will be generous enough to let a lost, tired and starving little girl and her frail flowery companion to stay there for free for at least one night.”

“Uhh, I’m not starving,” Frisk said.

“Obviously, but she doesn’t need to know that,” Flowey said.
“Ahh, I see where you are going,” Frisk said. “But wait, won’t she, and perhaps the entire town now that I think about it, recognize me as a human?”

“Nah I wouldn’t worry about that,” Flowey reassured her. “As I said to smiley trashbag back there, most monsters have no idea what a real human looks like. If anything, they’ll just think you’re one of those ape monsters from down south. Most of them are very isolationist, so it would also help explain your ignorance of the world for them.”

“Well, that’s convenient,” Frisk said.

“Yeah, it is,” Flowey said. “So anyway, we convince the aforementioned bunny lady to let us share a single room together for the night and-”

“Hey Woah, Woah, Woah!” Frisk exclaimed as she felt a sudden rush of confusing emotions. “I uh, I think you are perhaps going a bit too fast for my liking.”

“What?” Flowey said, utterly befuddled by her reaction. “What are you going on about!”

“What are you going on about?” Frisk asked back.

“I’m simply saying we should get a room there for the night so that we won’t have to sleep the night in this gods-forsaken forest,” Flowey answered.

“Oh,” Frisk said, feeling incredibly embarrassed and dumb. “Yeah uh, that makes much sense.”

“Where did you think I was going with this?” Flowey asked genuinely.

“Oh nowhere!” Frisk quickly said. “Nowhere at all. I guess I am just… tired and not thinking straight.”

“Sleep deprivation does that to ya,” Flowey said. “That’s why you should rest. Gives you a clearer head afterwards.”

Frisk chuckled. The way he phrased that reminded her of a certain someone.

“You’re kinda starting sound like that old guy from the ruins,” she said.

“Yeah, I’m sure that being stuck with him for years might have had some effect on me,” Flowey said and smiled back.

Frisk, on the other hand, stopped smiling as memories and thoughts she had tried her hardest to repress these past few hours now came rushing forward.

“Still don’t wanna talk about him eh?” Flowey asked.

Frisk didn’t answer for a short while. She didn’t really know how to answer. The flower was right, she didn’t really want to talk about or even think about him. But she felt that she had to do that sooner or later, so she decided to be somewhat honest.

“What is there to talk about?” she asked back, staring at the ceiling. “I met him, he was crazy, I was scared of him, and just as soon as I began to warm up to him, I found out he lied to me and wanted to keep me trapped with him forever. But even then, I still feel awful for having killed him though.”

“Even though you completely undid that?” Flowey asked, sounding as if she just said some incomprehensible gibberish.
"Yeah," Frisk said. "But the fact that I did it in the first place is just…"

She sighed. While the guilt of the murder seeped out of her gut, deep within her, she could feel a fear surfacing. A fear that she might’ve put the old hermit in a worse place than before she met him.

“Honestly, I still feel kinda sorry for him,” Frisk admitted. "Even though he was clearly messed up I think that in the end, he was just… lonely. The other creatures in the ruins seemed to be somewhat scared of him, I guess, and now that he’s completely alone for good… man, I don’t want to even think about it.”

“So you're suggesting that you should return and give me back to him, eh? And that I should spend the rest of my life giving him company?"

“Of course not!” Frisk exclaimed.

“I know, I was just messing with you,” the flower said.

“Oh,” Frisk said. “Sorry, I’m just… kinda slow now I guess.”

As she now thought back to the old monster, she realized that all she could possibly focus on was utter despair. Even the small but nice moments she tried to picture were silenced and drowned by the sounds and visuals of her hands covered in blood and the creature’s cries of rage and agony.

“Let’s talk about something else now shall we?” Frisk said after a while.

“Yeah that’s a good idea,” Flowey said. “Let’s not dwell on him or we’ll fall into utter depression. So then, what do you wanna talk about?”

Frisk stared in the air thoughtfully. As she pondered on what to pick, she decided to sit back up. That proved to be surprisingly difficult, as her muscles had gotten somewhat numb from lying still for so long, but after an unnecessarily long time, she finally conquered that difficult challenge and adjusted herself back to her sitting position. After that, she stretched her arms and yawned.

Then she thought hard. She wasn’t stumped because she couldn’t find anything to talk about, but rather the opposite. She had so many questions swirling around in her head. Questions about the world, this mountain and especially of monsters, including how they work, how many are there, what they generally look like and so on. She half wanted to unload all of her questions at ones like an avalanche of words, like she would have done if she was 6 or 8. again. Frisk then half-realized that this weird place, with all its wonder and mystery, was starting to make her feel like a kid again. A scared, confused kid with so much more questions and answers about the world.

Then finally, she finally decided on a topic. It was a big topic, and she sort of picked it on random, but it was perhaps up there amongst the things she was most curious about, simply because of how incredible it was, and how no matter the answers she would get, it would change her view on the world, and perhaps life in general.

“You mentioned souls that one time,” she said to Flowey. “I’m still really curious about them. I mean, there are a bunch of different cultures and religions on the surface so with many interpretations and ideas of what a soul is. Not to mention all the people that reject the idea of souls entirely. The fact that I, just some random, teenage-girl with emotional issues, finally finds an absolute answer to this question, before all scientists and scholars, is just… mind-blowing and… kinda awesome. It honestly makes me feel somewhat cocky. Sorry. Kind of vent a bit overboard.”

“A bit yeah…” Flowey said. “Alright then. Souls it is. I still have knowledge left in my noggin. I
think. So where do you wanna start.”

“Ok so umm, how do they work?” Frisk asked excitedly.

Flowey looked at her with a thoughtful expression. If Frisk didn’t know any better, she would have assumed he was stumped.

“That’s kind of a big question y’ know,” he answered. “I may know, or rather used to know, a lot more than most inhabitants down here. But even the smartest monsters down here still don’t know the full mechanics or power of them. Even the royal scientist himself, who by the by is the smartest and perhaps also the strangest monster in the underground, hasn’t come to a definitive truth yet.”

“Then can you then at least tell me the basic?” Frisk asked. “Like I’m sure you guys know something right?”

Flowey looked down on the ground and put one of his vines under his face like a person putting their palm on their chin to ponder.

“Ok, so how do I start,” Flowey said, and turned towards her. “Hmm… well for starters, every sentient being is split into 3 separate parts, the body, the soul and the consciousness. Even though they are all “separated”, quote on quote, they are still bound to each other in a strange way. That’s about what most monsters down here learn on their first day in school. Are you still with me?”

“Yeah I am,” Frisk said.

If schools taught shit like this at home, she thought. I think I never would’ve skipped class.

“Alright, because this is where it gets a bit more complex,” Flowey began. “When you die, your body rots while a large part of your consciousness, which is the thing that makes you you, moves into your soul. The easiest thing I can compare it to is when you take a file from your computer and move it into another folder.”

“Holy shit!” Frisk said as she felt a sense of incredible revelation. “Are you… are you saying that there is truly life after death?”

Flowey stared at her for a good few moments with a strange expression on his face. It seemed like a mix of awkwardness and sorrow, like a person trying to think on how to announce something disappointing to a person on the peak of their excitement.

“Ehh, no one really knows,” Flowey said after a while. “After the owner dies, their soul quickly vanishes afterwards. No one knows where they go, or heck, if they even go anywhere.”

“Oh,” Frisk said, feeling mildly disappointed.

She was sort of hoping for a more clear answer on this. Still, she felt a bit satisfied with what Flowey told her.

“Well at least it’s good to know that souls exist right?” she said. “At least there’s still hope for something after death.”

“Oh yeah, I bet that uh, feels great,” Flowey said.

Frisk wasn’t sure what it was, but she felt like he was hiding something.

“What’s wrong,” she asked him.
“Oh nothing,” he said. “Nothing at all. Hey, wanna see what your soul looks like?”

“What?” Frisk exclaimed.

“Your soul,” Flowey said simply. “Wanna see it? I can use some simple magic to take it out of your body for a short while. It’s not gonna hurt or anything I promise.”

Frisk stared at Flowey with her mouth wide open in shock. Then, thinking it was a joke, she chuckled, although somewhat awkwardly. But then she noticed that Flowey had almost the same, no-nonsense expression on his face as he usually does.

“Are you serious?” she asked.

“Of course,” Flowey said. “Have I lied to you so far? Well besides that one time an hour ago when I lied to hide my fear, but you get the deal.”

“I don’t know,” said Frisk, feeling a bit hesitant. “Isn’t removing my soul from me somewhat… dangerous?”

“Well I am not technically gonna remove it from you, I’m just gonna remove it from your body,” Flowey said.

“Uhh, those two sound like the same thing,” Frisk said.

“Ok, I’m not in the mood to get into the metaphysical nature of all this,” Flowey began. “But long story short, even if it’s removed from your body, it’s still bound to you in a way, and when it comes to humans you can’t sever the bond unless you kill them first, and since we both know you are immune to that, it’s not really a problem.”

“Umm ok then,” Frisk asked. “But I dunno, this feels weird.”

Flowey looked at her with the sternest expression Frisk had ever seen him make.

“Listen,” he began. “If I could or even wanted to take your soul, I would’ve done so the moment I was awake again.”

“I wasn’t even suggesting that but now you just put that idea into my head and now I’m extra scared,” Frisk said nervously.

Flowey looked at her thoughtfully for a moment and then shrugged.

“Fine then,” he said. “If you don’t want to see it, then it’s your choice.”

“Oh uh, wait, wait I wanna see it!” Frisk said quickly.

She wasn’t sure if it was the way Flowey said those last words, or whether she really did change her mind, but before she could think, Frisk had already said those words almost instinctively.

“Uh, what?” Flowey asked back, and for a moment Frisk saw a small, satisfied grin on his face.

“Yeah fuck it,” Frisk said. “Do the thing. What’s the worst that could happen?”

“Are you really, really sure?” Flowey asked somewhat mockingly.

Frisk became quiet again. Truthfully, she wasn’t sure at all. On one hand, this was perhaps the first time in hours she was somewhat nervous and unsure of the talking flower. On the other, she knew
she might not get such an opportunity in the future.

So after a few seconds, she just nodded and said:

“Yeah sure.”

There came a large, satisfied smile on Flowey’s face, perhaps the largest smile Frisk had ever seen, and it unnerved her somewhat.

“Alright then,” he said. “Now hold still. This won’t hurt. But since this is your first time it might feel a bit weird.”

Even with that said, Frisk closed her eyes in preparation.

She expected to feel a jolt or some sort of uncomfortable sensation at least, but what came next was surprisingly quick and painless, and felt as ordinary as drinking water. Once she opened her eyes again, she almost gasped as what she saw; she thought was undoubtedly the most amazing thing she had ever seen. In the air in front of her, there floated a red, heart-shaped object of seemingly pure energy. It looked very quaint in hindsight, and it was very small, barely the size of her palm. But during the moment, the mere sight of it made Frisk believe in a world beyond her scope and knowledge.

Everything around it grew darker and darker, and even the cavern crystals far above seemed to fade into nothingness. In the end, all she could see in front of her was a red glowing object that was the brightest and most colorful thing in the whole world. Yet, strangely enough, Frisk didn’t feel one bit frightened. She felt rather familiar with it. Calm even, and she wasn’t sure if it was due to some strange magical effect or simply her fascination, but Frisk found herself unable to move her eyes from it. She was so mesmerized by it, that she found herself unable to think properly.

“Holy shit,” she said in astonishment. “Is that… my soul.”

“Indeed it is,” Flowey confirmed.

“Wow, it’s so… it’s so red,” she muttered. “Are all souls like this?”

“Well if you’re talking about the structure then yeah,” Flowey began. “But human souls aren’t exclusively red. They can be blue, purple, orange and so on. Heck, I distinctively remember that one theory that there might even be souls with colours the human mind can’t comprehend. How does that work you ask? I don’t know. Now here is the cool part. The colours are said to reflect the owners defining trait, like a green soul, would, for example, represents kindness and such belongs to someone who’s very kind, while a person with a cyan one means he or she is very patient.”

“Wow,” Frisk said. “Alright, then does a red soul say about me then.”

Flowey looked turned towards the soul, seemingly impressed by the implication of it.

“It means you have a high amount of determination,” he said. “That’s a good thing. Very good actually. In my mind, it’s perhaps the best possible soul trait. You see, even if it’s just a tiny tinge, every human has what we call determination in their soul. It’s not really determination in the literal sense, but it’s rather some sort of hidden force within every human. This force is believed to be the sole thing that gave humans a major advantage over the monsters so many years ago. Humans were immensely determined in comparisons to monsters. That’s why they won. A red soul just means that you have higher points of determination than most other humans. That plus all the magic in the air down here is my guess as to how you gained your special power. Frisk? Are you even listening to me?”
“Umm, yeah I think,” Frisk said, sounding almost as if she was drugged. “You were talking about my soul… and uh, determination and... sorry, I just feel kinda numb and… confused all of a sudden. It’s fine though. It’s fine. I think. Yeah, I have this feeling that it’s fine.”

“Oh, I guess your mind is not used to be separated from your soul huh?” Flowey observed. “Eh, it’s your first time. I’m sure it comes with practice. Well, back in you go then.”

With that said, the red light, vanished completely, and in that instant, all the light and colours that were missing in the world during that short moment came back as if they were never gone from her sight, but merely hidden from her consciousness.

“Wow, that felt… euphoric,” Frisk said, sounding sober again. “I feel like my mind has expanded like ten times.”

“Yeah it does that to you,” Flowey said and smiled. “The first time that is. It’s kinda all downhill from here.”

“Hey, can I see yours?” Frisk asked excitedly.

Flowey quickly his head to face her, looking very surprised and obviously taken back by that question.

“What?” he asked.

“Your soul,” Frisk said. “You can do that right? Show it to me? I’m super curious now.”

“But I-”

“C’ mon, let me see,” Frisk egged him on like a little kid. “Please? It’s not like I can take in y’ know.”

“But it’s just… it’s just…”

It was at that moment that Frisk noticed the strange sadness in his tone and posture.

“What’s wrong?” she asked gently.

“I… I don’t have a soul,” Flowey said.

Frisk felt taken back by that answer.

“What?” she exclaimed. “Wait. Do monsters not have souls?”

“Of course they do,” answered Flowey. “It’s just… I’m not a monster.”

"Really?" Frisk asked in a confused manner. "Then… what are you?"

"I'm a flower obviously," he answered simply. "A talking one yes, but a flower nonetheless."

"Umm, ok then what's the difference between a monster and a, uh, talking flower?" Frisk asked.

"Well one has a soul, the other doesn’t," Flowey answered. "One is sapient and can talk, the other one… ehhh isn't supposed to be. I'm kind of an anomaly in that case."

"That feels kinda like a non-answer but ok," Frisk said. "But if you're just a simple flower as you say, then why do you have like, I dunno, a face? How can even you talk, and do all that crazy shit
like extending your vines?"

"I dunno, I dunno, and I dunno," Flowey answered. "I guess I am just magical or something."

“But wait, if you don’t have a soul then... what happens to you when you die?” Frisk asked. “Like where does your mind go and...?”

Frisk stopped in her words as Flowey expression took on a dreary turn. He didn’t have to say anything as Frisk could tell by his pained look exactly what the answer was, and she felt sorrow begin to cling to her heart.

“Oh,” she said. “That’s uh… god, I’m sorry.”

“Nah it’s fine,” Flowey answered while staring melancholically at the ground. “I’ve accepted this fate for a while now.”

They both stared at the ground quietly for a moment while this thought dawned on their minds.

"Can't imagine how it feels," Frisk said sympathetically.

“Yeah I don’t think anyone can,” Flowey said without looking up.

Then as if to lighten the mood, he suddenly began to chuckle.

“Y’know,” Flowey began. “The funny thing is, this is exactly how I discovered this power. To reset that is. You see, once I was uhh… let’s say on the verge of dying, and during that moment I thought to myself-”

There came suddenly an indistinguishable sound of something rustling in the bushes far behind them, and Frisk turned around as if the entire forest had just yelled at them.

“*What was that?*” she whispered.

“*I dunno,*” Flowey whispered back.

“*Think it’s that weird skeleton guy again?*”

“*Well, in that case, I’d rather it’d be a killer on our trail.*”

Frisk let herself stood up from the log and kneeled down on one knee. She and Flowey then practically huddled together as they stared at the direction of the sound for a good few moments. They could barely see anything as there were too many trees and shrubbery in the way. But they waited and waited, and after a while, the air was completely still again.

“Yeah, I’m sure it was nothin-”

Before Frisk could finish her sentence, there came suddenly a much worse sound from deep within, a sound so weird and uncanny that it sent shivers and dread through Frisk’s entire body, and she froze from it. It came from somewhere deep within the thick foliage, and it sounded very much like a cry of a reindeer in pain with an uncanny hint of a human quality to it.

“*Holy shit,*” Frisk whispered.

“*Yeah that’s definitely not smiley trashbag,*” Flowey said, sounding almost as stunned by the sound as Frisk.
Just FYI, the thing at the end might not be as amazing as it sounds. Hell, it's arguably not that amazing at all. Just wanted to have a cliffhanger in the chapter.

But anyway, I'm back.
I am sorry for the delay, I had much going on, et cetera.
It's kind of a habit at this point I think. Having long delays between chapters. I'd be surprised to hear if I still have some of my old readers around here.

But here it is, finally. I mostly blame my laziness than anything. I have NOT lost interest in this story, nor am I losing it anytime soon. The reason for most of the delays is simple, pure procrastination. I do think I might have some attention problem, but I am not gonna try to diagnose myself or anything.

As for the chapter itself. What dangers and adventures could possibly be coming to Frisk and Flowey after a month hiatus. Talking. Yes talking. I felt like having a chapter where they just talk...
Maybe should've delayed my break for a bit.
On the bright side, I am kind of far with the next two chapters, with the one after this being almost done since it was originally gonna be part of this chapter. But then I realized that writing and going over it would take too long, so I decided to split it in two so I could update the story much earlier.

I think that's all I've got to say now so adios. See you soon.*

*I'll try to at least.

Edit: So I just realized I forgot that Frisk was partly barefoot at this point since she threw her other shoe at "the creature" at the end of the ruins chapter, meaning that I just made a bit of a continuity error.

So I went ahead and updated this chapter so no-one can pester me in the future about it.

Also, good news. I am almost done with the next chapter after this. Just need to write 1 or 2 more paragraphs and then do a simple run over, fixing some errors and making minor changes. I expect the chapter to be up and ready about this weekend, but I also have to deal with school and finishing Borderlands 2 as a build-up for the 3rd game so I'm not making any promises. But I am personally optimistic so... keep an eye out this weekend.
The duo sat still for a while as they waited for something, anything, to follow up from that inhuman cry.

"What the fuck was that thing?" Frisk whispered.

Flowey didn’t say anything immediately, but rather stared in the distance, looking very nervous yet thoughtful.

"I-I know this sound very well but..” he began.

"But you don’t remember?" Frisk guessed.

"Oh we only met a few hours ago and already you know me so well,” the flower replied without turning to her.

"Well, don’t flatter yourself, it’s kinda par for the course now ,” Frisk said. “Still, that was without a doubt the creepiest fucking thing I’ve heard.”

"Ugh, it sounded so familiar yet I just can't place it!” Flowey said and gave out a frustrated sigh. “Give me a moment and I am sure it'll come back to me.”

"Or better yet, let’s go check it out,” Frisk said bluntly.

Flowey turned and stared at her as if she had just casually admitted to having murdered someone.

"Seriously? ” he exclaimed, almost breaking his whisper. “Oh, please tell me you’re joking .”

Frisk casually shrugged.

"Why not?” she asked seriously. “It’s not like death is a problem for me or anything . Hell, if I die, we’ll just come back here and we'll continue on knowing at least what’s out there. It’s a win-win situation in my eyes .”

"But didn’t you just say earlier that you were worried you might transport back to the ruins with the old man ” Flowey asked.

Frisk turned abruptly silent for a moment.

"Well yeah, it’s just...” she began and sighed. “I dunno I guess you’re right. It was a stupid idea .”

Flowey stared back anxiously at the source of the sound.

"Fine, go then ,” he whispered bluntly.
“What, are you serious?” Frisk asked back, feeling almost a bit excited.

“I mean it’s your choice and it’s not like I can stop ya,” Flowey answered. “But please don’t tell me you’re gonna take me along on this dreadful excursion of yours.”

“What you think I am just gonna leave you here alone here?” Frisk whispered. “Of course am I gonna take you with me.”

“What?” Flowey whispered in surprise. “Are you… ugh, fine. As I said, it’s your choice.”

“Aww, c’mon, cheer up,” Frisk whispered somewhat merrily. “‘It’ll be like a little adventure.”

“Yeah an adventure where we could get killed, captured or both by some unspeakable horror,” Flowey whispered bluntly.

“Well I’m in,” Frisk whispered.

With that said, or rather whispered, she put Flowey on her back and began carefully to fight through the heavy snow and vegetation. As she did, Flowey began to slowly lean into the backpack and huddle.

Frisk now wandered once again through the thick snow and foliage and began to slowly feel more nervous, yet also more intrigued at the same time. She felt like she was now incredibly capable and determined to push through any obstacles she could just to see what was on the other side, no matter how dangerous or stupid she considered that action to be.

But pushing through the snow was no gruesome challenge though. In fact, it was much easier than last time as it became more shallow and thin the further she went, and before she knew it Frisk was now lightly jogging.

“So what do you think it’ll be?” she asked Flowey, partly to ease her growing nervousness.

“You seem unusually cheery for a girl heading into possible instant death,” Flowey simply replied.

“I mean, it helps to always keep myself in a good mood I guess,” Frisk whispered casually and shrugged. “Besides, we don’t even know if whatever this thing is is really dangerous or not.”

“Fair point,” Flowey whispered. “But to answer your question, well, it can be any number of things, from being some poor harmless kid with a strange voice or voice infection, to an omnivorous eldritch abomination that eats flowers and drags you into hell where it tortures you for a long time before putting you out of your misery.”

“Ok, that last part was… needlessly detailed and dark,” Frisk replied and chuckled anxiously. “Got like any deep-seated issues or… hang on. Those… demon things don’t actually exist do they…?”

“Of course not, I’m just preparing us for the worst is all,” Flowey replied. “I have no idea what the worst can actually be.”

“Oh that’s good,” Frisk said while pushing through some very thick foliage. “The fact that those things don’t actually exist I mean, not that you have no idea what the worst is. But whatever it is. Even if it’s something like a monster clown or a running pile of baby demon zombies or whatever, I am sure that we will absolutely make- holy fucking shit, what is that?!”
As she removed the last piece of foliage, Frisk and Flowey came into a large opening of covered in thin snow, and saw by a large rock a few meters in front of her, lying wounded and covered in dozens of bruises and little garbage, perhaps the strangest creature she had seen, not just in the underground, but in her entire life. With every other creature she had seen down here, there was at least something on earth that she could easily compare them to, like a skeleton, a frog or an anthropomorphic hybrid of a goat and a lion. This thing, however, seemed to be utterly alien from any animal or object on earth at first glance. The closest thing she could compare this creature was to a reindeer due to its brown-furred body that was almost identical to a reindeer body, besides the lack of a tail.

But the head of the creature, which was massive and about the same size as the body, looked nothing like the head of any other beast she knew about.

It had two antlers, or rather one and a half, protruding from the top that resembled tree branches, and one of them even had what looked like a small pine tree protruding up from it. The other antler was much shorter and clearly broken, with a small piece still dangling off from it. The ears were the most “normal” part of the head, besides the fact that they more closely resembled rabbit ears than a deer’s and they protruded upwards between the antlers. Then there were the eyes, which unlike a normal deer, were facing the front like a human, and they were completely white except for a small black line in the centre like a cat’s eye.

But by far the weirdest part was its mouth, or rather at least what Frisk assumed was its mouth. It took up over half the creature’s face, but rather than opening up and down like most creatures, the mouth opened up by the sides like a scissor, which gave the creature a complete alien quality. It seemed to breathe in and out from this strange mouth and Frisk could occasionally see dozens of razor-sharp teeth inside.

Besides the aforementioned broken antler, it was also covered in bruises and shrapnel wounds, and there was a bloody stump where one of its hooves should’ve been. Not to mention, the creature was also covered and tangled in some leftover garbage.

At the moment, it didn’t seem to notice Frisk or Flowey, and if it did then it clearly didn’t care about them. Rather it seemed to wail and whimper softly.

“What the hell is that thing? ” Frisk whispered.

Flowey rose up from the open backpack to take a look, and his eyes became filled with clarity.

“Ahh these things ,” he answered. “Don’t remember what they are called, but I’ve seen them before. They are harmless. Mostly. If you don’t irritate them at first that is .”

“God, what could’ve happened to it? ” Frisk asked.

“Well, first of all, calling them an “it” is just rude. ” Flowey began. “Second, what seems to have happened is that either he or she stepped on a landmine or a boobytrap, or some kid messed with it using some deadly magic. As for the garbage? Well, I remember some stories of teenagers decorating those things with garbage as a prank so that’s probably unrelated to its… current state .”

Frisk stared emphatically at the wounded and whimpering creature.

“Wh-what do you think we should do? ” she asked softly

“I… I don’t think it’s gonna make it,” she whispered. “Maybe I should…”

She sighed in despair. She assumed that if this thing worked similar to an ordinary deer, it was most likely going to die slowly and painfully. But she recognized that there was perhaps one thing she could do, and even though she hated that suggestion, she believed it was the best mercy she could give it.

“Frisk, what are you thinking?” Flowey asked anxiously.

She wordlessly picked up the red-hued knife from her pocket.

“I-I think it’s for the best,” she whispered sadly.

Flowey looked at her utterly shocked.

“Uhh, are you not just dumb but crazy as well?” he exclaims.

“Why do you think that?” Frisk asked genuinely. “Don’t you think that leaving this animal like this, to die slowly and in pain, is a worse option.”

“It’s not that,” Flowey began. “What I’m getting at is that-”

He suddenly stopped mid-sentence.

“What were you getting at?” Frisk asked.

“Never mind,” Flowey answered.

“Wait what were you going to say?”

Flowey turned to her and for a moment she could’ve sworn there was a glint of a devious smile on his strange face.

“Y’ know what?” he began. “I was wrong, and you were right. I think putting it out of its misery is the better option.”

“Are you sure?” she asked him.

“Absolutely,” Flowey said confidently.

Hearing his agreement, Frisk assumed that she would feel more assured in this action, but she now felt rather more hesitant instead. To make things worse, she also felt a bit that the flower was now hiding something.

But she didn’t think much of that and turned back to the wounded creature, which had stopped whimpering and now seemed to be waiting for its inevitable death.

“Alright,” Frisk said.

She carefully crept towards the wounded monster, like the way she assumed she should approach a wounded deer when it suddenly and quickly turned it’s strange head to her making Frisk stop in her tracks. The creature, however, did nothing. Just stared at her, seemingly uninterested as if she was just yet another tree in the wood.

“Hey, it’s ok, I’m not gonna hurt you,” Frisk lied.
The creature made no sound as she continued towards it with the red knife firmly gripped in her hand. Even though she had felt the sensation of taking another life with the old monster from the ruins, Frisk still felt awful in doing this. She wondered desperately at that moment whether there was some way to save this creature, anything, but she could think of nothing.

As Frisk closed in on the creature, she raised her empty hand in the air as if to calm it.

“Yeah that’s it, be calm,” she said reassuringly. “It’s alright. It will just be-”

“Are you mocking me kid?” an elderly male voice suddenly said. “Or are you actually planning to stab me as well? Why isn’t my current suffering enough?”

Frisk stopped creeping and now stared at the creature utterly stumped.

“Did it just... ? she thought

“Wait, you can talk?” Frisk asked.

“Of course I can,” the voice replied. “Why wouldn’t I? Do I look like some sort of weird dog to you or something?”

Frisk felt utterly apologetic. The strange creature on the ground now seemed to have an expression on its bizarre mouth that seemed to show a feeling of utter insult.

“Oh shit, I am terribly sorry!” Frisk exclaimed. “I wasn’t aware that you could speak and...”

She heard Flowey snicker behind her. She felt annoyance and frustration build up within her, and she turned around and saw him just as she expected, a large grin on the flower’s face, stretching from leaf to leaf joined by his soft laughter.

“You- you knew?!” Frisk asked him in near anger.

“Uh yeah I did,” Flowey said grinning. “What? Is it not funny when I pull the same gag twice?”

“Is- is this a joke to you?!” Frisk exclaimed. “I almost just murdered that guy. What, if he didn’t say anything, were you just gonna let me cluelessly stab him? Is that it?”

“Do you think so little of me, of course not!” Flowey said, still grinning. “I’d have stopped you if it went too far.”

Frisk sighed.

“God you’re such a fucking asshole Flowey,” she said.

The flower shrugged smugly.

“Yeah sorry Frisk,” he apologized, but Frisk wasn’t sure if he was genuine or not. “It was just such a good opportunity to-”

“Umm, I’m still here kiddos,” the creature interrupted. “Typical teenagers. Not caring about the elderly even when one is literally dying in front of them.”

“Oh sorry,” Frisk said and put the knife back into her pocket. “Don’t mean to be rude, but I just kind of assumed you weren’t really... well, sapient.”

“So you were just gonna put me down like a wounded dog is that it?” the creature said.
“You make it sound so… worse,” Frisk began. “God, I said I’m sorry!”

The creature gave out a strange sound that eerily resembled a sigh. Then he looked down on the ground as if in despair.

“It’s alright kiddo,” he said and winced in pain. "I don't think there is any way you can make my situation worse anyway. Gah! So anyway, I guess you're not from around here are you?"

"Oh, what gave it away?" Frisk asked, somewhat sarcastically.

"Many kids these days are dumb and unobservant yes,” the creature began. “What with them misusing their brains by twiddling all day on their phones or pulling dumb magic pranks on us unsuspecting elderly. But in all my years of experience, I've never met someone so out of touch as you.”

“Yeah, you have no idea how accurate that actually is,” Frisk answered.

If he finds out I'm human, she thought. Then how the hell is he gonna react? Will he call someone or... god, this is stressing.

“Thought so,” the creature said. “So judging by your look and ignorance, I am guessing you are from Apetown is that it?”

“Oh umm…” Frisk began.

She quickly turned towards Flowey for desperate guidance at this moment, and for a split second, she was almost sure she saw him wink.

“Um, yeah,” Frisk said. “I’m an ape from… Apetown. All the way from… downtown Apetown.”

The creature stared at Frisk with squinting eyes as if it would help him see better, and Frisk felt her sweat began to form on her neck. Then the creature just rolled his eyes and puffed.

“Bah, of course, you're an ape monster,” he exclaimed with a hint of grudge. “Of course. Why wouldn’t you be?”

Yes, save! Frisk thought.

Meanwhile, the wounded creature seemed to be somewhat irritated.

“By the gods and the angel, why does it always have to be ape monsters?” he whispered to himself.

“I’m guessing from your words and tone that you don’t really, uh, like my kind?” she asked him.

“Is that what you’re hearing?” the creature asked back and sighed. “Alright, truth is, I got no qualms with your kind. Not in general that is. But no offence, for the past few years, you hermits have been swarming up here in the tens and messing with our ways and such. Ever since Mickey and his dumb lackey Willy showed up that is. Ugh, I should've expected they'd bring more of their kind up-”

“Wait what did you just say?!” Frisk quickly asked.

“I said I should’ve expected-”

“No, before that!” Frisk urgently said.
“Ever since Mickey and Willy showed up?” the creature asked, sounding confused. “Why?”

“Who-who’s Mickey?” Flowey asked nervously.

Whether it was due to some distant memory or instinct, of some frightened curiosity, or simply because it was the exact name that the old monster had warned them about, the mere mention of that name threw Frisk and Flowey into a state of desperation. It was as if finding out who this “Mickey” is was the only thing that mattered at this current moment, and Frisk felt herself mentally prepare for whatever evilness or horror the wounded creature would lay on them.

But both Frisk’s and Flowey’s excitement and fear dwindled immensely after the creature simply shrugged.

“Dunno,” he said. “Except that he’s a real asshole whose damn leftover traps put me in this situation. But besides that, I know nothing about. Like everyone around here.”

“Ok is there at least anything you can tell us?” Flowey asked.

“Like just a little bit?” Frisk added.

“You two seem strangely interested in that guy,” the creature said with the same tone of confusion as before.

“It’s just umm,” she began, trying to make their reason sound not that weird or crazy. “We’ve heard that name before. And not in a good way that is.”

“Well of course you have,” the creature said. “Everyone’s heard of that name. Of the great champion of our current king and kingdom. Of our great saviour, Mickey.”

He said that last line with a clearly distinct sneer.

“Bah, what a grand hero he is,” he added sarcastically. “Most likely a bunch of lies. Nothing more than a con artist I’m sure. If he’s so great, then why the hell are we still in this accursed situation?”

“Wait, didn’t you just say a moment ago that no-one knows who he is,” Flowey said curiously. “But if that’s the case, then how can he also be a known hero at the same time?”

“Well that’s just the thing isn’t it?” the creature said. “He’s popular and well known, yet at the same time, we barely know jackshit about him. He apparently just showed up one day and we are now suddenly supposed to accept that he’s some hero or champion? Bah, malarkey!”

Somewhere in the middle of the strange creatures monologue, Frisk had sat down to ease her legs and later on she became to bothered to keep her focus that she didn’t even think much about the wet snow that was uncomfortably soaking her pants. She also didn’t notice immediately that his expression had now suddenly taken on a darker look.

“But if you really wanna know something, then I’ve heard some rumours,” he began after a short pause, now sounding almost frightened. “That he has supposedly done some… dark things. Evil things even. But eh. What do I know? I’ve lived alone in these woods all my life, and I don’t go to town much. Hell, I don’t even have a working TV anymore, so maybe I am merely the one who’s ignorant. Who knows? Maybe the people in town can tell you much more. But I wouldn’t bet on it though. Last time I was there, which wasn’t long ago I might add, I asked some monsters, young and old, about this Mickey fella. Most of them knew just as much as me, while many seemed hesitant about even mentioning him. So expect much if you go there. Oh, I think I might’ve spoken too much. Terribly sorry.”
“Oh no no it’s fine,” Frisk said. “It’s fine, I’ve... heard longer. God, you should see my old teacher.”

She turned to look at Flowey who, as Frisk judged by his expression, seemed incredibly invested in the creature’s talk.

“You got any of that?” she asked him.

“Oh yeah, plenty,” he answered. “Practically all of it I think. When you have basically just a half-empty mind like myself, it’s really handy to fill in those dozens of holes with some useful information, no matter how plentiful. Or at least, that’s how I think it works.”

_Well good to know at least one of us got more than half_, Frisk thought. _God, I’m so tired._

“Well, doesn’t really matter if you didn’t listen to me,” the creature said. “But it nice that you did though at least. Honestly, I just thought it was really good to speak overall. Really helped keep my mind off the pain- gah, gods.”

He groaned a bit as more blood began spewing out of the red stump.

“Oh, shit!” Frisk exclaimed. “Umm, take it easy, mister, I can…”

“Nah don’t worry kid, it’s fine,” the creature said. “It can’t get any worse than this.”

Frisk looked at the red stump which was surrounded by pools of blood that instantly vaporized before her very eyes into dozens of dust particles that became indistinguishable from the snow. After a short while, the bleeding seemed to have stopped.

“Is there... anything I, or rather we, can do for you?” Frisk asked him somberly.

The strange creature became thoughtful for a moment. Then, as if quickly coming to a decision, he turned and pointed with his strange mouth towards the thick trees to his left.

“See that cabin over there,” he said. “That’s my old home. Now if I can remember correctly, there is supposedly a completely full bottle in one of the kitchen cabinets, labelled emergency. I was on my way to get it myself, but then my wounds grew too severe and my body completely gave up. Can you perhaps snatch it for me? I’d be forever grateful if you did. The cabin is only two rooms big, a living room and the kitchen I mentioned, so you won’t get lost.”

Frisk turned to the direction he pointed and indeed saw a small cabin, hidden about just from sight within the trees. It was a bit of a walk away, yet even from a distance where it looked like a tiny toy house the size of her palm, Frisk could see that it was old and rotting.

“Alright,” she said. “We can do that.”

The creature gave out a breath of relief.

“Thank you girl,” he said. “Thank you very much. Mayhaps, there is still hope down here.”

“Wait, you don’t think there are any traps that way right?” Flowey asked cautiously. “Like the one that got you.”

“Nah, I’m pretty sure there isn’t,” the creature said. “The one that got me was actually quite far back. Like 2 hours ago or so.”

“You-you’ve been walking like that for hours?” Frisk exclaimed. “Holy shit.”
“Yeah, yeah, can you get me that bottle now?” the creature asked.

“Oh sorry.”

She stood back up and wiped the wet snow from her pants.

“What was your name again?” she asked.

“Gyftrot,” the creature said. “Name’s Gyftrot, like in gift and rot.”

“Alright Gyftrot,” Frisk said. “We’ll be a moment. I promise.”

“You better,” Gyftrot said.

“Right.”

With that said, Frisk began to head towards the cabin with a bit of speed in her steps. The snow became heavy once again as they left the clearing, so running was impossible at this point.

“So…” Flowey began as Frisk trod through the snow. “What have we learned about Mickey?”

“Well…” Frisk began. “We know that he’s real at least, and not like a collective delusion with the old guy and you, no offence. Not sure that’s good though, but we at least know what to really look out for. Also, he’s supposedly a monkey creature I… guess? And a knight? I think Gyftrot said something about that, and also that he’s possibly dangerous… and evil… and mysterious as well. It’s not much, but it’s at least something to go off on. If I were being honest, I somehow feel like I know less about Mickey now than before.”

“Well he did mention a king,” Flowey said. “That Mickey was his champion or something. Strange though, that he mentioned a king in the current sense. Now that I think about it, Smiley Trashbag also did that. Very strange indeed. I kind of would’ve thought that…”

He turned abruptly silent.

“Kind of would’ve thought what?” Frisk asked.

“Oh sorry,” Flowey said. “Kind of got lost in thought.”

“You know something I don’t or…?”

“Oh, it’s nothing like that,” Flowey said. “I think I might’ve just misplaced a memory somewhere or something.”

“Alright then,” Frisk said with a bit of suspicion and continued on.

After a few more difficult steps, they had arrived at the broken-down shack. It somehow managed to look worse up close, with a large gaping hole one side, like something big had burst through, and a holey roof held up by old wooden walls that looked like they could collapse at any moment. The shack was about the size of two bedrooms and the roof was just high enough for her to reach with her hands.

Frisk slowly stepped through the large hole and heard the floorboard creak by her step, and as she entered she carefully walked through what she assumed was supposed to be the living room, with the only hint being a single, decayed couch that was half-sunken through the broken floor. Frisk half-expected that she would fall through the floorboards with every step.
“Weird that he would leave this bottle here, and whatever's in it, for god knows how long rather than take it with him to where he lives now,” Frisk pondered. “Especially since it seems to be something important. I just don’t get it.”

“Ahh, well there are a lot of things you don’t get about monsters,” Flowey said. “No offence of course. You’re new here after all. Like did you know that they have a huge affinity for riddles and puzzles?”

“That… doesn’t surprise me as much as it should,” Frisk said while she crept into a room smaller than the one before, that only held a few cupboards and a large wooden table.

“Still,” she continued. “Don’t see what that has to do with my previous question though.”

“Oh it probably doesn’t,” Flowey answered. “That was a good point actually. So much so that I was actually considering if this a perhaps weird puzzle of his. Even then, I’m about as stumped as you if I were to admit. Huh. Stumped and not because of a memory loss. Gods how I missed that feeling.”

“Alright keep being cocky back there,” Frisk said.

Flowey didn’t seem to notice her mild roast, or at least Frisk noticed he didn’t care much as he gave out no reaction or backfire.

There were about 6 different cupboards nailed on the walls above what looked like an old kitchen sink, including some empty spots that seemed like they once held more cupboards, as proven by the small piles of broken wood that were all placed on the floor right below each of the missing frames.

First thing Frisk did was to rummage through them with her foot, the one that still had a shoe on it, but she found no bottle, any shards of glass or piles of liquid.

“Why is he so sure that the bottle is still even in here?” Flowey asked.

“C’ mon, glass-half-full Flowey,” Frisk said.

“I’m just saying,” Flowey began. “This place has clearly been abandoned for… gods know how long. And judging by the stench it’s probably been much longer than that, yuck. But I’m just thinking practical. Bunch of monsters must’ve looted this place before us. Hell, maybe dozens of humans have come here as well. Not to mention that mister Gyftrot back there didn’t even think to put up a lock on the cupboards for some reason.”

“Yeah, I’ve considered that,” Frisk said while peeking through one of the remaining cupboards. “Still, better to check and be sure rather than to give up prematurely. And besides, glass-half-full remember?”

Fortunately, her cautious but clear optimism proved valid, as immediately after she opened up one of the larger cupboards, she saw deep inside a large glass vial the size of a beer bottle with faded ink writing on it that clearly once said emergency.

“Aha,” Frisk said and smiled. “See, what did I tell you Flowey?”

“I mean I never denied that the bottle couldn’t still be here,” Flowey said in a low voice, almost muttering it.

Frisk reached in and grabbed the bottle, which surprised her by how warm it felt, and pulled it out
into view.

It was about the size of her elbow, and a bit heavy since. Its glass was sickly green and nearly impossible to see through unless you stared at it long enough.

The first thing both Frisk and Flowey noticed was its heavy alcoholic smell. Frisk recognized it immediately. In fact, she knew that smell very personally.

She removed the brown tap out of curiosity and sniffed. There came an absolutely putrid stench that caused Frisk to wince before she quickly closed it back up, but not before it filled and drowned the room in a stench resembling rotten fruit and faeces.

“Gah fuck me,” Frisk exclaimed.

“Dear angel,” Flowey exclaimed. “This might just be one of the worst things I have ever smelled. And that’s saying a lot.”

“Guh, so you think this gunk is gonna save the reindeer thing out there?” Frisk asked as she cringed from the leftover stench.

“Well possibly,” Flowey answered. “I do faintly remember hearing stories of magical healing potions and other drinks that can cure almost any wound. But if I also remember correctly they are mostly used in hospitals and science experiments, due to the difficulty and expense in making one. In that case, it’s very strange and also incredibly convenient that he just has one laying around here casually.”

“Well, whatever’s the reason,” Frisk began. “Let’s hope it works.”

“Indeed.”

Frisk slowly crept back over the rotting floorboards, back through the large gap and shivered as her shoeless foot entered the snow.

Now remembering how cold and wet her feet felt, she hurriedly travelled back to the creature by following her own footprints.

If that house didn’t kill me, she thought. Then hypothermia definitely will.

But as she backtracked through the snow, Frisk began to have uncomfortable thoughts and concerns towards the bottle. It was mostly due to the surprising familiarity it gave, and what that same familiarity could possibly entail.

“Frisk is something wrong?” Flowey asked, having noticed her subtle but visible distress.

“I dunno,” Frisk began. “I just have this weird feeling about this bottle. Or suspicion rather. I’m probably wrong though. At least I hope I’m wrong. We’ll see.”

She came back through the clearing, where the strange mouthed creature still lay in the same spot, trying to get some newspaper out of its horn using just its head.

“ Took you long enough,” Gyftrot said as he noticed the duo. “It’s not like I’m dying here or anything.”


She sat down on one knee and opened up the foul smelling-bottle before bringing it to his strange
“Thanks,” Gyftrot said. “But I can handle the rest myself.”

He grabbed the bottle from her hands using his pincher mouth and in a very strange set of movements, which Frisk found incredibly weird to watch, he succeeded in perfectly adjusting it using just his mouth and teeth, and began to drink. It was like watching a gymnast performing a near impossible technique that he had mastered his whole life.

But Frisk couldn’t bring herself to wonder or feel much awe about the creatures strange habit, as she found herself unable to hide her suspicions any longer.

“That’s not medicine is it?” she asked him.

As if on command, the creature carefully placed the bottle on the snow with his pincers.

“Is that what you thought?” he answered. “No. Of course, it isn’t.”

_I knew it_, Frisk thought sadly.

Gyfrot then picked up the bottle again and took another gulp, perhaps the biggest he had taken so far.

Even though she had suspected the true nature of the bottle, and even though she barely knew him, she still couldn’t help but feel awful in hearing it confirmed.

“Does… does that mean you’re gonna die?” she asked anxiously.

Gyftrot placed the bottle back down while cringing from the strong taste.

“Well unless you can find a doctor in these woods within a minute or two then yeah,” he said.

Frisk didn’t know what to say at this point. She turned to Flowey as if expecting him to have an answer but he just looked at her surprised and a bit sorrowful as well.

“Shit man I…” Frisk began and turned back towards the dying creature. “I- I don’t know what to say I-”

“You don’t need to say anything,” Gyftrot replied. “It’s fine. I’ve been waiting for this day for a while now. Hell, I’ve been keeping just this magic booze stashed away for a long time just for something like this. You see its magical qualities make it so that it gets much better the longer its kept in a place that’s very personal in the owner’s memory. It’s high-quality stuff, something that’s fitting for royalty to drink.”

He grabbed the bottle up from the snow with his pincer and handed it towards Frisk.

“Here have some,” he said. “On the house. Since you were so kind to me after all, heh.”

Frisk reached and grabbed the warm bottle from the pincer. She wasn’t particularly fond of the taste in alcohol, having tried some variants plenty of times, so she took it purely out of courtesy.

She opened the top letting the disgusting smell appear and then took a quick swig.

The taste reminded her of mould and rotten grapes and fruit, and it made her want to immediately puke it all out. But she instead grinned and forced the remains down her throat.
“So, how does it taste?” Gyftrot asked.

“Ugh, it’s umm delicious,” lied Frisk while grinning. “Sorry, I just drank it wrong is all.”

“Thanks for your courtesy, but you don’t have to lie,” the creature said. “Was pretty sure you wouldn’t like it anyways. These things are often an acquired taste you see.”

“Ok then,” Frisk said as she handled Flowey the bottle.

To none of their surprise, Flowey spat out the drink as soon as he took just a single and small swig.

“Good angel…” he said while handing Frisk back the bottle with his wines. “I’m sorry old-man but gods. This liquid is atrocious. Even calling it one is an insult to liquids in general.”

Gyftrot laughed softly by his words, and it was one of the strangest sounds Frisk had ever heard come from a living creature. It was like hearing an old deer attempting to imitate human laughter.

“Gods I always love seeing you kids try these,” Gyftrot said and grabbed the bottle from Frisk’s hand using his mouth.

He took another large gulp and Frisk found it now rather disgusting to watch him drink it.

“Gah,” Gyftrot began and placed the bottle carefully in the snow with his pincer mouth. “Kind of expected a different reaction from a human but eh.”

Frisk felt her stomach swell from the sudden and casual revelation of the monster.

“You… you knew I was human?” she asked in surprise.

“Oh, you truly are?” Gyftrot asked. “It was more of a guess really. But no, I didn’t suspect it all the time. I didn’t think of it until you were gone to fetch my drink. You see I thought you looked strangely familiar the first time I saw you, and you also didn’t look like any ape monster I’ve seen, what with your clean-shaven fur and brownish underskin. Not to mention your complete ignorance.”

“Ok then…” Frisk said nervously. “Are you gonna…”

“C’mon kiddo,” Gyftrot said, having noticed her unease. “Do I really look like someone who could pose a threat to you? Honestly, I don’t even give a crap that you’re human. Just makes these final moments much more interesting.”

He attempted to lift the bottle up again, but suddenly he dropped it as fast as he grabbed, and out of it spilt a bit of brownish liquid on the white snow.

Then he stared at the bottle on the snow, looking utterly helpless.

“I… I can’t feel my mouth anymore,” Gyftrot said, not in a tone of worry but rather of little surprise. “Or my body for that matter. Can you… help me drink the rest? I’ve suddenly grown rather weak at the moment.”

“Oh sure thing,” Frisk said and leaned forward to grab his strange mouth. “Flowey? A little help?”

“Right,” the flower replied without hesitation.

Flowey used his elongated vines to support the bottom Gyftrot’s mouth while Frisk reached for the bottle with her loose hand. It was a really clumsy affair, but she succeeded and then proceeded to
feed the creature like she was feeding a little lamb milk from a bottle.

The creature drank it all up, every single last drop from the bottle, and it went on for so long that Frisk almost thought it was bottomless for a second.

The drink slobbily ran down the creature’s cheek, or at least what Frisk assumed was his cheek, and seemed to grow stuck in the fur, and in a short moment, it was clear the foul-smelling bottle was finally empty due to its lightness and no more leftovers liquids leaking out by the sides.

But Gyftrot still kept chugging for a few moments on the now empty bottle as if he wanted to savour the taste as best he could. Then after a short while, he grunted softly and Frisk noticed it was him signalling that this was good enough.

Then as soon as she removed the empty alcohol bottle from his drippy mouth, he suddenly, and very casually, extended a horrendous looking thick, brown vine from his mouth to clean out the remains on his jaw. It took Frisk a moment to realizes that this disgusting appendage was his tongue due to her momentary shock.

“Ahhh, that was… worth it,” Gyftrot said and detracted his strange tongue. “My last meal you could say. You may keep the bottle if you don’t mind. A memo of me. I obviously don’t care about it anymore. Heh. I gotta say. I was very lucky you two were here. Very lucky indeed.”

“Is there…” Frisk began, feeling a lump in her throat. “Is there anything else we can do for you? Like is there someone I should call or…”

“Funny that you should concern yourself so much with someone you’ve known for less than half an hour,” the creature said.

“Oh sorry,” Frisk said. “It’s just… a habit I-”

“Bah, you don’t need to apologize or even justify it kiddo,” Gyftrot said. “Kindness is… not something one should have to usually defend in this world. And to see such kindness from a human, one that I would’ve expected from a monster, is… marvellous. Imagine. Dying at the hands of a human. A selfless one at that. Never would have imagined it in my life.”

He gave out a sad sigh.

“But to answer your previous question,” Gyftrot began. “No. There is no one left to care for me. I-”

The creature suddenly began to violently cough.

“Hey, hey take it easy, mister,” Frisk said and softly patted his back.

The cough began to lessen and Gyftrot began to breathe easy again as it’s strange face suddenly took on a melancholy expression.

“Thank you,” he said. “Thank you very much. Frisk wasn’t it?”

She nodded.


“That’s more of a nickname actually,” the girl clarified. “My real name is actually Fransisca, but everyone just calls me Frisk either way so yeah, it’s basically my official name at this point.”

Gyftrot chuckled a bit, and then immediately began to cough loudly again.
“Woah, Woah, slow down,” Frisk said gently.

The creature quickly stopped but then spat out some blood, which then quickly turned into small dust particles that vanished in the snow.

“Never had any children,” he began. “Never really liked them for a long time, nor have I ever had any interest in having them. Relationships were never my thing either, so I always believed I would die alone. Kind of thought it would be better like that.”

Gyftrot coughed again and spewed a bit more blood. Then he took a short breather and continued speaking.

“But… this is nice,” he began. “Having someone with me in my final moments is… better than I expected. So thank you, Frisk. Even if I’ve only known you for a short moment, it’s nice to have you here. And you too, Flowey, let’s not forget you as well.”

“Well it’s the best we can do now,” Flowey said, and Frisk felt herself notice a hint of sadness in his tone.

Gyftrot gave an expression that seemed to resemble a smile, or at least that was what Frisk guessed based on his strange mouth.

“But even if I’d miraculously survived this,” he continued. “I doubt I’d have any children either way. But now I know at least… that I should have perhaps appreciated them more.”

“I mean, anything can happen, right?” Frisk said, tears forming in her eyes.

Gyftrot gave out a deep sigh.

“Not this time kiddo,” he said, his eyes beginning to daze. “Not… not this time.”

The eyes of the creature became sleepy and he now stared up at her in a way like he didn't even see her anymore.

"Mister?” Frisk asked. “Are you still there?”

His breathing became very calm. After a few seconds, it was almost as if he was asleep with eyes open.

"… mister?” Frisk asked worryingly.

He gave out one feeble breath before he turned abruptly silent, his eyes now staring up at the girl while his body made not a single stir or sound. Then, he began to dissipate, and before Frisk could react, the air and ground were covered in swirling dust that moved softly in the breeze.

Chapter End Notes

So a few days late from my not-so-promised release date, so it's here whatever.
This is a very somber chamber, featuring what is, in my opinion, my favorite scene so far. I'm honestly not really sure if the bottle will come into play, as Gyftrot giving it to Frisk was a last-minute addition, but hey, maybe I'll find some way to squeeze some relevance of it sooner or later.

I honestly don't have much else to say that I haven't said a million times already, except that I found this chapter surprisingly difficult to write. Maybe because the stress of school is growing on me, but fuck it. I am really enjoying writing this fic and seeing all the comments and support, and I am not gonna quit any time close.

I am determined to finish this story, and all my other, non-fanfiction stories I've been planning.

Speaking of which, I am about halfway done with my short, original, fantasy horror story set in a world of my making. Of course, I'm technically not really about halfway done since I've yet to run over it and share it with a bunch of other writers who'll give me notes and such, but I am certain I will be done with it before new years eve 2020.

But I also said in my last update that I would've been most likely be done with this chapter last weekend* so yeah. Anything can happen.

*I mean it was only a few days delay so it's not much to judge about.
Frisk was now once again walking in silence through the cold and dreary forest. Half an hour had passed since the strange old creature died in her arms and his dust and previously tangled garbage flew the windy air. Flowey then spent a good few, dreadful but quiet minutes cleaning the dust that fell on Frisk. Even if she managed to perfectly guise herself as a monster, Flowey pointed out that it was perhaps not a good idea to be wandering around covered in monster dust. Frisk didn’t find herself able to care as she just stood there silently and partly shook, absorbing what had just occurred.

These minutes felt like hours for her, with so many dark and bleak thoughts filling her mind at the time. Then she looked at the dust on her hands, the one that used to be a living, breathing creature just a few minutes ago, and began to think about how some people and monsters die alone without no-one ever noticing or caring. If not for her, this creature, Gyftrot, would’ve. Was such a common occurrence here in this strange new world? How many people, or even monsters, died in secret and yet the world kept turning? Those thoughts led to other thoughts about mortality, her own or currently lack thereof, and then she wondered whether the timelines or universes where she died didn’t get erased, but rather branched off, so she may have permanently died in the ruins after that long fall in the ancient city, or when she stabbed herself in her own throat back by the stone door, and the surface world would never know her true fate.

These dark ponderings and many more kept flowing even when she had wandered far from the dusty grave of the old monster, like a constantly splitting stream where all paths flowed to misery. Flowey noticed her unease after about a half an hour of silence. It was subtle, but it was impossible for him to miss since he knew what had just happened. He sighed. Not because he was annoyed at her for feeling awful, or because he expected her to behave differently, rather because a part of him, even if it was a small, minuscule source of empathy, knew her feeling. And he hated being reminded of it.

“Don’t be so hard on yourself Frisk,” Flowey said to her. “There was no way we could’ve saved that guy.”

“I-I just can’t stop feeling if I missed something,” Frisk said. “Like, maybe there was something I could’ve done differently to save him. Called someone or… or maybe…”

She stopped herself mid-sentence. Every choice, every possibility she tried to think of, she couldn’t find any that didn’t involve her having to go back much, much further than her last point. As much as she hated to admit it, Frisk found herself agreeing with Flowey.

She found herself now mentally exhausted and sat down on a nearby rock on the road.

“You’re right,” she said, staring at the ground. “There was nothing I could’ve done. And I know that that means I should just move on so to speak but… I still can’t help but feel awful y’know? It really fucking sucks.”
“I know,” Flowey said. “I know how that feels, trust me.”

Frisk went quiet as she gathered her thoughts. Then she gave out a deep, sad sigh.

"When I woke up yesterday," she began. “Hell, even after I fell down that hole, I literally did not expect that just a few hours later I would learn that actual monsters, magic and souls, things that should belong in fantasy, are real, and then in just a span of a single day I would see 2- I mean 3 people, for lack of a better word, die right in front of me, if ever. One by my own hands even. God. I'm 16 years old and I've already killed someone. I mean yeah, yeah, that technically didn’t happen any more but...y’know.”

She gave out another sigh.

“Now, here I am,” she continued. “Scared, cold and confused while stuck in the middle of goddamn Wonderland while some guy I’ve never met or even seen before possibly wants to take me and maybe kill me. And then there’s my power that I still don’t understand. I’ve even died twice now and... it’s all just too much ok? I've just…”

Frisk then put her hands on her head as she stared exhaustingly at the ground.

“I’m not made for this shit,” she muttered.

At the moment, Frisk found herself no longer thinking or caring. She barely even cared when she felt a slight stirring in her backpack, followed by the soft sensation of a flowery vine moving slowly against her cheek.

“Y’know,” Flowey began. “I know what I’m supposed to do now, but I just like to start by saying I’m not really great at all in doing these “comforting” things. Heck, I may not have even done one as far as I can remember. Not to mention, I believe I literally lack some emotions everyone else has.”

He waited for a second, seemingly expecting a cheeky response from the girl, but she instead said nothing. So he continued.

“But,” Flowey began. “Even with that said and while my memory is admittedly terrible and full of random holes, I can honestly say I know what you’re going through. Truly. Of all the things I’ve forgotten, all the possible joyful moments I have had that have vanished deep within my memory back, somehow that feeling, the feeling of powerlessness, is one of the things that stayed. I mean, I felt that way during my years-long coma unsurprisingly so that might be why it stuck so hard, while other things I wished for have long gone deep into my memory storage. Anyway, the point I'm making is… I agree. It really does suck. When I had the same time-binding powers as you do now, I had to eventually accept that while I could do so many things with it, I was not omnipotent, in that there were still so much I couldn’t do. It took me years to realize that even with the power to literally undo your mistakes, you’re not really a god after all. But... that's just life ain’t it? Even the most powerful monsters or magicians can’t control everything. And while we would all love to be able to, the fact is we can't. No one can. So in a way, once you find the limit, I think is the moment where you find out you can make the most of yourself. In other words, I honestly believe that the best we can do once we hit the impossible wall is to just go with it. If we can't cross the stream, then we might as well just go with the flow and see where it takes us. Or something like that.”

Frisk turned to look at Flowey partly in shock. She felt at the moment like he was a completely different flower from the one she awoke in the ruins just a few hours ago, the one who snarkily didn’t care when she accidentally killed the old man. It was if he was replaced sometime in the past hour without her noticing.
But either way, she didn't care. His words caused a small weight to be lifted from her heart, only slightly but it was enough so that she found herself smiling again.

“Thanks, Flowey,” Frisk said. “It's not much, but… thanks for the effort. I think I needed something like that.”

“Well I tried to do my best,” Flowey said. “Like I said. It was my first time.”

“Heh, for a supposed first time that wasn't too bad,” Frisk said and chuckled. “Could’ve maybe made a few changes here and there but… its the thought that counts at least.”

She became quiet and her smile faded slowly.

“I… think I should apologize,” she said.

“For what?” Flowey asked as if she just grew ten feet.

“Well I… kinda thought you were an asshole at first,” Frisk admitted. “And I… may or may not have been considering tossing you away earlier.”

“Really now?” Flowey asked, sounding even more surprised, yet slightly amused at the same time.

“I only considered it for a moment,” Frisk quickly said. “Still, it just goes to show you that I maybe shouldn’t have judged you so early after all after all.”

“Oh no, honestly you weren’t wrong,” Flowey said. “At first that is. I was admittedly… kind of an ass.”

Frisk smiled softly.

“Yeah you are,” she said half-jokingly. “You may be an ass, but... you’re not that bad actually. Turns out, you’re kinda nice actually.”

Just as Frisk finished that last sentence, there came what looked like a sudden and terrible shock to Flowey. He glared at her, with what looked like a heartbroken expression, almost as if she had just triggered a terrible memory from his past.

“Flowey, what’s wrong?” Frisk asked worryingly.

He suddenly turned his head away from her like he couldn’t bear to be in her presence anymore.

“I… I…” was all he muttered while sounding like he was utterly traumatized.

“Did I say something bad or…” Frisk began, feeling somewhat scared. “Seriously, what’s wrong?”

Flowey didn't reply.

“Alright, maybe it's not my place to ask,” Frisk said. “I mean, sure we only met like this morning and-”

Suddenly, as if he was possessed by some devil, Flowey suddenly and incredibly quickly turned back his head in a complete half-circle and his usual smug face was now instead replaced by pitch-black eye sockets and a terrifying visage that seemed to express pure hatred and evil.

“That’s right, you don’t know me!” he hissed with utter fury in his voice. “You don’t know me one bit!”
“Jesus fucking Christ!” Frisk exclaimed and fell off the rock.

At that moment, all the blackness and evil in the flowers face suddenly faded away, and he stared at the girl with the biggest face of sorrow and regret Frisk had ever seen like he had turned a tearful little lamb.

“I-I’m sorry, he quickly said. “I- I'm so sorry.”

“You better be,” Frisk said as she slowly rose back up from the snow. “What the fuck was that?!”

“I… I…” Flowey muttered as if he tried to find an excuse. “It’s just that…”

Frisk sighed.

“Look, man,” she began. “If you don’t want to talk about it now, that’s fine. We all have things we don’t want to share, god knows I have a lot, and as you said, I don't even know you. But Jesus you really didn’t have to pull that shit. Let’s just agree that we both have secrets we would rather not share, ok? If you don’t want to talk about it, then that’s that.”

Flowey became quiet for a good few moments as if he was thinking something.

“Alright,” he then said. “Let’s just agree that this never happened.”

“Deal,” Frisk said.

They looked away from each other, into no particular direction, and the air became filled with silence again. It felt a bit awkward at the moment, but to Frisk, it made her feel slightly uneasy.

“Well now,” Flowey said as if he read her mind and decided to break it. “That could’ve gone better. I’m guessing this is the first and last time I attempt the comforting business again.”

Frisk lightly snorted and smiled.

“Alright, let’s keep going now,” she said.

“Oh yeah lets,” Flowey said.

They had only walked for a few more minutes when Flowey suddenly became agitated.

“Stop ,” he whispered.

Frisk immediately followed his command and became very still.

“What? ” Frisk whispered back.

“Do you hear that? ” Flowey asked as he looked around.

Frisk stood awhile and listened. She now did indeed hear something. It was a bit faint, but in the immense quiet of the wood, it might as well have been as loud as a storm. It sounded as if somewhere in behind the trees, there was a hint of chatter.

“Yeah, I think I hear it ,” Frisk confirmed. “Sounds like people talking right?”

“Exactly ,” Flowey said.
“Wait, could we be finally close to that town, umm, Snowing or whatever it’s called?” Frisk asked.

“Snowdin, and no, I don’t think so,” Flowey answered. “Because if my memory serves correct, which it honestly might not but I am sure of it this time, there should be a hill and a bridge that connects to it, and so far we’ve seen no hill or bridge.”

He slowly extended his neck vine towards Frisk and smiled cheekily.

“Should we go check it out?” he asked.

Frisk snorted lightly in surprise.

“You seem suddenly interested in this?” she replied suspiciously. “Not like worried about any danger or anything this time?”

“You scored well two out of two so far,” Flowey said. “You’re not quitting this curiosity game now are you.”

“Oh course not,” Frisk said and smiled. “I mean, if it’s finally something bad then I still I have a best two out of three points.”

Flowey out of the sudden looked as if he had a silly realization.

“Hang on, did we just make a game out of this?” he asked.

“I think we did, yeah,” Frisk said, with the same tone of realization.

Alright,” Flowey said and his grin widened. “Then let’s continue playing.”

With that said, Frisk headed off the road again and trod through the snow and trees. The snow wasn’t that deep thankfully enough, so the biggest obstacle was the thick trees and branches. After a while, the voices became more audible.

“Gotta say, that innkeepers bun wasn’t as good as I remembered,” one male voice said.

“Yeah, it tasted almost as bad as Jerry’s asshole, HAH!” said another, smugger sounding voice.

“You’ve tasted Jerry’s asshole?” asked a third male voice.

“What?” replied the smug sounding voice. “No, I- hey stop laughing guys it’s not funny!”

“Sounds like they’re having fun,” Frisk said softly as she closed in on the chatter.

She could now see a bright, orange light through the foliage. After a few more steps, she thought it was very clear what this source of light was.

A campfire, she thought. Must be. But if so, who would be camping here so deep in the forest? And why?

Her suspicions were confirmed as she moved through the next branch. In front of her now was, in fact, an average-sized campfire, only slightly larger than the one in the old camp with the fat skeleton, and with clearly much more effort put into this one.

Around the campfire were what looked like four strange bird creatures, clearly clueless about her presence and Flowey’s presence. They were unusually large for birds, with the smallest one being
just about the size of her backpack, while the tallest seemed to be about as tall as Frisk herself. The four of them seemed to be three separate species, with two of them being very similar-looking besides the different coloured feathers.

The smallest of the bird creature, the one who also happened to be the farthest from where Frisk was standing, looked a bit like a snowman with an oversized head, much larger than its body. How the entire body could even support that weight, Frisk had no rational solution for, so she just assumed it was magic. The body was white and plain-looking, and it’s thick, seemingly fingerless limbs reminded Frisk very much of old school teddybears. On the large head were two white dots resembling eyes of a penguin, just much paler, and in the centre was what Frisk assumed was a long, yellow beak. Finally, on top of its head was perhaps the most noticeable part of its strange design, a large, crown-like structure that appeared to be made of solid ice. It took Frisk a moment to notice that it wasn’t a part of its body, but rather a strange ice hat of some kind.

To the right of that creature, or rather left from where Frisk was standing, were the two similar-looking birds, sitting side by side. Both of them were very large, both in height and width, almost reminding Frisk of penguins like the first creature. But they both were clearly much closer to ostriches or chickens that had somehow grown to human size. Their bodies were covered in thick feathers except on their distinct yellow underbelly, and their large heads were looked to resemble snowflake patterns, with white lines expanding from each corner and meeting in the centre where a large, yellow beak was formed. They also both had two yellow eyes that faced the front rather than the side like most birds on earth, and their avian look was complete with yellow chicken legs standing out beneath them.

The most noticeable difference between the two of them, besides their outfits or lack thereof, was their colour schemes, with the one sitting beside the small, ice hat-wearing bird being cyan coloured and the other one being sea-green, and wearing what looked broken, oversized sunglasses on his beak.

Last but not least, was the tall, skinny bird closest to Frisk. For some reason, it sat much further from the other two, with its back just a few feet away from Frisk. Frisk found hard to gain much from it, as heavy foliage hid most of its features so she could only guess from silhouettes. From what she could see, that one was much more humanoid than the others, with rough and very dirty feathers, and it also seemed to be the only one who wore any proper clothes on the rest of his body and not just on its head. That was the only thing Frisk could manage from that particular one as she hid in the foliage to hide from the sight of the clueless birds, and she wasn’t even sure if that particular one was even a bird after all.

These four monsters were all casually chatting, about nothing major from what Frisk could gather. Their subjects and way of speaking, in fact, reminded her incredibly much of her classmates from back home.

“Ahh, teenagers ,” Flowey whispered as he examined them. “ Looks like we found your people Frisk. ”

“Oh haha ,” Frisk replied in a whisper as well. “You’re the one speaking. Didn’t you say earlier today that you are a teen as well? ”

“Yeah I technically am, but try telling these guys that that ,” Flowey answered.

“Ok I think I get that, somewhat ,” Frisk replied. “So any idea what they are doing here anyway? ”

“I can’t tell you ,” Flowey answered.
“Hmm, figures,” Frisk said.

“Oh it’s not because of missing memories this time,” Flowey said. “I think so at least. From what I remember, I have never seen teenagers hang out like this in the middle of the woods.”

“Whatever the case, I’m gonna go take a better look,” Frisk said.

She slowly stood up and began to creep to her right.

“Ok it goes without saying but be careful,” Flowey said. “We still don’t know what they’re-”

Without looking, Frisk had stepped on a small twine and a distinct crack echoed through the campfire, causing all the birds to immediately stop their chatter.

“What was that?” the cyan coloured, snow-flake patterned bird said with a startle.

“Oh shit,” Frisk whispered and quickly ducked into a nearby bush.

“I- I think it came from there,” the one with the ice cap said in a soft, male voice.

He pointed with his fingerless hand in the direction of the bush where Frisk was now hiding.

“Oh must be that old Gyftrot guy again,” said a smug sounding male voice.

Frisk didn’t see who of the group said that, but she assumed it was that bird monster she couldn’t see clearly.

“That old geezer?” The cyan coloured said. “What does he want this time?”

“Hey are you spying on us?!” the green bird with the sunglasses yelled at Frisk’s direction, clearly trying to sound tough.

Crap, Frisk thought. Crap, crap, crap.

“What should I—” she began.

“Shhhh!” hushed Flowey.

“I heard that!” the green bird yelled. “Show yourself!”

Crap, Frisk thought. Guess I’ve got no choice.

Feeling defeated, she slowly stood up from the bush and revealed herself.

“Frisk, what are you-” Flowey began.

She didn’t listen to him, and now she stood in the open while all the birds looked at her direction with interest and suspicions, including the tall one that was previously hidden. Now that he was turned around, Frisk could see that his dirty, rough feathers were cobalt blue and his beak was yellow like a chicken. His black, strangely human-like eyes were behind broken, plain-looking glasses, and to complete his somewhat nerdy look, he was also dressed in a white and short-sleeved, bottom-down shirt alongside a plain black, t-shirt underneath.

That bird looked at her with a bit of an analytical expression that shewed a clear hint of smugness, yet he somehow looked like he also cared the least in her out of the four around him. The large cyan coloured one with a head like a snowflake didn't seem to mind her either while the green twin
beside him with the broken sunglasses, Frisk found hard to read. The dwarf-sized one with the strange ice hat, on the other hand, seemed surprisingly the most interested in her.

“Uhhh, hi?” Frisk said awkwardly and raised one hand.

“Who the hell are you?” the green bird asked her.

“I’m Frisk and this is my, uh, friend Flowey,” she said and pointed to her companion dangling from her backpack.

Flowey turned to her, slightly surprised and amused by her choice of words.

“Hang on,” the small one with the ice-cap said while looking straight at Frisk. “I know what you are.”

_Uh oh_, Frisk thought.

She could feel Flowey stir in her backpack as if he was preparing for her to book it. Frisk was now even starting to seriously consider that idea. But only for a moment, as that idea faded once the strange, small bird continued speaking.

“You’re an ape monster,” he said. “What the hell are you doing all the way up here, and so deep in the woods.”

_Oh thank god_, Frisk thought and softly breathed in relief.

“More importantly,” the cyan one began. “What were you doing hiding there? Did an adult send you? Because if so, we are not going back to town.”

“No, it’s nothing like that,” Frisk said. “We were just travelling nearby, and then we heard you talking and became curious. That’s all, I swear.”

The four avian creatures looked at each other in unison.

“Alright, I guess that sounds fair,” the green one with the sunglasses said.

“I told you guys we should’ve kept it down,” the cyan one said.

“Oh, how were we supposed to know that tourists just happened to be walking by at this hour?” the green one replied to him.

“I personally think we should give these guys a chance,” the small one with an ice hat said and turned towards Frisk. “Hey, why won’t you join us? We’ve got some space.”

“Uhh, what?” Frisk replied in shock.

She didn’t expect that invitation and felt incredibly pulled back.

“Oh, c’mon Berdly, don’t be like that,” the green one with broken sunglasses said and then turned towards Frisk. “Yeah, what Ice-Cap said, you can sit down with us, we don’t mind.”

“I mean… you don’t have to,” the one called Ice-Cap added. “I was just suggesting that and uhh-”
“No, no, it’s no problem,” Frisk quickly said. “We’re not in a hurry or anything so I guess I can join you for a while.”

Without even checking on Flowey, she pushed through the thick bush and headed towards the campfire.

“Aww, you called me your friend,” Flowey whispered sarcastically into her ear. “How sweet.”

“Yeah yeah,” Frisk muttered back.

She sat down between the large, cyan bird and the dwarf-sized creature with the ice cap, who on closer inspection, didn’t look much like a bird up close. He, in fact, looked much closer to a snowman built to imitate a bird.

The green one with the broken sunglasses seemed like a leader of the group, so it was fitting that he was the first to speak now.

“So for starters,” he began. “You can call me Chilldrake, and these are my roommates. Sort of. That jerk over there is Berdly.”

He pointed with his winged hand towards the skinny blue one, who raised his hands as if to wave. He even managed to somehow make that simple act of raising his hand seem smug.

“That guy over there we call Ice-Cap, because he, well wears an ice cap,” Chilldrake said and pointed to the dwarfish, snowman looking one besides Frisk.

“Hi,” that one said courteously before suddenly turning a bit serious. “Don’t touch my hat though. It’s mine and I really like it.”

“Right…” Frisk replied.

“And this,” Chilldrake continued and patted the back of the cyan bird between Frisk and himself. “Is my pal Snowdrake, and before you ask, no we are not related.”

“Ahh, Snowdrake,” Frisk said and snorted. “I get it.”

“Get what?” the cyan, snowflake headed bird asked, sounding genuinely confused. “What’s so weird about my name Snow-”

Suddenly, his eyes lit up like a Christmas ornament as his expression turned into shock.

“Oh my gods,” he said, sounding shocked and mildly insulted. “My friggin name is a pun!”

All the other boys suddenly burst into laughter, and Frisk found herself feeling a bit of confusion. Then, without being able to help it, she found herself beginning to chuckle a bit as well.

“Hey stop that!” Snowdrake commanded. “It’s not funny.”

“You’re… you’re only figuring it out now?” Berdly asked amidst his glee.

“Wait, you guys knew!?” Chilldrake asked in frustration. “Why the hell didn’t you guys tell me before!”

That just made the group laugh harder, and Frisk now finally properly joined inn. She couldn’t remember the last time she laughed so hard among a group of people, much less one in her age group. She heard even Flowey snicker a bit behind her, but Frisk didn’t pay much attention to that
in the middle of the hysterics.

After a few seconds, the laughter finally faded.

“Ok, ok,” Frisk began while she took a breath and smiled. “I’m sorry. I’m really sorry. I just have
the tendency to laugh at the worst moments.”

“Nah it’s fine,” Snowdrake said as he stared melancholically on the ground. “It’s fine.”

“Look, man,” Chilldrake began and laid his wing on Snowdrake’s shoulder. “You know we didn’t
mean to hurt you. You’re still the same bird we all know and love.”

“Yeah, yeah,” Snowdrake said and grew a short smile.

“Just goes to show you your parents truly had a sense of humour,” Ice-Cap added.

The smile on Snowdrake’s beak suddenly faded as quick as off a light bulb.

“Yeah they sure did,” he said in a tone of sadness.

Frisk felt like a rainstorm was gathering overhead them. She knew these conversation moments
very well and decided it was best to steer away from it, somehow, before this joyful feeling was
completely extinguished.

“So umm… what are you guys doing here?” she asked them.

“Oh, we are just… chilling like usual,” Snowdrake said and smiled again.

“Out here in the woods?” Frisk asked. “I mean I’m pretty much new here so-”

“Wait, did none of you get my joke?” Snowdrake suddenly asked. “Seriously? Chilling? Y’know,
because it’s cold out here.”

“Uhh, what?” Chilldrake said.

“Umm sorry Snowy,” Ice-Cap began. “But I didn’t even think any of us realized you were joking.”

“Oh seriously!?” Snowdrake replied, mildly frustrated. “You and the newbies laugh at my misery
but you don’t think much about a proper, actual joke?”

“I got it,” Berdly said.

“See?” Snowdrake said. “He has only half a brain but even he got it.”

“Yeah, but it wasn’t like funny,” Berdly replied. “I got it, but it wasn’t funny.”

“Oh, c’mon man,” Snowdrake exclaimed.

“Yeah and the fact that you explained it,” Flowey suddenly added. “Which is like the number one
sin in comedy, kind of did nothing but take away from it.”

“Flowey, he’s just trying to have fun,” Frisk said, somewhat sternly.

“Well, then if he wants to be properly funny,” Flowey began. “He should be able to take some
critique in the least.”

“What are you like the joke police now or something?” Frisk asked sarcastically. “Besides, I don’t
think he's really here for critique. Let’s just agree to disagree about what's funny for now ok?"

Flowey looked at her, then at Snowdrake and then back at her. Eventually, he frowned and said:

“Fine, I'll shut up.”

“Great,” Frisk said.

“Oh thank you girl,” Snowdrake said with relief.

She then turned towards Berdly.

“Oh and you too,” she added.

“What are you, my mom or something?” the bluebird replied snarkily. “You ain’t telling me what to feel or do.”

“C'mon let's not make a deal out of this,” Chilldrake said. “She’s right. If we keep arguing, today is just gonna suck for everyone. We don’t want to create another Jerry situation right?”

“Ugh, good point,” Berdly said and frowned.

“Jerry situation?” Flowey asked with interest.

“Eh, it’s a long story,” Chilldrake answered.

“We have time,” Frisk said. “Right Flowey?”

“Yeah, yeah,” Flowey said.

“Umm, about that,” Snowdrake began.

“Yeah, sorry but we kinda don’t want to bring it up again,” Chilldrake said with a hint of discomfort. “Kinda brings back bad memories.”

“Oh,” Frisk expressed. “Ok then, nevermind, I get that.”

An awkward silence suddenly formed between the group. The type that forms when most of the people involved never properly developed their social skills. The only sound Frisk heard was the subtle crackling of the fireplace and the soft wind fluttering against the other kids’ feathers. She decided that she should be the one to break the ice, as it felt like her job for the previous conversations she had in the past few days.

“Soooooo like I asked before,” she began. “But what are you guys, well, doing here?”

“Well we live here,” Ice-cap answered.

“Why do you care?” Berdly asked rudely.

“I'm just curious,” Frisk said. “I mean, I see no adults or teachers around- wait. Did you just say you live here?!”

“Uh-huh,” Ice-Cap confirmed.

Frisk looked at him in disbelief and then smirked.

“What, so is this like a Lost Boys situation or something?” she asked.
The four creatures looked at her confused.

“What's that supposed to mean?” Chilldrake asked in confusion.

“Yeah, we're not lost, I think,” Snowdrake added.

“No that’s not what I meant,” Frisk said. “Nevermind. Why did I think you would get that reference?”

“What reference?” Snowdrake asked.


“Ohh, can you maybe tell us?” Ice-Cap suddenly asked. “I kind of have an interest in folktales. Especially foreign monster stories.”

Oh fuck, Frisk thought anxiously. Why did this group of teens just happen to have a fairy tale nerd?

“Ok umm, listen,” Frisk began nervously. “I ain't gonna tell you the whole story, otherwise we'll be here all day. It's a long one. Let’s just say that a part of it involves a group of boys who umm, call themselves The Lost Boys and they uhh…they live in the woods I guess. Away from parents and civilization. Sorry, it's been a while since I saw- I mean heard the story, yeah.”

The group of teenage monsters looked at each other as if they all simultaneously got the same idea.

“Looks like we found our name boys,” Berdly said.

“The Lost Boys?” Chilldrake repeated. “Gotta say, it has a nice ring to it.”

“Shouldn’t we umm… call ourselves The Lost Kids rather?” Ice-Cap asked. “Since we are not… only boys anymore that is.”

“What?!” Frisk exclaimed. “No, no, no, sorry. I think you guys are getting some mixed messages because I’m not gonna live with you.”

“I-I didn’t mean that way, sorry,” Ice-Cap said quickly and with a tone of regret. “I just meant… like a group of friends or something. If you don’t like us or anything-”

“It’s not that I don’t like you,” Frisk interrupted. “It’s just… I’ve got some places to be. People to meet, crap like that. Sorry. I didn’t mean to come across as rude.”

“Oh ok.” Ice-Cap said in a surprisingly sombre tone.

“Hey speaking of which,” Flowey began. “Where are your parents? Shouldn’t they be worried about you guys? Being all on your own here?”

All the teens suddenly turned dreadfully silent and they all took on a sad expression.

“Ummm…” Flowey stammered, sounding awkward and slightly disturbed. “Did I say something wrong or…?”

“No,” Ice-Cap said. “Not exactly.”

“What do you mean?” Frisk asked.
She was beginning to feel slightly disturbed as well.

Then after a short awkward silence, Chilldrake stepped in and said in a melancholy tone:

“We are… orphans.”

Frisk felt complete discomfort drown the air around her. She stared in disbelief at the group of teenagers, waiting for another burst of laughter to follow, and if not, then at least some punchline of sorts.

“All of you?” she asked with slight disbelief.

“Oh, huh,” Ice-cap confirmed sadly.

“Are you really surprised?” Berdly said. “War makes orphans y’ know?”

“Wait, what?!” Frisk asked with a much clearer tone of surprise. “There’s a war going on down here?!”

She was beginning to feel that every single time she asked a question about this world, at least two more questions would appear like the head of a hydra. She turned towards Flowey as if she was expecting an answer, but just a saw a similar hint of confusion in his expression.

“Wow you ape monsters are really isolated from the rest of the underground huh,” Berdly said, somehow sounding both surprised and smug at the same time.

“There was a war rather,” answered Chilldrake. “It ended about 15 years ago actually before most of our parents even died. Dunno why he thinks it's at all relevant.”

“Uhh, are you dumb?” Berdly said. “It’s not over yet just because they say so, especially if one side is still fighting.”

“Yeah, but the rebellion, even if it still exists, is so small and insignificant to have any effect at this point,” Chilldrake said. “Besides, most people don’t give a shit about it anymore.”

“So in other words, it doesn’t count because you say so?” Berdly asked smugly.

“That’s not what I meant and you know it!” Chilldrake said harshly.

“Maybe,” Berdly replied, still with a hint of smugness. “But, either way, my old point is actually not that far fetched if you think about it. War costs money, and lack of money leads to poverty, which leads to crime and famine and those things lead to death, such as most of our parents’ death. See? It's a long road, but simple.”

“It sounds more like you are saying that war leads to poor people,” Snowdrake added.

“Yes and that leads to more death,” Berdly said, sounding almost insulted. “Are you really that dimwitted? It's not supposed to be hard to piece it together.”

“I dunno,” Snowdrake said. “I've known and heard of a lot of monsters who managed just fine being poor without ending up dead or criminals.”

“Well those are mostly the exception obviously,” Berdly said. “Besides I’m mostly talking about the underground in general as not everyone is as lucky to be born in the capital as you, where what counts as being poor is still someone owning a two-storied house with an acceptable income.”
“You’ve never been to the capital, you are just pulling stuff from your ass!” Chilldrake said, almost yelling.

“Maybe, but at least it’s all based on facts rather than guesses,” Berdly said smugly.

“Guys, guys,” Ice-cap said. “C’mon, stop this. Let’s save this arguing for later ok? You’re making our guest uncomfortable.”

“Frankly, I just literally have no idea what’s happening or what you guys are even talking about anymore,” Frisk admitted.

It was true what she said, at least. Words and concepts like war, rebellion and the capital were just casually dumped on her already confused brain like a scrambled alphabet soup. All these new pieces of information did was add more questions to her already unclear view of this strange, new world.

“Me neither,” Flowey added.

There was a subtle but unmistakable tone of confusion in his voice.

Well, if he's lost then that feels kinda validating , Frisk thought.

“Allright,” Snowdrake began, sounding as if he was giving a presentation. “So in short, about 15 years ago, war broke out all over the underground. Basically, it broke out because almost everyone became unhappy with the current state of things and the king complete silence regarding everything, so many decided to finally take to arms and revolt. So, there was the kingdom’s side, being King Asgore and his knights, versus a makeshift army of rebels, mostly consisting of farmers or city folk.”

“You forgot to mention what happened with the queen,” Berdly added.

“Dude, I'm trying to be as concise as I can for these newbies,” Snowdrake said to him. “I ain't going over every detail.”

“No, please tell us about the queen!” Flowey quickly said with unusual urgency in his voice.

“Uhh fine then,” Snowdrake said, clearly taken aback by it.

Frisk also felt like there was something odd about his reaction. She almost felt like he was hiding something.

“Ok, so before the war,” Snowdrake continued. “And before the king, well, became isolated and... crazy, the queen, who had been missing for decades mind you, suddenly returned one day. I'm not gonna go into why she was away or even why she came back. It’s not really important in this context. Bottom line, she came back after a long time which was a huge deal… and then she apparently died a few days later.”

“Oh,” Flowey expressed.

Frisk felt a surprising hint of shock and disappointment in his voice. There was even some sadness, though she didn’t think much of it at this moment.

“How did she die?” Frisk curiously asked Snowdrake.

“Well-"
“The king killed her,” Berdly answered before Snowdrake. “Impaled her with his fork is what I've heard.”

“That’s just a theory Berdly,” Chilldreake said sternly to him.

“I heard she committed suicide,” Ice-Cap added.

“And I've heard she's somehow still alive,” Snowdrake said. “Point is, no one knows what exactly happened during the time she came back and when she died, except for the king of course. As far as we and the public know, she's dead. There was even held a funeral and everything. After that, everything went to shit so to speak. The king became isolated and depressed and sometime after that he just officially cracked. Then there came a war and everything got worse. The economy drained, monsters lost their homes, etcetera. Yes, it was a real mess. Then the king locked himself up even more and very few have seen him ever since.”

Frisk sat there for a moment as she absorbed it all. She felt a bit more satisfied now. Finally, she had some clear answers about this world and history.

“Hmm, interesting,” Flowey added.

Frisk noticed that there was something about his tone that sparked interest, yet confusion. Like the type where you notice a contradiction in someone’s testimony, or where you hear a different point of view from yours that makes you rethink what you’ve learned.

“I was too young to experience most of this by the way,” Snowdrake said. “So a bunch of what I’ve said is just what I remember in history classes, and read online.”

“Don’t worry, it was good enough,” Frisk said. “Thanks, I kinda get more of what’s going on-wait. Read online?”

“Uhh,” Snowdrake began. “Oh, yeah. You Ape monsters probably don’t have internet where you are from.”

They have their own frigging internet down here? Frisk thought.

“Erm,” Snowdrake began. “So… it's this giant database thingy. Sorry I am not really good at explaining that shit. Berdly?”

“Yeah like he said,” the bluebird began. “In short, it’s an invisible giant database filled with a bunch of information. The word online, that Snowy here used, is basically a synonym for the Internet.”

Frisk felt a bit of panic growing in her. For a moment, she almost blew her cover. Hearing that this strange, magical kingdom with talking animals and monsters has its own version of the internet completely threw her off track. But if she showed any knowledge of the internet, Frisk was sure they would catch on to it. She knew she had to play dumb.

“Umm… this internet… sounds fascinating,” she began. “Umm, how do I… umm, where do I go to this… internet?”

God, that might've been too dumb, Frisk thought. Oh please work. Please work.

“Oh, it's not a physical place,” Berdly began. “How do I explain it? Well, it’s a thing you can access with your phone and stuff. You know what a phone is right?”
“Uhh,” Frisk began, trying to keep up her clueless facade as best she could. “What’s a-”

“You have a phone, don’t you Frisk?” Flowey said behind her.

_Goddammit Flowey_, Frisk thought.

“Uhh yeah, yeah I have,” she said and pulled it out of her pocket and showed the group.

“So you ape monsters have phones but not the internet?” Berdly asked with a confused look.

_Crap, what do I say now?_ Frisk thought. _They’re right. A bunch of out there Amish people shouldn’t have phones._

“Uhh, no I got it from someone recently,” she lied and put the phone back in her pocket. “Right Flowey?”

She turned her head towards the flower and shewed not-so-subtle signs on her expression for him to play along.

“Right?” she asked him again.

“Uhh, yeah,” Flowey said, slightly confused. “Yeah, there was this old guy we were… staying at. And he had a spare phone he gave her.”

“Giving out free phones in this frigging economy?” Ice-Cap asked with interest. “Where the hell was he?”

“Uhh, somewhere near Apetown,” Flowey said. “It was also his last phone and only other phone… and it’s not that good. Heck, as she said, it doesn’t have the frigging internet heh.”

The group looked at Frisk and Flowey, and Frisk couldn’t tell but hoped to god that they didn’t turn suspicious of her. Thankfully, that didn’t seem to be the case.

“Sounds like he ripped you off,” Chilldrake said and shrugged.

“Yeah, was that guy like super old or something?” Ice-Cap asked.

“Oh definitely,” Flowey said. “Like, he must’ve been like a few hundred at least.”

_Damn Flowey_, Frisk thought, feeling great relief. _Turns out you’re actually a decent liar after all._

“Anyway, let’s change the subject a bit,” Flowey said. “Let’s talk about something we can all understand, and not this… internet jargon. We are confusing this girl over here. Don’t want her to be left out, do we?”

“Yeah, good point,” Snowdrake said.

“I was actually thinking the same thing,” Ice-cap added.

“So if I’m getting this right, the four of you have just been living here alone in the woods for years?” Flowey asked the group.

“Pretty much,” Snowdrake said.

“Well, we used to be five actually,” Ice-cap said. “There was this one other guy, Jerry, but he’s gone now.”
“Oh,” Frisk said sympathetically. “Well, I’m sorry for your loss.”

"Oh he’s not dead or anything," Snowdrake said. "We think. He just left is all."

"Yeah he said he couldn’t handle our "hippie lifestyle" and ditched himself a few weeks back," Chilldrake added.

“I don’t think anyone of us really misses him though," Berdly said. "Guy was an utter twat."

“Yeah, if anything, I’m glad he’s gone,” Snowdrake added and smiled.

“S-seriously?” Frisk exclaimed, utterly baffled at their reaction and casualness. “Aren’t you guys worried about him even one bit?! That guy could be dead for all you know!”

“Nah, we’re sure he's fine,” Chilldrake said. “Jerry is a… well to be honest none of us know what the hell kind of monster he is exactly. But he's super tough. Like his skin is almost impenetrable.”

“Yeah you’ll have to throw a whole dictionary at him just to give him a papercut,” Snowdrake added and chuckled.

“You know why?” Berdly said and sniggered. “It’s because he’s so dense.”

“Heh, and not to mention, he can survive over a year without eating,” Chilldrake said. “Still, he ate much of our stuff anyway just because he felt like it.”

“Hmm, either way, it sounds like you have a pretty boring lifestyle,” Flowey said. “No offence of course.”

“Well, it’s not that bad,” Ice-cap said. “Of course I still miss the constant warmth and sleeping in bed. And pizza of course. In fact, just having a bunch of food in general.”

“So why won’t you just… go back to town?” Frisk asked. “I’m sure some, uhh, people would be willing to give you shelter.”

The four birds stared at her for a while, thinking, before Berdly shook his head, seemingly in embarrassment.

“Oh you’re clearly not from around here,” he said. “Because I don’t think anyone bothers caring about us.”

“Yeah, and it’s not like it’s much better in Snowdin than out here,” Snowdrake said. “Last I heard, some bunny lady had to sell her whole family heirloom just to not starve for a few more months.”

“And also, fuck adults,” Chilldrake said. “And fuck the orphanage. You have literally no idea how bad it was back there.”

“Oh yeah fuck that,” Frisk agreed. “God, orphanages are the worst.”

She felt a wicked, but clear joy spark within her. Finally, she thought. Some other teens she could relate to.

“We are doing much better down here,” Chilldrake added. “Despite everything, at least we are not in the dirty little orphanage where it’s pretty much the same as here, except much more fucking strict. Like we couldn’t even have a snack without someone keeping guard since the cameras were all broken. Down here we have no rules and freedom to do whatever we want, and if we need food we’ll just sneak to some old farmers or townsfolk and take a little.”
“Yeah we have some, bad stories from the orphanage,” Ice-Cap added.

“It practically had no budget,” Berdly added. “ Barely had a roof either, so we could have just as well been here in the woods.”

“Not to mention, the owner was kinda abusive,” Snowdrake said. “Never like beat us or anything, but man he was great at making us feel guilty for nothing.”

“To be fair, I don’t think he ever meant to,” Ice-Cap added. “Not to excuse him or anything. He was just a shit caretaker.”

“Sure, but that just makes it worse in my opinion,” Snowdrake said. “Not to mention, the food was barely edible. When we got it, that is. Yeah, that's right, some days we just didn’t get any food.”

Frisk stopped smiling. After hearing their tales and descriptions, she felt a tinge of guilt for comparing her life to theirs. In fact, those teens would’ve most likely killed for her childhood. She knew that maybe she shouldn’t feel that way, but at the same time, she couldn’t help it.

“Yeah, I think Jerry’s gone all the way back there,” Ice-Cap said. “Or if not, then he’s probably living with old mister Gyftrot now or something.”

“Nah, I doubt it,” Chilldrake said. “That grumpy old fart doesn’t like us in the least, so what chance does Jerry have?”

“Wait, did you say Gyftrot?” Frisk began.

_They truly have no idea_, she thought.

“Yeah, you know that twat?” Snowdrake asked her.

“Kinda,” Frisk said somberly. “I… uh, met him a while back.”

“He was a real prick wasn’t he?” Berdly asked and grinned and turned towards the group. “Hey, remember when we snuck into his house and covered his horn in some garbage?”

“Oh, I remember,” Chilldrake said and smiled. “Boy was he angry.”

“I still kinda feel bad about that though,” Ice-Cap said.

“Eh, you shouldn’t,” Chilldrake said. “He’s a complete ass.”

“He’s dead,” Flowey blurted out.

Complete silence now filled the campfire as all the creatures stopped smiling. It was like a magic spell had been cast that sucked out all the joy in the place.

“Oh,” Chilldrake said. “That’s… umm…”

“Shit man, how long ago was it?” Snowdrake asked.

“About a half an hour ago,” Flowey said. “Maybe more or less.”

“How did he die?” Ice-Cap asked somberly.

“He stepped on some… landmine or something,” Frisk said. “When I met him, his entire leg was like… gone.”
“A landmine?” Ice-Cap asked in a somewhat startled tone. “Out here in the woods?”

“That’s what he said,” Flowey added. “Supposedly left here by some guy called Mickey. You guys don’t happen to know anything about him do ya?”

The entire group stared at them, all looking slightly surprised.

“Wow, you guys are really isolated,” Berdly said after second of silence.

“Everyone’s heard of Mickey,” Childrake said. “He’s kind of a big deal actually.”

“Yeah, he’s like the most famous warrior down here,” Ice-Cap said. “If you guys know nothing about him, then yeah, you Ape monsters are REALLY isolated. Especially since Mickey is, well, supposedly one himself.”

“Well, we've heard a few things about him,” Frisk said.

“What do you mean by supposedly?” Flowey curiously asked Ice-Cap.

“Well umm, not much is known about him,” Childrake answered instead. “Not many monsters outside the capital have managed to see him.”

“I’ve seen him and I can confirm he’s an ape,” Snowdrake said. “He also had these weird, hairy tentacles on the back of his head. I assumed for a long time that was, well, the standard look for ape monsters, but apparently not.”

“Uhh, yeah it’s… not standard… amongst us,” Frisk said nervously.

“Right,” Berdly said, eyeing her somewhat suspiciously. “I’ve also seen him before. He used to come by Snowdin fairly often back then. Mostly with his lackeys.”

“Lackeys?” Flowey asked.

“Oh right, you’re apparently a bunch of hermits,” Berdly said. “I’m talking about The Royal Hunt. You’ve must’ve heard of them at least. Mickey’s their leader.”

“Uhh, yeah I’ve heard of them before,” Frisk said, thinking back to the warning from the fat skeleton. “I didn’t know about their relationship to Mickey though.”


“Yeah, that’s the one,” Berdly said. “Seems like you guys know more than you’re laying on.”

“Oh, sorry, my friend’s been around here longer than me,” Frisk said. “He just has some strange amnesia so he sometimes has a lapse of memory.”

“Hmm, alrighty then,” Berdly said, still with a tone of suspicion.

“I personally don’t know much about them,” Childrake added. “Except for the things I’ve read online. But shit, leaving a mine around here just seems reckless, even for them.”

“Yeah, things haven’t been the same ever since King Asgore lost his marbles,” Snowdrake said somberly. “Man, it was so long ago yet I can still remember when life was awesome down here. When Undyne and the Royal Guard was still around, and not this… hunt or whatever.”
“I… think I can imagine,” Frisk said. “That things used to be better that is.”

Snowdrake and Ice-Cap stared melancholically at the warm fire, while Berdly and Childrake put on a thoughtful posture. No one spoke for a while, as if they were all mourning a time long passed.

“Y’know what?” Ice-cap suddenly began. “I still blame Gaster.”

As soon as he said that, Frisk felt as if the whole world was suddenly collapsing. She couldn’t for the life of her understand why, but that name, that one name he so casually mentioned suddenly sent Frisk’s heart beating rapidly as if the mere mention of it dragged back echoes of old, forgotten horrors.

“Oh, here we go again with your dumb conspiracy theories,” Berdly said to Ice-Cap.

“Frisk are you ok?” Flowey whispered, sounding surprisingly worried.

“Who… who the hell is Gaster!” Frisk almost yelled.

The loudness of her tone shook every single monster around as they all back a bit and stared at her in shock.

“He’s the uhh, Royal Scientist,” Ice-Cap said after a while. “Shit girl, why were you so loud?”

“Yeah, Frisk” Flowey agreed, sounding surprised as well. “What the heck was that?”

Frisk found herself suddenly pushed back into reality and saw in front of her a group of bewildered monster teens and a confused flower stare back at her.

“Sorry, sorry!” Frisk exclaimed. “I’m really sorry about that, I… I have no idea what just came over me.”

“Well if you really hate that guy,” Ice-Cap began. “You are not the first. Just saying.”

“It’s not that,” Frisk began. “It’s just that… I’ve heard that name somewhere. Somewhere awful. Like from a nightmare.”

“So why the hell did you yell it then?” Childrake said, adjusting his broken sunglasses that almost fell off during his shock.

“I- I don’t know!” Frisk exclaimed. “I honestly don’t know why I did that. It was like… instincts or something.”

“Doesn’t surprise me honestly,” Snowdrake suddenly said. “The fact that you seem to have bad memories of him, not that you don’t know why you yelled.”

Frisk looked at him curiously. She found it strange to see him so sour, much more so than before.

“Why is that?” she asked him.

The cyan, snowflake headed bird sighed.

“I hate him,” he began. “I absolutely hate him. He is… kind of the reason I’m here in the first place.”

“Wh-what do you mean? Frisk asked.
He turned quiet for a while as he stared at the ground. His friends looked at him with clear sympathy, as if they had heard this story many times before.

“He took my mom away,” Snowdrake said. “She was... dying. Of some disease. Can't remember its name, but he and his assistant, Alphys I think her name was, managed to persuade her and my dad to give her up for some... experiments. That was many, many years ago and I haven’t seen or heard from her since. Then the war started to have an effect on the capital.”

Snowdrake suddenly looked as if he was about to tear up.

“Even though we lived in the capital, we were pretty much fucked,” he continued. “If we had never accepted that bastards offer, we might’ve found another way to save mom. Dad said it wasn’t possible, but I know it was. But as it stood, bills just kept piling and piling. My father was a comedian, and such a job doesn’t pay well in the capital so we were eventually forced to move down here. Obviously, it put my dad in a bad mood for a long time and so he... he began using some Baron’s Breath to help with his nerves, but one day he accidentally took too much and... and he...”

He finally began to cry.

“Jesus,” Frisk said. “Sorry I... I had no idea.”

“Yeah,” Ice-Cap said somberly as well. “My parents died in the war. Or so I’ve been told. I was only a few months old back then.”

“Mine died of some disease,” Childrake added. “They didn’t have any money to do anything about it though, so they gave me off to the orphanage before they could infect me as well.”

“I never knew my parents,” Berdly said, and Frisk found it strange to hear a hint of sorrow in his otherwise smug voice. “I’ve lived in the orphanage ever since I hatched.”

All the monsters turned quiet and they all stared off into no discernible direction. Before Frisk noticed, the only in the area came from the crackling of the wood breaking down in the warm fire.

She didn’t know what to think. What to feel even. She believed she could sort of relate their grief, the way they spoke about their parents, but she wasn’t sure if it was fair to compare herself to them. A part of her, a somewhat selfish part wished she could, but another part of her knew it was not at all right.

“I don’t want to see you or your god-damn face ever again”, ran through her mind. A reminder, an echo, that she had tried her hardest to run away from for a long time. She didn’t want to be in this place anymore.

“Alright,” Frisk began. “This conversation has taken a turn. It was nice meeting you guys, but I think its best we go before I somehow make it worse.”

She stood up and dusted the snow from her pants.

“Wait, a-are you leaving?” Ice-Cap asked her.

“Yeah, that’s what I said,” Frisk said.

She sighed, as she saw his somewhat saddened expression.

“Its nothing to do with you guys, I promise,” Frisk said. “I just... I have to go. I’m late... I think.
There are people waiting for me.”

“Personally, I’ve been, surprisingly enough, enjoying your company,” Flowey said. “But I’m kinda her guide and she’s kinda my boss so it’s not like I have a choice in the matter.”

“Alright then,” Childrake began. “It was nice meeting you two.”

“You too, guys,” Frisk said back.

“Hey before you go, you guys didn’t happen to see a fat skeleton around here have you?” Snowdrake suddenly asked.

Frisk quickly turned to him.

“Uhh, yeah I think,” she said.

“You mean Sans right?” Flowey asked.

“Yeah, I think that’s his name,” Snowdrake said.

“That is his name,” Berdly added.

“Why?” Frisk asked, feeling slightly nervous. “Should we watch out for him or something?”

“Nah, he’s not that bad on his own,” the bird said. “But I’m not sure if you know this but… Gaster is his dad.”

Frisk looked at him with a tinge of disbelief for a good few moments. Then as the momentary shock faded, she felt it being replaced a soft dread.

“Seriously?” she asked him. “Well, that’s something. Thanks, I guess.”

Now that she had this info, she felt it was explained to her, even only slightly, some of the unease she experienced from her encounter with the strange, fat skeleton. Frisk thought that Snowdrake could have well just told her that he was rumoured to be a serial killer and she was sure she wouldn't feel much different.

“Be careful,” Childrake advised her. “Shit’s fucked out there. Not a great time for a newbie like you to be around.”

“I figured that already,” Frisk said. “Alright. Off I go I guess.”

“Bye,” Ice-Cap said courteously to her.

With that said, Frisk turned around and began to slog back the way she came.

“Hey, now that Gyftrot is gone,” she heard Berdly say to the guys behind her. “You think we maybe should check out his house? Maybe move there? Seems like a perfect time to live somewhere warm.”

“Oh, you’re such an inconsiderate asshole Berdly,” Frisk heard Childrake say. “But fuck it. Might be better than this freezing cold.”

After that, the group of teens went completely out of her earshot.
“So… you humans really don’t have internet where you are from?” Flowey asked Frisk once they had been back on the road a bit. “I may be remembering this wrong, which is a possibility mind you, but I was pretty sure that the monster internet was based on… well, your internet.”

“Of course we have internet,” Frisk answered. “I was just playing dumb with those guys earlier. I was afraid I might reveal too much.”

“Oh,” Flowey said and then his face changed into realization. “OH. Is that why you were acting so weird for a moment back there?”

“Yeah duh,” Frisk said and smiled. “No offence, but you are a bit too slow sometimes.”

“I blame my memory loss personally,” Flowey said.

“That may be the case,” Frisk said. “Yeah, the internet is actually super important amongst us human folk. Honestly can’t imagine life above without it. Hell, it’s so important that some rich celebrities or business owners or such even have it literally implanted it in their brains and or eyes.”

“Really?!” Flowey asked with great intrigue and surprise.

“Yeah, with cybernetics and shit,” Frisk answered.

“Oh you’re just joking now,” Flowey said with doubt in his voice.

“I'm not,” Frisk said and chuckled lightly. “Man, if I had WiFi down here, I would definitely show you some photos. Some of them look like frigging cyborgs. Speaking of which, when we get to town, do you think it might be possible for me to access the monster internet on phone? I got some things I need to do. People to speak to, and stuff to catch up to, things like that.”

“Yeah, about that,” Flowey began.

Just hearing his tone, Frisk was already disappointed.

“I don’t think it's possible,” Flowey continued. “I seem to remember that it's built so that only monster made technology can access their internet.”

“Hmm, that makes sense,” Frisk said disappointingly.

“But we can try,” Flowey added. “I mean, human technology seems to have certainly evolved from over a hundred years ago. Who knows? Maybe it'll work now.”

“Yeah hopefully,” Frisk said.

“Gotta say though,” Flowey added. “I’m still not buying your cybernetics thing until I see it for real. I mean it just sounds completely Sci-Fi.”

“Now that you mention it, yeah,” Frisk said. “Funny. When you actually think about it, most of the shit we have right now would be considered futuristic and something from a Sci-Fi flick from a hundred, hell even just 50 years ago. Most of it is just so ingrained in our lives that we don't think much of it.”

“Huh, never thought about it like that,” Flowey said with intrigue.

“Or maybe you have but just forgot about it,” Frisk added.

“Heh, maybe,” Flowey said and smiled.
Frisk glanced at the trees and felt them look more lively now somehow, even though these ones looked unchanged from the pine trees she had walked past dozens of time without thinking.

The road also felt different now, curving more to sides or being patterned like a wave, rather than the simple straight-line she had walked on the past hour or so.

Her silence this time was not due to fear, rather, it was because her thoughts were somewhere else this time, and she couldn’t think of much to say.

Part of her thoughts was focused on the growing discomfort she felt on her shoeless foot. Her white sock had finally gotten soggy after walking and sitting on pounds and pounds of snow. She was now starting to regret throwing it at the monster in the ruins, even if it did buy her valuable time for a moment. She thought that if she had analyzed the situation better and not rushed in, she would’ve maybe thought of other ways. Then again, Frisk believed she had no reason to think that the next area beyond the stone gate would be covered in snow for miles on end. She, in fact, assumed it was the end of the cavern. A door leading home.

But even with her current hindsight, Frisk didn’t dare to reset and try again. She didn’t even want to think about the poor old monster again, much less confront him again.

It was at this moment the silence of the woods got to her, and the bad thoughts were beginning to crawl in, so she moved her thoughts to about getting back home and what she planned to do once she did. Then she thought about the teens she met a short while ago, about their conversations and moments of joy.

But then another thought came, one she just couldn’t repress no matter how hard she tried. It was of Gaster. That name, that person she knew next to nothing about, yet the mere utterance of was enough to make her shiver. She learned a fair bit about him from the teens. They way Ice-Cap mentioned his name so casually made her think this Gaster person was at least well known, and from what she gathered from Snowdrake, she was sure it was not due to a good reason. It was like she had found a missing piece of a half-finished jigsaw puzzle, one where the available pieces hinted at a very disturbing picture to come.

Yet, she still wanted to know more. A large and scared, but morbidly curious part of her wanted to know more. Had to know more, as if she wouldn't be complete without a full picture, even if it would horrify her beyond reasoning.

“Hey, Flowey,” she began. “Is there anything you can tell me about… Gaster?”

“Oh yeah, I've been meaning to ask you about that,” Flowey said. “Didn't you just get here a few hours ago? How in the world have you heard of him?”

“I told you and the guys, I dreamt of him,” Frisk answered.

“Yeah sorry but I doubt that,” Flowey said with brutal honesty. “I don’t think you're able to dream about a person like that without having had at least some memories of him. What are you hiding?”

“Nothing!” Frisk exclaimed. “I swear to god, my nightmare last night was the first time I've ever heard of him. Christ. So much weird shit has happened the last few hours. You can buy magic and monsters, but not weird nightmares of people I've never met?”

“Hmm,” Flowey said as he looked at her analytically. “Alright, fair point. I'll bite.”

“Ok good,” Frisk said. “By the way, why didn't you tell me before that Gaster is that skeleton guy’s dad?”
“Pardon?” Flowey asked.

“You know, back when we met him, Sans or whatever,” Frisk said.

“Seriously?!” Flowey asked, sounding as if he was offended by stupidity. “How the… how the hell, sorry heck, was I supposed to know that was relevant back there? Yeah, Gaster is a creep, but I felt he wasn’t that important to mention at the time. Also, I didn't know you had a dream about him or anything at the time you hadn't told me about it yet!”

“Oh, you’re right, sorry,” Frisk said apologetically. “I just… wasn’t thinking straight.”

“Not the first time today,” Flowey softly muttered.

“Anyway, you mentioned he was a creep,” Frisk added. “As in how exactly?”

“Hmm,” Flowey said thoughtfully. “How do I put this? Well… do you know that feeling when you see something that supposed to be familiar and friendly, but you feel like something about that thing is wrong or incorrect but you can't place what that is exactly so it makes you somewhat disturbed by the thing in question?”

“You mean like the uncanny valley?” Frisk asked.

“I have literally no idea what that is,” Flowey said.

“Oh, it’s a term we humans use,” Frisk explained. “Basically, it's used when we see something that’s clearly not human mimick human look, but not completely enough which makes our brains go haywire and freak out. Like, for example, a baby doll that has so many details that it could almost pass as a human baby, but there is just something about it that doesn't fit so it comes across as creepy rather than cute. More often than not you can't tell what's wrong at first glance, but your brain can, so it makes you feel scared of it no matter what. Personally, I'm not really that bothered by those things, but lots of people- I mean humans are.”

“Hmm, yeah might be about it,” Flowey said. “Frankly, that sounds like a perfect explanation of what I'm talking about.”

“Yeah I know,” Frisk said.

“Uncanny valley,” Flowey repeated. “I think I’m gonna use that. But yeah. That’s kinda Gaster in a nutshell. Familiar, but something always feels wrong about him. Heck, now that I think about him, everything about him feels wrong or, well, uncanny in some way or another. The way he looks, the way he talks, even his movements feel wrong. Gods, the way he moves. It's like his whole body has its own gravity to it, distant from ours.”

Frisk felt shivers just after hearing this short description. She thought it could just be because of the wind, but she felt otherwise. Still, with her morbid curiosity, she wanted to know more.

“Anything else you can tell me?” she asked. “About Gaster that is.”

“Oh, I can tell you plenty about Gaster,” Flowey said. “Most of my memory might be missing yea, possibly even plenty related to him, but I thankfully still have enough in my noggin about him to give me a lasting impression.”

His expression turned uneasy, in a way as if something was suddenly disturbing him.

“Honestly, I’m not sure thankfully is the right word,” Flowey said. “As I said, he’s creepy. He's
also smart. Very smart, obviously. He's the royal scientist after all, so it's his job to be.”

“That reminds me,” Frisk began. “What is a royal scientist exactly?”

“Well, I think that's best described as almost like a fancy, modern-day rebranding of court magician,” Flowey explained. “Basically, he oversees most of the science divisions and experiments going on, while also assisting in the technological advancements going on in the underground. His job also consists, like any good court magician, of occasionally dabbling in the mystic arts and the unexplainable. Mostly as a way to better understand, and or quantify those things.”

"I see,” Frisk said.

“Of course, he also has followers,” Flowey added. “Can’t pull such a large job on your own after all, and he's smart enough to know that. But I doubt he would be able to find many new monsters to willingly work for him these days.”

“Why not?” Frisk asked.

“Well it's not just his look and behaviour that’s creepy,” Flowey began. “His actions and manner of speaking are… questionable, to say the least. In all my memories of chatting with him, I always felt like he was hiding something. That he knew more than he lay on. Even if we were just talking about something mundane like I dunno, Ice-cream, his words always seemed to paint a picture of something being obscured. Kinda like he… knew exactly where the conversation was going as if he's been through it countless times. Not to mention, his tone of voice always made me shiver a bit, and I’m a flower for the angel’s sake. Worst of all is that, sometimes, he seems to imply that he knows he comes across as uncanny to people, but decides it’s not worth doing anything about as if everyone else is lesser than him or something, and not worth his sympathy.”

He sighed.

“From what I've read and can remember reading,” Flowey added. “He was, supposedly, a much better person before his accident .”

“Accident?” Frisk asked curiously.

“Ahh it's a long story,” Flowey began. “Basically, a few years back, before I was alive that is, one of his experiments went horribly wrong. He lived, obviously, but he had disappeared for a while, and when he came back he went into a coma of sorts before waking up as… well, who he is now.”

“Alright, how was he before the accident though?” Frisk asked.

A small grin grew on Flowey’s face.

“Oh from what I've gathered,” Flowey said. "He was like his son is but better. In almost every perceivable way. He was cheery and sympathetic, and some reports say that when he wasn’t working, he used to pull all sorts of stuff, some of it even bordering on unprofessional, but nothing that ruined the day for anyone. Unlike his son, he was also pretty funny apparently, and not as irritating.”

“Ehh, Sans is not that bad,” Frisk said.

“Oh let's agree to disagree with that,” Flowey said. “Gods though. What I wouldn't do to meet the old Gaster.”
Flowey turned silent as he put on a dreaming expression.

“Anything else you know or remember about him?” Frisk asked.

“Hmm,” Flowey said thoughtfully. “Nah. I think I’ve said everything I got.”

“Well I think it was more than enough,” Frisk said. “Thanks for the info, Flowey.”

“No problem, friend,” Flowey said.

“Oh you’re not gonna let that down are you?” Frisk said and smiled.

“Not unless you truly disagree with it that is,” Flowey said mischievously.

“Alright,” Frisk said, still smiling. “Let us not get ahead of ourselves just yet?”

After that dialogue, she felt she was now one step closer to understand her nightmare and her sudden knowledge of the strange, mystery man. She still felt somewhat uneasy about him, but for now, with more knowledge, she felt just a teensy bit better.

Frisk eventually lost track of the time. The road seemed to change constantly now. Not only did it curve and bend, but sometimes it led to bridges over small frozen lakes, or through open fields, some with old shacks or playground. One even seemed to have a tiny, frozen mini-golf course of sorts. There were also cliffs here and there and the road leading up and down some, and only recently did Frisk realize she was on a higher altitude once the road curved by a brink where she could see a valley far down. The mere height and size of the cavern impressed her. It was like an entire, underground country with its own landscape.

Frisk and Flowey now talked a lot on the road, most of it unrelated babble. Frisk asked him, for example, of monsters and how many types there were and Flowey then proceed to list a dozen or so he remembered. Many of them were names Frisk had never heard of before and she proceeded to immediately forget. Then she asked him if dragons were a type of monsters, and she expressed clear joy once Flowey confirmed that.

Mostly, she just chatted with him to lessen the unease and bothersome thoughts she was having, so Frisk tried to ask as much she could think of. She asked questions about the history, the culture and why monsters were locked down here in the first place, and if there were any other places they could be. That’s when Flowey told her a short version of the history of the monsters, of a war between human monsters which ended in the monsters defeat, and then he told her about the barrier around the mountain that was erected by seven human mages and that only humans can go through it. Frisk asked why the war happened and Flowey told her the truth that no one really knows why.

As to whether there were other mountains with monsters, Flowey wasn’t sure, although he told her there plenty of theories of it. But also made a clear emphasis that’s all they were, theories, and that even the oldest monsters down here didn’t know for sure either.

A lot of those answers Flowey gave her, Frisk felt thankfully answer a lot of her questions. There were some moments of annoyance where Flowey’s amnesia manifested and he couldn’t remember some details or important tidbits, but overall, the answers he could give were mostly enough for her to keep a clear head.

“So do you personally think there are other mountains, or do you believe you guys are really
alone?” Frisk asked as they passed into another open field.

“I don’t know,” Flowey admitted. “I mean I like to think so. Would be a bit lonely otherwise. I guess we’ll find out when we monsters get out of here.”

“When?” Frisk repeated. “So there is a chance of freedom?”

“Well, some monsters are working on it,” Flowey said. “They’ve been working on it for quite a while in fact, and they’ve in fact made plenty of progress so far with some... methods and ideas I’m not getting into because I’ve forgotten.”

“So how long do you think until you guys are free?” Frisk asked.

“I dunno,” Flowey said. “My guess is about a few decades at most.”

“Hmm, alright then,” Frisk said. “I hope I’ll still be alive by then.”

“I hope so too,” Flowey said. “I think everyone down here does.”

Frisk began to wonder now. The same questions she wondered before. How would society react and change once monsters suddenly started pouring out? Would humans accept them? Would there be another war? Would there be chaos? Frisk didn’t know what to think as the likeliest outcome. At the very least, plenty of books would have to be rewritten. Whatever happens, Frisk decided at that moment that if she were still around once the time came, she would become one of their first supporters.

“Alright,” Flowey began as the road again grew surrounded by trees. “If my memory serves correct, then we should be close to town. Now. There should be a-”

“Sup kiddo,” said a familiar voice behind them suddenly. “Fancy seeing you again.”

“Gah, fuck!” exclaimed Frisk.

Behind them, there now stood a familiar short yet bulging skeleton in a blue jacket, with black shorts and a wide grin stuck on its face.

“Jesus Christ,” Frisk said, her hand on her chest. “Do you really have to sneak up on me like that every time?!”

“I was just passing by and wanted to say hi,” said Sans. “Sorry kiddo. Didn’t meant to scare the skin out off ya.”

“Ugh,” Flowey expressed and rolled his eyes.

“Yeah, yeah,” Frisk quickly said. “What are you doing here anyway?”

“Oh, you didn’t hear?” Sans asked back. “I said I was passing by and wanted to say hi. Not surprised you forgot since it was a pretty uneventful conversation.”

“No I meant, what are you doing here?” Frisk said, somewhat harshly. “As in why were you passing by?”

“Geez kiddo,” Sans said, still grinning as usual. “You seem suddenly harsher than before. Are you even the same striped jacket-wearing kid, because if not, have you seen another human kid here
recently? She was wearing the same looking striped jacket, with only one shoe and brown skin like you. Speaking of which, now that I think about it, she looked very similar to you, whatever your name is. Do all humans look the same? Or does that count as racist?"

Frisk said nothing. She simply felt incredibly on edge dealing with him, now that she knew who his father was. It didn’t help that Frisk felt like the smiling skeleton was reading her mind.

“Giving me the silent treatment eh kiddo?” Sans continued. “That’s alright. You don’t need to waste your words on me. I’m not that interesting anyway.”

“You can say that again,” Flowey said.

“Alright, you want to know the truth of why I was around here?” Sans began, either ignoring or not noticing what Flowey said. “Will that make you happy? Ok then. So I was just here setting up a new business I’m planning. I’ve decided I want to start selling fried snow. Haven’t seen much of that around so I decided to tap into this unused market. Give me a month or maybe even a week and I’m sure I’ll be a billionaire. Now, since you’ve been such a good kid, I think I’m gonna give you a great, once in a lifetime discount on the first batch official fried snow. It’s only 9999g. Take it while it’s still warm.”

“Why are you really here?” Frisk said sternly.

“Alright kiddo,” Sans began. “Did something happen recently? Because if so, I think I can help ya out. I may be lazy, but I ain’t heartless. Metaphorically at least.”

Frisk felt a bit unsure of herself now. Looking at him now, she could not miss the similarities he had to the man she saw in her dream, even if he was literally just a skeleton. While she knew it was possible he had no ill intent, Frisk still didn’t feel comfortable by his presence. But she also realized that it wasn’t the best idea to judge a person by their parents, especially since she didn’t really know his. Properly that is.

“It’s nothing,” she lied. “Nothing’s the matter.”

The skeleton stared at her suspiciously.

“Alright,” he said. “If you say so.”

“You didn’t answer her question before,” Flowey said.

“Geez, everyone is acting suspicious of me today,” Sans said, still grinning. “I swear to you, I do not know where they hid the money.”

“Hold up, what?” Frisk asked in surprise.

“It was a joke, kiddo,” Sans said.

“Oh,” Frisk expressed. “Huh.”

Flowey gave out an exasperated sigh.

“Can we continue on Frisk?” he asked. “I wanna get to Snowdin in the next few minutes if we can, especially if this trash bag is gonna tag along the way.”

“Oh, you’re in luck then,” Sans said. “The town is just over that hill.”

He pointed with his bony, index finger to a spot behind them. Frisk then turned around and indeed
saw the road leading up a hill large enough to obscure what was behind it. Looking closer, Frisk saw the occasional smoke rise up here and there. Chimneys, she figured. Frisk now felt a rush of excitement build up within her.

“Oh, I knew that already,” Flowey said, somewhat awkwardly. “And I definitely… did not forget that.”

“We’re finally here?” Frisk said, with joy in her voice. “Holy shit. I get to see an actual town full of monsters.”

“Don’t get too excited,” Sans said. “It ain’t as cool these days. No pun intended. Or was there?”

“It can’t be that bad since I last remember,” Flowey said.

“Oh it is that bad,” Sans said. “Then again, I can’t read your mind so I don’t know whether the last you remember was like from yesterday or a decade ago.”

Without uttering a word, Frisk hurried her steps as she began headed towards the hill.

“Wow, someone is excited,” Sans said behind her, with the same calm demeanour in his voice as he had in the last hour or so.

Frisk saw the hill grow closer and closer while her excitement grew at the same pace. The grey clouds of smoke in the distance also became more distinct. In only a few minutes, she had already reached the hill.

“Woah calm down Frisk,” Flowey said, bouncing around in her backpack as she climbed up the road. “I'm getting sick from all this dangling you're making me do.”

“Can flowers even get sick?” Frisk asked him.

“I honestly don't know,” Flowey answered. “But if I throw up in the next few minutes I'm holding you accountable.”

“Well then I'll happily take full blame I guess,” Frisk said and smiled.

Climbing up the hill proved to be very arduous. To make it worse, the snow grew thicker with every height, and once she was close to the top, she was knee-deep in snow. Frisk almost felt like she was climbing a mountain. If it wasn't for the moment with the stone door in the ruins, this would’ve been the most she had used up her strength today. Yet, like with the stone door, she was determined to pull off these last steps, only in this instance, she didn't have the fear of someone chasing after her.

Once she finally reached the top after a surprisingly gruelling climb, she took a short breather and gazed upon the other side… and became utterly shocked, disappointed and saddened by what she saw.

Across the other side of the hill, and across a long wooden bridge that lay above a tall crevice separating the hill from the town and leading far, far down, was what Frisk could only surmise from the crudely stacked buildings was once a prosperous town. Whatever it was like in the past was a time clearly long gone, as if it wasn't for the couple smoking chimneys and strange unidentifiable figures of various shapes and colours in the distant, Frisk would have assumed this town was long abandoned. All the houses were drab and colourless, with dozens of holes and empty frames, with some missing their front doors or even entire walls. Some of the buildings had the windows boarded up, and the streets were covered in newspapers and garbage blowing in the
The only two buildings that looked in decent shape was one at the other end of town she could only glance at, and another one in what seemed to be the square, that looked like some sort of bar or restaurant of sorts, but even these two buildings didn't seem to be in perfect shape either.

The figures, that Frisk could only guess were other monsters from this distance, looked like they were either wandering alone aimlessly, gathered up around makeshift campfires or huddled together in some empty building. If there was one thing on earth Frisk could best compare this horrendous sight too, it would be a warzone.

“By the angel,” Flowey gasped. “What in the world happened here during the time I was asleep?”

Sans walked beside the surprised and disappointed duo, and even with his large, seemingly permanent smile, his posture and look gave off a clear vibe of utter saddened shame.

“Welcome to the cheerful town of Snowdin,” he said. “Or at least what's left of it anyway.”

Chapter End Notes

So I decided to take a break from being dead and finally uploaded a new chapter.

Seriously speaking though, hi. It's been a while. I'm sure some of you (the ones that stayed and are thus reading this) began to suspect that I've given up on this fanfiction, or maybe even fanfiction in general. That's actually, sort of, the opposite reason of why I was away. I'm actually writing several fanfictions now, all UT or DT related, and one original short story of my own. One of those I've already written a chapter for, and you can check it out yourself. Just look up the fic, Dungeons and Darkners. My idea for that came as I was going through some of my favorite fan artists and realized we all have our own takes on Frisk, so that story is basically a semi non-canonical, crossover fic involving all of our three versions of Frisk meeting up, and before you ask, yes I got permission from them. Alongside that, I've also been brainstorming some other fics, most of it just spin-offs of this AU with other side characters, including one about Politics Bear. Yeah, that guy from Snowdin who only had like 3-4 lines in the game at the very least. I kinda starting writing his story if you can remember a while back, but I'm kinda starting over with it, now that I'm more adjusted to writing. Then there is also my original short story, unrelated to UT or DR or any other work already made, but I haven't touched it in months and I kinda wanna finish it before the year is over. Maybe I'll post a link to it here once I'm done with it. So I've just been busy with that, and other stuff. Turns out, this might've been a bad time to start working on multiple fics at once, since we are at the end of the semester, and Christmas is coming up and all that jazz.

But it doesn't matter much now because guess what, I've finally uploaded the next chapter, and it's a long one at that. The longest chapter so far, maxing over 26 pages on my Google docs. I guess it's only fair after such a long wait, and I also have so much to say about it.

This is kinda the chapter where we get to know more about the state of the underground in this AU, and there is also some character and lore building going on. We also meet some characters from UT, including the group of teens I decided to not make hostile this time, and even Berdly. Yes, in case you were wondering, this is that Berdly. From Deltarune. I was originally going to make it Jerry, but then I wanted to add more connection to the DT world and thought "why not?" and so I gave him a
short cameo so to speak. This will not be the only character or reference to DT, so keep an eye out for more in future chapters.

As I've already laid down before, every chapter, and I'm talking about chapters overall but not parts, is followed a short interlude. While the first interlude was used to build mystery with new characters that never appeared in UT or even DT, the next chapter will... be slightly mysterious as well, but unlike the first one that is not the focus, and it does feature two major characters from UT and is kinda their introduction in this AU, so to speak. As to who these characters are, well I leave you to guess until it comes out. All I will hint at is that they have already been mentioned in the story so far.

Anyway, enough babbling and enjoy the story. The interlude and next chapter will come soon (hopefully before 2020) and I hope you'll stay until then.

Adios.
Interlude 2: The Uncanny Valley

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Interlude 2: The Uncanny Valley

Hotland, Core

Deep in a hot, volcanic region, where mountains and rivers of pure fire lay dormant, a large, intimidating building of pure glass and metal stood firm. Inside of it, the short and plump yellow drake monster, Alphys, wearing her white lab coat entered the lab elevator, alone and trembling, with a touchpad and stacks of files in her hands. She hated this part of her job. It was by far the worst part, and something she wouldn’t dare put on even her worst enemies. But since she was The Royal Scientist's top assistant, she knew it was also one of the most important moments of her job, if not the most.

Yet she still couldn't help but hate it either way. Every time she saw that accursed red light blink in her lab office, which also happened to be her home as well, she always felt like her heart ceased. Every time it came, and it always came without warning, it was like the world had stopped turning, and she stared at the blinking light and listened to its soft but audible beep for a few moments of pure, unadulterated terror, before she managed to put herself together, although barely, and then attempt to answer that call.

This time it came just over a minute ago, unannounced as usual, while she was in her bed watching old reruns of her favourite human shows, and in just seconds after her initial shock wore off, she had dressed into her usual white lab coat and gathered the files and notepad.

There was only one thing that blinking, red light always meant. One thing it always signified, like a horrible omen of eldritch proportion. It was her boss, her master, The Royal Scientist himself, Gaster, calling for her.

The elevator went further and further down, deep into the crust of the earth. Alphys hated how slow it was sometimes, as it always prolonged the agony she desperately wanted over with as quickly as possible. Alphys counted down elevator numbers on the elevator pad and felt her yellow, reptilian teeth shiver. The countdown always seemed to slow down the further her floor came closer, like the universe itself was gleefully torturing her by delaying the inevitable. That and the soft ding it made as it passed by every floor, reminiscent of the dreadful blinking light hanging in her office, just made the agonizing wait worse.

Then, after what seemed like an eternity, the elevator reached its destination. It was the bottom floor, and seemingly so deep down that Alphys could’ve assumed it was at the bottom of the earth. The door opened, and in front of her was now the deep, dark hallway she always trembled at. The walls and floor were made of plain steel, and in the darkness, the hall seemed to lead into the depths of oblivion. It was never lit these days. It was supposed to be. Or so she was told. Whatever Gaster's reasoning was, Alphys couldn't dare imagine.

She slowly stepped with one clawed, trembling foot into the hallway, feeling as if she was about to
literally face death itself. She felt her guts swirl once she placed her other, and was now finally standing with both her feet on the cold, empty metallic floor. Then she heard the door behind her close and her only source of merciful light at the moment, being the light from inside the elevator, follow suit. Alphys found herself now standing alone in utter silence facing nothing but blackness. At the end of this utter oblivion, he was waiting. Gaster was waiting.

Alphys felt sweat leak down her chin. Yet, it was cold in this place. Very cold. Like the outer spaces had somehow manifested here.

She should have been used to this by now. She knew that. This wasn’t her first time in this place, nor would it most likely be her last. Yet all Alphys wanted to do now was to fall on the floor and hide, hide from the horrors that surrounded her in silence. This place felt worse now. It always did. It was like this place was the antithesis to both natural logic and earthly magic at the same time, and Alphys wondered in which future instance of coming down here, she would finally crack and lose her mind like Vissie did, her poor old friend and colleague.

But she was sure that if she did run or give up now, she would be given a much worse fate than whatever Gaster had in store for her now. Instead, Alphys did her usual and closed her eyes shut for a moment.

“'C'mon Alphys, y-you can d-do this,” she whispered to herself. “Y-you're a big girl. A st-strong g-girl. It's just the u-usual. You just n-need to give it your- give HIM y-your papers and m-maybe t-talk for a moment, and th-then you can go back up. S-simple as that.”

With that said, she opened her eyes, took a deep breath, turned on her notepad for some visible light, and headed down the dreaded, cold metallic corridor.

It was like she had now walked in silence for a few hours, hearing only her exasperated breath and footsteps creating metallic echoes through the halls during that time. Alphys looked at the clock on her notepad, and according to it, only a few minutes had passed. She knew that logic dictated that her fearful state must’ve caused her to imagine time moving much slower than it did, but she wasn’t sure of that anymore. She wasn’t sure if natural laws even applied down here these days.

A large set of doors now appeared on the hallway to her left and Alphys glanced at it fearfully as she walked past. She knew that door. Behind it lay literal manifestations of her shame and guilt, unkillable yet suffering from immense determination, her determination. The only solace she felt in it was that she wasn’t really alone in the blame that lay there, yet Gaster seemed to harbour no sense of guilt about it whatsoever.

Those doors vanished deep in the darkness behind her, and Alphys wished for her dreadful destination to arrive soon just so she could get all of this over with. A few moments later it did, as she finally reached the large, red door at the end of the hallway.

She reached for her keycard in her pocket but unfortunately dropped it immediately from her shaking hands. Cursing herself, she kneeled down on the floor and tried to reach it. Something happened then, something strange she couldn’t explain. She didn’t realize something had even occurred until she was standing with the card in the slot and noticed she didn’t remember ever getting the card back up. It was as if time itself had blinked for a moment, or changed so that she never dropped the card in the first place.

She shook her head and dismissed it as a simple memory loss in a midst of unease, and proceeded to open the door. The first thing she saw was a bright, sea-green light coming from a glass window
on the other end of the room that appeared. The room in question was large and wide, and if it wasn’t for the green light, it would have been almost as dark as the hallway, if not just as. In the centre of it was a large, strange mechanical device about her size, hovering just above the floor and being supported by steel bars, tubes and wires protruding from the ceiling. Alphys had no clue what the purpose of it was, but from this vantage, the strange apparatus resembled a strange, animal skull of a kind, mostly similar to what Alphys knew from her files on the surface animals as “a deer”.

On the left and right walls of this wide-open lab were empty tubes filled with unidentifiable liquid, and on the other end underneath the table with the bright light were desks covered in blueprints, notes and the occasional science tools. Alphys partly wished, mostly out of curiosity, that Gaster would share with her what he was using these strange tubes, devices and notes for, but she was too scared to ever ask him, and another part of her even feared that knowing what it was would possibly make all this feel even worse.

Alphys felt her heartbeat go rapid as she slowly walked towards the glowing window, and the sweat on her yellow scales intensified. She almost couldn’t bear to look at the light, even though she had seen it countless times, but she pressed on as Alphys knew that it would bring her closer to finishing this terrible ordeal.

Once she reached the glass window, she fearfully glanced through it. The frosted glass was almost the complete opposite of transparent, so all she could see was a large circular room covered in sea-green hue, and at the bottom of it, she saw a strange, humanoid, black and white silhouette almost hidden by the frosting. She knew who it was. It was Gaster.

Looking down at him, Alphys felt as if she would now finally faint. She hovered her finger over the button underneath the microphone beside the frosted glass window and finally brought herself to press it after a while.

“G-G-G-Gaster?” she spoke into the microphone. “S-sir? I… uhh, I came as y-you requested. I also, umm, brought the f-files that you… that you… asked for?”

She looked down, baffled, at the pile of papers in her hands, underneath her notepad. Even though she was certain she was supposed to bring these exact files, it just dawned on her that she never got any messages or notes requesting them. There wasn’t even a microphone installed in her office, so the only way for Gaster to ask for them would’ve been in person. It was as if something had somehow planted this idea into her mind. Or maybe someone rather.

“Ha… ha… t-that’s f-funny,” Alphys said, trying her hardest to find light in this situation. “I-I could’ve… umm, I could’ve sworn t-that you asked me to… asked me to… bring these to you…”

As soon as she looked back through the frosted glass, Alphys noticed something, or rather a lack of something, that brought forth the biggest fright she had had for a while. The figure was gone. She never heard from him or from anything else from the room on the other side, yet he was clearly absent, and Alphys now began to frantically look around it in panic. It was like the sensation of finding a spider in the corner of your room, and then immediately losing it after you look away for only a short moment.

He had never done something like this before. Not in any of the previous instance of her coming down to this living nightmare, and she now began to wonder if she was finally losing it.

*Where is he?!* Alphys thought frantically. *Where is-*

She suddenly felt a dark presence in the air, and it dawned on her that she was no longer alone in
this room. She slowly turned around.

“G-gaster…?” she asked softly

Chills ran up her scales and she froze solid. She could see a figure in the shadows, skinny and much taller than her, standing like a ghost with its back to her. It was staring at a glass jar sitting on a desk in the centre that Alphys had failed to notice once she came through the door. What Alphys could only see from this distance, was that the jar held a strange, jelly-like substance resembling almost a mushed human brain of sorts, but it also had some strange flesh-like qualities to its texture and even seemed to be crystallized.

The being in the shadows, the one she knew as Gaster, just stared at it, like he was somehow entranced by this strange gunk.

It was at this moment that she was reminded of why she hated coming down here, why she always hated meeting him. It wasn’t due to the social anxiety she often had of meeting new people, or even comparable to when she was speaking to someone she looked highly up to or someone she had a tinge of a crush on. What she actually felt from Gaster, that creature, was genuine, uncontested fear. Fear of the unknown, and fears made manifest from the hints of great or unnatural things that wouldn’t belong in this world if the gods that existed were kind.

She no longer felt concerns on whether she was actually supposed to bring him these files or not, as she no longer cared and just wished to get out of here as soon as she could.

“H-hey,” she said nervously to the figure. “I… uh, didn’t see you there b-boss. Didn’t uhh s-see you l-leave your meditation chamber either. How umm, how did you… d-do that?”

The silhouetted figure said nothing and made no movement like it was a statue.

“N-never mind,” Alphys continued. “S-sorry. I am s-so sorry I… I’m just gonna… leave t-these f-files here, I don’t really know i-if you want them or not-”

As she was about to plop the files onto the table by the frosted window and then proceed to frantically head out, she noticed the files on her hands were suddenly gone, and she only held her illuminating notepad. She had felt a strange lightness in her hands a moment ago, but she was too frightened to think much of it.

As Alphys turned again towards the figure, bewildered and scared of what could have possibly happened to it, she saw her question answered in the most unnatural and logic-defying way she could think of. The figure was now holding them in one of its skeletal hands and seemed to be looking at it. Alphys knew of magic that could teleport items from one destination to another, yet this felt this was somehow different from that, more subtle and less noticeable. It was almost like she never held the files in the first place.

“Y-you already have it,” Alphys said frantically. “G-great. J-just g-great. Glad I could, umm, be of help. To you that is. I, uh, I’m gonna go now.”

The figure said nothing as it continued to examine the files. Then Alphys saw the file flip a page on its own, without seeing the figure ever using its other hand. She felt she had seen enough now. She had felt that for a while.

She walked past the silhouetted figure, who did not do so much as to turn towards her. Alphys felt, at that moment, a gigantic rush of relief. This moment seemed to have ended much earlier than she anticipated. She didn’t even have to speak to her boss it seemed. Now she could finally get back
upstairs and chill in her bed for seemingly the rest of the day without much worry.

“Alphys,” a voice suddenly spoke.

The yellow lizard froze in her tracks. She felt an unnatural amount of horror grip cling her to the floor like an anchor. The voice sounded almost like a whisper yet at the same time it was paradoxically loud enough to echo across the whole floor. It seemed to spread through every door and every hallway, and it marked itself as a permanent stain on the yellow lizard’s mind as it dug through both her eardrums like a wormlike parasite. But the most frightful thing, the one thing she hated the most, was about how it seemed to control her every nerve, and suddenly she felt the idea to ignore that voice to be the worst possible thing anyone could do at this moment. She was sure that even the bravest of souls would feel hesitant in rejecting it.

“Turn around,” the voice spoke again. “I want to talk to you.”

Alphys didn’t even consider refusing and proceeded to obey. Once she did, she was greeted by the same bottomless eyes that glared into infinity she had seen and loathed for years. The eyes seemed almost pure black at first glance, somehow even darker than the rest of the figure itself, but each of them had white dots in the centre like distant lights at the end of the darkest tunnels of oblivion, and here in the darkness of the room it was like looking the last remaining stars on an otherwise empty night sky in a dying universe. It was like staring at eternity, and they hinted at things, greater things not meant to be realized by any entity, magic or not, in this fragile reality. Where these white dots ended or even where they lay, Alphys couldn’t even dare to imagine, as she felt the truth would make her mad. All she could bring herself to do now was stare at this being, this being she knew for years but still couldn’t fathom as existing in the slightest.

“G-g-g-g-g-” was all she could mutter.

The being looked at her, patiently, with his seemingly bottomless eyes. The way he did just made Alphys feel worse.

“G-Gaster?” Alphys finally said, although meekly. “Uhh… w-what d-d-d-do you uhh…”

“What do I want?” the being asked back. “I want to talk. Simple as that.”

“Oh uh… about uhh… w-what?” Alphys asked, nervously.

“You should know,” Gaster simply said. “I am disappointed in you. Only slightly, but still, I am disappointed.”

That one word, disappointed, seemed to cause all of Alphys’ nerves to seize at once. He had never said that to her, and the lizard felt like she was about to genuinely die, or worse. Yet, despite everything, despite now wanting to run screaming out the door and through the halls, she felt it was better to stand her ground for now, as she feared that doing otherwise would upset him even more.

“A-about what?” she said in a whisper, as it was all she could muster through her trauma.

Gaster stood still, almost as if he was waiting for his turn to speak.

“I read… some of your so-called files on human history,” he began after a short pause. “And watched some of the tapes. Even tried out some of those… interactive media. I found them… interesting to say the least. Valuable even, in some sorts. But that is not the reason I have called you here. The reason is your reckless usage of them.”

Alphys almost opened her mouth in disbelief. Those tapes and books were supposed to be kept
secure in a locked closet in her room, and she only let a select few others view them. It had been that way for years, and she hadn’t even informed Gaster about them one bit. She knew the possibility that someone else had told him, but barely anyone came down here these past few years except for her, or so it was ever since Vissie lost her mind and was sent to the asylum.

*Is there no limit to this… thing’s grasp?* Alphys thought to herself and felt the sweat run down her cheeks.

“Oh… t-t-those things?” she asked and smiled nervously. “H-how uhh… how did y-you hear a-about them? H-how did you even… uhh… get to them exactly?”

“They are all fiction,” Gaster said, clearly ignoring her questions. “None of these things, in any of the discs or stories, actually transpired in this world or any that closely resembles it, and those aspects of them that do have some actual historical merit have been changed so much as to be completely unrecognizable. Yet, you are not naive. You are smart, and you knew, yet you still labelled them as history. Why?”

“I.. uhh…” Alphys muttered, smiling awkwardly and sweating.

Her literal lizard brain tried it hardest to think of any excuse it could possibly think of, anything that could possibly save her from this being’s wrath.

“Y-you’re right… I did do that,” Alphys began, spouting out whatever popped in her mind. “I-I did label them as… history, because, um, that is… what they are… in a sense. A history of… human media. Sure it’s kinda… lacking in content if we are speaking in a general sense, it’s no library, after all, heh, but this is all I have managed to scavenge from the trash that flows down here. Besides, we… heh… all gotta start somewhere right? And collecting human media is important… in a sense. Also, I never really expected anyone to take any of them seriously, heh. Maybe I should’ve… made it clearer.”

She smiled apologetically at the cold figure in the dark. He seemingly stared at her, unmoving, but Alphys couldn’t really tell from the darkness. Then walked a few steps forward, until the sea-green light from the window alongside the white one from her notepad finally illuminated the rest of his body. She could now see this being as it truly looked. The head that held those two infinite pits with distant light uncannily resembled a human skull, and Alphys felt like there was something else wrong with it despite the aforementioned eye sockets, but she couldn’t fathom what. The Royal Scientist wore a coat of purest midnight black, the one he almost always wore, and it made him look almost like a sorcerer from a distant corner of dark lands. If Alphys didn’t know any better she would’ve thought he brought those clothes with him from whatever realm he returned from. Protruding from the two sleeves were skeletal hands, with milky white bone palms that slowly developed into ink coloured fingers like they had been dipped into a dark void where even the brightest of hopeful light could never shine. They were almost invisible when they were further in the darkness. He continued to stare at Alphys, seemingly thinking something.

“You are lying,” he answered simply, sounding as cold and careless as his expression, yet his words made Alphys startle like a cat. “You intentionally mislabeled these stories and entertainments to fool others into thinking these were historical records. You have already done so already, several times in fact, towards different souls, some of which that you care for. Now this misinformation has even spread throughout the underground from soul to soul, and you are the root of it.”

Alphys didn’t know what to say. It was like his voice was speaking directly into her soul, and reaching deep into the dark recesses of it and grabbing hold of whatever shame or sorrow lay in those depths, and she found herself unable to bring forth the courage to double down on her lying.
What else does he know? she thought, panicking. What other knowledge is he hiding from me?


Wait, how could it be them? Alphys thought. But… if not them then who else could it be? Does Gaster actually leave this floor without my knowledge?

“No one told me,” Gaster answered simply.

That answer surprised Alphys and made her feel confused at first. But then as she thought on it she felt even more frightened.

“Then… h-how did you know?” she asked the being, befuddled. "Do you… go outside often?"

Gaster didn’t answer. Just looked at her, silently. It seemed he wasn’t willing to answer, but this silence Alphys thought was much more frightening than any explanation he could’ve given.

“I do wonder though,” he suddenly began after a while. “Why did you do it? What did you hope to accomplish by intentionally misleading other monsters?”

“I uhh…” Alphys muttered, not knowing where to start. “I j-just wanted to… impress others. All these works, these comics, shows and games. All of it is… so amazing I just wanted to… see how they reacted I guess.”

“So you are saying you deceived other souls, some of which you care for… for amusement?”

Gaster said, sounding as confused as a machine trying to understand emotions.

“No, no, no!” Alphys began apologetically. “That’s not it… I…”

She stopped herself from continuing. She couldn’t find a clear, satisfying answer because there wasn’t any, and she couldn’t deny that anymore. Every excuse she made would just make it worse. She stared down on the floor, not wanting to look this being in his accursed eyes.

“I… I don’t know,” she admitted. “I don’t know why I lied. I just… I’m sorry I’ll fix it… I promise… boss. I’ll even erase it all if I have to.”

Alphys still couldn’t bring herself to look at him, while he stared down at the ashamed lizard, looking like a master standing over his whipped hound. She wished that she was able to ignore his presence altogether, or even pretend he didn’t exist as if he was simply an illusory shadow on the corner of her eyes. As it stood though, even the very air she breathed down here radiated his presence. To deny him was harder for her than to deny even reality itself.

“Hmm,” Gaster finally replied after a while.

Without saying anything else, he turned around and headed back to the shadow.

“Do not disturb me from now,” he said while staring again at the jar. “Unless I otherwise order so. This work I have is far more important than anything you can think of. You should also know that it is of utmost secrecy. If you do however come down here, Miss Alphys…”

He turned suddenly quiet.

“I-if I come down here… t-then what?” Alphys asked and looked up nervously.

Gaster stared down at the glass jar on the table as if he was in thought.
“You may leave now,” he simply answered. “Do not disturb me.”

And with that said, he was gone. Gaster, alongside the glass jar and the files, he was no longer in the room. There were no effects, lights, or sounds, or even anything that could've hinted he ever was here, and witnessing his mere vanishing as if he just blinked from existence made Alphys almost feel as if she was close to having a heart attack. Then after she absorbed what had happened, she felt a weight lifted from her soul as it no longer felt his presence, and without hesitating, she ran out of the room and walked down the corridor with haste.

She didn’t even consider locking the door again behind her. All she wanted to do now was to get out of this accursed floor and corridor, away from these horrors and hints of otherworldly truths.

That was always how these meetings ended, every time she came down and most likely how they would continue to until perhaps she would become too scared in this place to even move on her own accord.

It wasn't like Gaster was unaware of it, of her fear. In one of her previous meetings down here, she finally caved in and confessed, but all he did was stare at her for a moment with his same, unmoving expression and then turned away as if all she told him were mere unimportant tidbits. Even when she broke out in front of him, he simply examined her with a soulless look. Alphys wondered sometimes if he even had a soul, or if it was lost whatever abyss he crawled back out of.

She hated coming down here. She hated this job, this torture she had to endure under the heel of a seemingly unnatural being. She even hated… him. Or at least who he had become.

She thought back on her memories of Gaster from old. Before the accident, and before his disappearance. The skeleton monster she worked with gleefully and who gave off no aura of disorder or otherworldly horrors. The hard-working yet joyous monster that brought smiles to her and her coworkers, the one who saw potential in her and even specifically picked her as his second in command. The monster… that she once loved.

There times though, where she wondered and feared if those memories were even true, or if they were merely something like fake implants that manifested after this being rose from whatever hell he was born in. Those thoughts came to her first after she discovered that she couldn't find a single file, source or anything that pointed to his existence before the accident. It was as if someone or something had wiped out or altered any records that even mentioned or hinted at him before he appeared and seized his current status. But then Alphys would wonder why her memories of him were of a much pleasant person than the thing that lived down here. Perhaps, as she sometimes considered, it wanted to ease her and everyone else into trusting it more, whatever it truly was. But then came the questions of his two sons, both of which were born long before his momentary disappearance. Then there was also Gaster's so-called father-in-law, Semi.

Alphys doubted though that she would ever find the truth of it. If it was even possible to find it that is. But the thing that bothered her the most, the question even she herself couldn't answer, and one she pondered on her elevator ride back up, was why she didn't quit. Or why she couldn't rather. She knew it was most likely for the best, but every time she ever came close to doing so, she felt a disturbance or sensation of sorts, telling her it was wrong or making her feel that her resignation would throw a wrench into some kind of plan she had to follow. She also thought at times that it was just an excuse she made, a convincing lie she made to herself, and the simple truth could be that she was fearful of how Gaster would react if she did resign.

She pondered these things and more even long after she left the elevator and entered her room where she proceeded to lay on her bed, as she did after every visit, waiting for this day to end. That was all she could do at this point. Ponder, but never expect to get an answer to any question.
So in this interlude, we are introduced to two major characters from the game, and ones who obviously play a somewhat big part in this story. As to how big, I can't exactly tell you.

I really don't have much to say about this chapter. I kinda wanted to make Gaster give off a whole Lovecraftian vibe, but spoiler alert, his presence is and won't not the only hint of that though. But this story is not gonna turn into like a cosmic horror story of sorts, or at least I haven't planed it to be. Simply since Gaster's mere concept is based somewhat on the question of existence, and that in the original game he is someone who got literally erased from existence, I thought it was kinda appropriate for his character in this AU to somewhat reflect that. Alphys, on the other hand, I decided not to change much. Many of the main cast hasn't so far, but there will be some changes in characters later, in case you are curious. I ain't telling who changes, but if you read the prequel story, A hunt to Remember, you might definitely guess one popular character that has a big change, so to speak.

So I am not sure when I can promise the next chapter to come out. I do have some other fics and stories to work on. There is the non-canonical crossover fic with the artists Killb94 and Katelynntheg, involving our three versions of Frisk. Then there is also the Shattering spin-off story about Politics Bear which I'm remaking, but I might end up possibly scratching that one altogether. Then finally, if you have been paying attention to these notes, there is the original short story I am making, completely set in my own fictional universe and not related to any games, movies or any official work. When I do manage to finish it, and it is not a question of if, I will post a link to it on a future note. My goal is to at least finish one of these projects before the end of the year.

Anyway, without further ado, enjoy the story so far.
Chapter 3: Snowdin - Part 1

“This place looks…” Frisk began. “It looks…”

“Awful?” Sans said, still with a skeletal grin on his face. “Disastrous? Trashy? A hell zone? Don't worry kiddo. I doubt anyone here will feel offended by whatever you say about it. Snowdin has seen indeed seen much better days.”

The town didn't prove much better once they finally crossed the surprisingly sturdy bridge. In fact, what surprised Frisk about it was that it had managed to somehow look worse up close. All the clumsy-looking buildings on the verge of collapsing, the decaying look and feel, and the countless marks of ruination everywhere were now in clear, uncomfortable detail. That with the addition of the gruesome stench that Frisk could tell seemed to be a mixture of month old clothing, spoiled food, the uncleanness of wet animal fur, and burning wood and oil, just made this town already completely unforgettable in a sorrowful way, like a funeral for an old friend.

Frisk looked around, saddened and shocked, at the dozen of monsters of many types who paid no heed to the newcomers, who looked almost as miserable as the town itself. She counted so many new creatures she had never seen, which most humans had never seen, including a lot of ones resembling human-sized animals, standing upright and wearing, although torn and dirty, clothes like humans. Mostly they consisted of bunnies and hares with a few mice, equines, a single bear, and other mammals Frisk didn’t recognize. That’s not mentioning the ones with fewer or even no animal characteristics in general, including one that looked like a black-eyed, imp-like figure with horns and a devilish face that was clearly forcing a smile, a group gelatinous mostly round, colourless blobs of various sizes and wearing differing torn hats or fake beards, a fleshy, reptilian-like creature with long ears and an impish tail, and there was even one humanoid creature that seemed to be purely made of green fire, wearing torn clothing Frisk couldn’t understand why it didn't burn. But she didn’t think much of it. She, in fact, tried to not think much of this, not because she didn’t really care or wasn’t at all impressed, but rather she didn’t want to. She even found it hard to accept just the slightest joy she felt at what she knew should be a groundbreaking sight for a human.

Frisk had been waiting these last few hours to feel joy and excitement at seeing a town full of strange monsters and creatures from the old fantasies and folktales come to life before her sight, but now that she finally stood there, in what was now just the ruins of a happier time she long missed all the possible joy and excitement she selfishly had now was drowned by the overwhelming grief and pity.

“What in the world happened to this town?” Flowey asked the bulging skeleton, sounding more befuddled than Frisk had ever heard him so far.

“What hasn't happened to this town rather?” Sans replied. “Ever since the war ended, all manner of things were thrown this way in the decade and a half that followed. Oh, yeah, there was a war down here Frisky, just in case you humans were out of the loop on your monster history.”
“We’ve heard that,” Flowey said. “Or she did rather. I kinda had a few memories about that era and… ok, a lot of it was missing so I kinda learned as well. But it was more of a dusty recap rather than anything.”

“Wait a minute Flowey,” Frisk began as she just realized something. “I seem to recall that you said you fell into your coma around like 3-5 years ago or something. Yet according to the teens back there, the war officially ended in over a decade and a half or more ago. Shouldn’t you at least have some memories of it? Or at least of how this town actually looked? I know you have some sort of amnesia, but forgetting an entire war and the state of a town feels kinda… stretching it.”

“Well I was technically born after the war actually,” Flowey answered. “I’m not that old, geez.”

“Oh sorry,” Frisk said. “But… shouldn’t you have at least remember some sign of decay?”

“Of course there were some signs of decay,” Flowey replied. “The town had problems yeah, a couple of empty buildings, plenty of homeless monsters and whatnot. But this? Snowdin wasn’t nearly THIS bad, and I can assure you, I remember it well. I mean, it was admittedly already kinda one of the worst looking places down here 5 years ago, but this is like a whole new level of awfulness.”

“That makes a bit of sense,” Frisk replied. “It’s just… I don’t know. I expected more.”

“Well, I think the real question is,” Flowey began. “How in the world did this place manage to turn this bad in just 5 years?”

“No idea, you tell me,” Sans answered, still grinning. “Hell, last year, I thought that was finally the worst Snowdin could get. But somehow, lo and behold, the cool people of Snowdin, pun intended, found a way to sink even further down. If I had to mindlessly throw out blame like an Undernet commenter, then I’m guessing it’s a mixture tax increase, poor leadership and the capital seemingly just leaving us to our own devices while at the same time not letting us have a mayor or even say in the matter for some reason.”

“Jesus,” Frisk muttered softly as she looked around the town.

She saw that the inhabitants were finally looking and paying some attention to Sans and the two newcomers, although with seemingly little care. She was partly relieved to see that none of them seemed to recognize her as a human, although a creeping worry of that still lingered in her mind.

“Of course there was also The Royal Hunt,” Sans suddenly blurted out. “Been making this place worse for years during their… let’s say antics for the children that might be listening.”

“Hang on,” Frisk said. “I want to ask you something. What do you know of… The Hunt. And also, do you know anything about… about…”

Frisk found it hard to continue. She didn’t know why but just muttering the name seemed impossible and it brought shivers through her body.

“About Mickey?” Sans asked casually.

Frisk stopped in her tracks and looked at him with slight unease.

“Oh yeah,” Frisk said, sounding worried. “How the… how did you know I was gonna ask about him?”

“Eh, I’m good at reading others,” Sans answered simply and stopped as well.
“Right…” Frisk said, unconvinced. “You’re not like… a mind reader or anything?”


“Mmh,” Frisk simply said. “Is that true Flowey?”

“Yeah, he’s not,” Flowey confirmed. “If he was, maybe he wouldn’t be so dumb now would he.”

“Maybe not,” Sans replied. “I’m sure I still would have my science degree though.”

“Ugh right,” Flowey said. “Forgot about that whole thing.”

“Anyways,” Frisk began, wanting to get back on track. “What do you know about Mickey?”

Sans became eerily quiet, and his seemingly endless smile didn’t seem to be holding itself together. The chump skeleton then looked down at the ground like a terrible memory came flashing forth.

“I think I should be asking you something,” he said and looked back up.

The smile on his face was gone, and Frisk who had gotten used to it, found it uncomfortable to not see him smiling, even though she knew human skeletons shouldn’t even be able to do that in the first place.

“How do you know about him?” Sans asked simply.

“Umm,” Frisk began. “There was this… this weird guy in the ruins. He told us about him. That we should keep away from him or something. Then there were some monsters in the forests, some teens who told us more, but not enough to go off on.”

“Hmm,” Sans said, thinking. “Alright, I can buy that.”

“But what do you know about him?” Frisk began. “I mean… you must know something about him, right?”

Sans stared at her in silence, as if he was unsure how to proceed.

“So how do I put this,” he began. “Well… I can’t tell you kiddo.”

“Can’t tell us what?” Frisk asked.


“Oh come on!” Flowey said with clear frustration. “How in the world do you not know about Mickey? You know practically everything that happens down here.”

“It’s not that,” Sans said. “In fact, I know plenty about him. But I can’t tell you. Not any of it, sorry.”

“Why not?” Frisk asked.

“Well I’m afraid I can’t give you a satisfying answer to that either,” Sans said.

Frisk began to grow slightly frustrated. She felt like she was running in circles, trying to catch something that always seemed to be close, yet always turned out to be farther than she thought.

“You’re not afraid of him, are you?” Flowey suddenly asked.
“Pfft, of course not,” Sans said.

“Uh-huh,” Flowey said, unconvinced. “Then why won’t you tell us eh?”

The skeletons face turned pale again, pale as a dead man’s face could be.

“Well truth be told,” he began. “What I meant to say was… it’s not my life I am afraid for.”

Frisk felt her frustration vane at that response. Only slightly, but still in some essence.

“Oh,” she simply replied.

“Who’s life then?” Flowey inquired. “Your brother’s?”

“Maybe,” Sans replied. “But I am sure there are others in town. Others, that are… maybe not so happy with either their lives or others. And considering the state of this place, you might find them surprisingly plentiful.”

“Hmmm,” Frisk replied.

She stood there on the road looking at the bloated skeleton, who’s weird smile, slowly but surely crept up again. Then she gave out a short, but clear yawn. As she did, Frisk felt that the tiredness was finally getting to her

“So anyway’s,” she said after she finished yawning. “Flowey said that there was an inn here somewhere in town. I’m guessing that place is out of the table.”

“You’re guessing right then,” Sans added. “The inn went out of business, what, two years ago? Maybe longer. Replaced by a free homeless shelter and charity by the owner and her sister. Hell, we even passed the place a short while ago.”

Frisk gave out a short, but clearly disappointed sigh.

“Figures…” she muttered.

“What businesses are even left standing here?” Flowey asked, looking around in shock.

“Well there's Grillby’s,” Sans said and pointed up at the wide building they were standing by.

It was a dirty, torn down building the size of a normal house, with a large broken sign that clearly used to spell "Grillby".

“Then there is also the library,” Sans continued. “Still don’t know how that place is still around honestly.”

“But what about the newspaper businesses?” Flowey pried. “Or the orphanage?”

“Oh yeah, the orphanage is also still standing, although barely,” Sans said. “Not in the greatest condition now and most of the kids there have moved to the homeless shelter, as its cheaper and has a better service. As for SNPB? Yeah, that's been gone a long time. They don't even have newspapers in town here anymore.”

“Do you, uh, think the shelter could still spare us a room?” Frisk asked. “I haven’t slept for like 24 hours and I’m frigging exhausted.”

“Ehhhh,” Sans began and smiled apologetically. “Sorry kiddo, but I doubt it. I think the owners
have their hands full today. In fact, they always do. They currently have like half the town living there these days.”

“We can still check though, right?” Flowey asked. “Even sleeping on a dirty floor seems better than on a snow-covered street.”

“Sure you can,” Sans said. “Just don't expect much. Besides, if there is spare space, then it's most likely being kept for someone less fortunate. No offence... or rather, no opposite of offence in this case.”

“Ugh,” Flowey said and rolled his eyes.

“I guess that makes sense,” Frisk said, almost muttering.

“Of course, you could always stay at my place,” Sans added.

Frisk felt a sudden shock from that offer and felt a tinge of unease grow at the consideration of it. She also didn’t miss Flowey’s sudden shaking.

“Me and my brother's place I mean,” Sans continued. “We live at the edge of town and we have some spare room, food and even some spare mattresses and blankets.”

“Oh no!” Flowey quickly said. “No, no, no! Frisk, we are NOT gonna stay a whole day hanging out with this... annoying, unfunny trash bag!”

“It’ll, uh, just be a few hours at most,” Frisk replied, still uneasy.

“Oh, so you are considering it?!” Flowey replied. “Geez Frisk, after all the things we've been through? Are you really gonna betray me like that?!”

Frisk heard a few whispers coming from the townsfolk around them, and when she looked up, she saw more than a few prying eyes.

“God, can you calm down with the melodrama Flowey?” Frisk said. “Some of these monsters are staring at us right now. In case you didn't know, we're trying to look inconspicuous.”

She smiled and waved awkwardly to the prying monsters.

“Uh, hi there,” she said clumsily.

“I mean you don’t have to take my offer,” Sans added.

“Yeah, I appreciate it,” Frisk said. “But sorry. I think we should check out other options first.”

“Oh, don’t be sorry, I get it,” Sans replied. “Not many people can handle my hilarious jokes after all.”

Flowey rolled his eyes while Frisk chuckled lightly.

“It’s not really that,” Frisk replied. “Ok, it’s that... nevermind.”

“No it's-” Flowey said, insulted.

“Hey!” Flowey said, insulted.
“Eh, it’s fine by me,” Sans added. “Welp, I guess we’d be parting now. But my offer still stands though, if you decide to change your mind later.”

“Don’t count on it,” Flowey said.

With that, Frisk watched as the chubby skeleton walked away from them, his back facing them. Once he was far away enough so that his distant figure could fit in Frisk’s palm, Flowey gave out a short sigh of relief.

“Thanks for that Frisk,” he said. “Even though you only did it to stop me from whining.”

“It’s not that,” Frisk replied.

“Yeah, yeah, you’re so sweet,” Flowey replied.

“I’m serious,” Frisk replied. “And no offence, but it’s got nothing to do with you. It’s just that I… I still don’t really trust that guy.”

“You mean Sans?” Flowey said and chuckled. “That sounds funnier than any “joke” that guy’s made so far. Because if I, of all creatures, say he’s trustworthy despite my obvious… distaste for him, then you have to be either deaf or really paranoid, and the latter would surprise me greatly considering you always went headfirst into strange noises in the woods.”

“Eh, this is different because… because of… of Gaster,” Frisk answered.

“Hmm,” Flowey replied.

“Because he’s the son of this Gaster,” Frisk continued. “Y’know, the creep. The scientist guy. The one I dreamt of.”

“You’re still scared of him?” Flowey asked with slight surprise. “You haven’t even met him. I think.”

“Frankly, I don’t even know why I am scared of him,” Frisk confessed. “I just… am.”

“Well, I think Sans doesn’t like his dad either,” Flowey answered. “Don’t think anyone does.”

“Sure,” Frisk said. “But it’s just that… I don’t know. I know about the whole don’t judge a guy by his parents kinda thing, but I just can’t help it. Every time I look at that guy, he just… reminds me of him. Of my nightmare. So yeah, this Sans guy kinda creeps me out.”

“You seemed to be good at hiding it then,” Flowey replied and smiled. “Honestly, call me crazy or selfish, but it all seems to point that you’re simply doing this for me.”

“No I’m-!” Frisk began before stopping herself. “Nevermind. Let’s just go check out this inn or shelter or whatever now.”

“Hmm, yeah let’s,” Flowey said.

With that, she turned around and headed back in her steps.

“So the skeleton said we passed it,” Frisk said. "Hope you remember where the place is. Or was rather."
“Sorry, I wish I could help you two but I can’t,” the donkey monster behind the counter said.

“Seriously?” Flowey protested. “Are you fricking kidding me?”

For a shelter that was supposed to be able to accommodate about half the town, the place in question was surprisingly small. It was clear that this place was simply a refurbished, wooden inn, that had been merged, although clumsily, with a neighbouring house, possibly as a makeshift attempt to fit more rooms without having to actually build them, possibly because of monetary reasons.

The counter by the entrance resembled one from a motel on the surface and was mostly made of cheap, used wood that had clearly seen better days. Then there was a torn red sofa by the outside door, and the light bulb above that kept flickering wildly. Frisk was able to glance a bit at the sleeping rooms behind the counter, where uncontrollable chatter and cries merged. From what she could see, Frisk felt that the word “cramped” was perhaps not a strong enough descriptor for this situation. Each of the rooms she saw had occupied bunk beds by each wall, monsters sleeping on the floor, and a drunkard here and there, all of whom were struggling, yelling and some even thrashing for more space.

Behind the wooden counter stood a strange monster resembling a donkey standing on two feet and with a lime coloured mane, possibly artificial. He was wearing nothing but torn jeans and a dirty, white tank top, highlighting the unattractive skinniness of his seemingly meatless body, and his face was so tired and crumpled from stress and sleeplessness that despite being just a young adult, the donkey monster could be easily mistaken for a senior by someone who wouldn’t know any better.

“I am not fricking kidding you, flower,” he said tiredly. “We are literally full. Sorry.”

“We can just sleep on the floor,” Frisk said. “I mean, I don’t think we really need to have pillows or anything.”

“Sorry lady, but I meant that we are literally full,” the donkey replied. “As in almost every inch of this place is taken, so unless you want to sleep on top of someone or perhaps under, then you best go someplace else. And it's not just a problem of space, as there's also the food, the heat-”

“We're just gonna rest here a few hours,” Frisk said. “We can live without food.”

“Great, but I can't say the same about the heat,” the donkey continued. “Or lack thereof of rather. We have literally had a few monsters die from hypothermia some nights, and judging by your clothing and lack of fur, really don’t think you'll last the night unless you know of any powerful heat magic we’ve never discovered. Plus, plenty of the guys and gals here are loud snorers, so even if the rest wasn’t an issue, I doubt you’d get any proper rest either way if that’s what you’re looking for. If you ask me, I think Grillby’s is a much better place to stay.”

“Great…” Frisk muttered.

The rebellious, and tired parts of her wanted to protest, but she just managed to stop herself. She decided there was no point in making a scene. Flowey, on the other hand, seemed to show little to no restraint.

“Look, mister,” the flower began. “I don’t know why or when Isabell decided to make you the owner of this place-”

“I'm… not the owner,” the donkey said. “At least not regularly. I just work here you see, and
currently, I’m taking over for a while. While she’s away. The owner I mean.”

“Oh, where is she then?” Flowey asked, sounding more demanding rather than requesting. “Let us know we can go tell her in person that she shouldn't be abandoning her job like that when there could be people in need!”

“She's… busy attending a funeral,” the donkey answered.

“Oh,” Flowey said, sounding a bit disappointed in himself. “Alright I... guess that's... understandable then.”

“When do you think she'll be back?” Frisk asked the donkey monster.

“I don’t know,” he answered. “Maybe in 3 hours in the least.”

“3 hours?” Flowey exclaimed. “The heck are we supposed to do until then.”

The donkey monster gave out an exasperated sigh.

“Look, flower,” the donkey said. “I have no idea. I am just doing my job and frankly, I don’t think miss Isabell will say anything different either. If I were you, I'd just drop it ok? Sorry, but we are packed for now.”

“Alright,” Flowey said, sounding a bit more understanding, although reluctant to be. “In that case, when do you think that this place will have room.”

“Don't know,” the donkey answered. “Maybe tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow?!.” Flowey exclaimed. “But I don’t think we aren't even gonna stay that long in town!”

“Look, I wish I could help but this is just how it is,” the donkey answered, sounding tired and mildly frustrated. “Now I’m sure there are other monsters around town willing to spare a room. If not Grillby, then most likely those two skeleton brothers. They're the sons of Gaster y’ know? I'm sure they have a lot of room and cash to spare.”

“Oh don't you dare suggest those two doofuses-” Flowey began.

Before he could finish his tirade, Frisk had placed one palm in front of his mouth, shutting him up.

“Alright, let's just go Flowey,” Frisk said, sounding almost as tired and frustrated as the donkey.

She looked up at him, who seemed very grateful for her gagging him.

“Look, I'm sorry about my, uh, friend here,” she said to the donkey monster. “He's not usually like this. I think. He's just in a lot of shock right now and… yeah sorry.”

“Mhmm,” the donkey simply said with a hint of annoyance.

Still holding her mouth over the flower whose face turned red as he made feeble muffled protests, Frisk used her other loose hand to adjust her bag clumsily and headed out the door. Once she finally did, she heard the donkey behind her give out a breath of relief.

“Jesus christ Flowey,” she said as finally removed her palm.

“Gah!” Flowey exclaimed. “Gods! What the hell- I mean what the heck Frisk?”
“Look I've had to deal with people like that,” Frisk began. “I mean like you. The way you were acting, and trust me, it's not fun to be on the other end of that. In that... donkey guys shoes.”

“Ugh, alright, fine,” Flowey said bitterly like an angry kid caught lying. “Maybe I did go a bit... overboard with that, and I'm sorry, but you saw that guy right?! It wasn't like he was any better now was he?”

“How was he-?!” Frisk began before dropping it. “Look. I know you don't like to hear it, but maybe he was right. There are plenty of places here that haven't crumbled yet. There must be some here willing to give us a room to rest.”

“Yeah and then they'll rob us and or kill us while we sleep,” Flowey began.

“Gee and you said I was paranoid,” Frisk said.

The flower then gave out a short sigh, the sigh of someone who had reached a final, dreadful resort.

“Guess we’ll just have to sleep at the skele-bros after all, huh?” he said.

“What?” Frisk replied, beginning to sound nervous again. “Oh, we don’t have to if-”

“No, no,” Flowey began. “I may not be able to stand the older one, or even the younger one at times, but they are at least trustworthy. The only monsters in town that I trust. That I can recall that is. Well, maybe except for Grillby and his lot, but it's been a few years and unlike him, the skele-bros are at least predictable.”

“Umm, alright,” Frisk said, clearly feeling uneasy still. “But before that I uh... let’s just look around. Just for a bit.”

“Wait, seriously?” Flowey asked and chuckled. “Are you really telling me you’re enamoured by this shi- I mean dirt hole?”

“Ehh,” Frisk began. “Not really. It... doesn’t look great, but umm, I dunno.”

She looked once more around the town, at the saddened state of the monsters. Then, she saw something, something that suddenly brought back a sense of wonder, and made her realized why she wanted to stay a bit. What Frisk merely saw, was one unfortunate monster, a starved, anorexic cow monster in torn clothes, walk up to a pile of logs in a ruined house, and then just casually lighting it on fire without even touching it like it was nobodies business. At that moment, despite still feeling sorry for the state of the place and it’s inhabitants, she felt also felt a spark of awe return as she was just reminded of where she was, of the unbelievable reality of this place.

“Well, maybe I am a bit... enamoured,” she began with slight but growing enthusiasm. “I mean, why wouldn’t I be? This may not mean much to you but look around. These are all frigging monsters. Creatures that for the longest time I’ve believed to be from myths. From fairytales even. And not to mention, all the frigging magic. It just... it kinda feels awesome in a way.”

“Hmm, I'll be sure to let these monsters know that,” Flowey said sarcastically as he watched a drunk and dirty bear monster dig through a trash can. “I'm sure they'll appreciate your gesture.”

“Yeah, I just realized that what I said may have been inconsiderate,” Frisk said. “I just can't help it. This is all so weird and... incredible I guess. I... now that I think about it... I kinda wanna see more.”
“You’re a weird girl,” Flowey said. “Whatever. I'm up for exploring a bit. Just any excuse to be away from the skeleton brothers for a longer period of time is fine by me. Where do you want to start?”

“Hmm,” Frisk said, thinking. “Well… I think Sans mentioned something about a library here. I really wanna check it out.”

“Oh, so you're a bookworm eh?” Flowey asked.

“Pfft, no,” Frisk answered. “I don’t even read much in fact, except in class. Last time I fully read a book on my own must’ve like 8 years ago or something. But this is different. Because monsters and magic are involved. Hell, now that I think of it, including monsters and magic into basically anything makes it instantly better.”

“I don’t really think I'll understand your kind,” Flowey stated bluntly.

“But if it’s still standing as Sans said,” Frisk continued. “Then there must be a shit ton of things to learn. All the history and stories of this world, the cultures and… my god, I just want to absorb it all right now.”

“Eh, I think we'd better not take to long,” Flowey said. “I really don't want to be here much longer. Now I just want to rest, and get out of town as quickly as possible.”

“Why what's wrong?” Frisk said, noting the sudden urgency in his tone. “Is it the skeleton brothers or-”

“It’s not because of them,” Flowey said. “Ok, it kinda is, but mostly not- whatever. It’s just that… now that I'm looking at this town, I kinda… I’m kinda starting to feel… to feel…”

“Sad?” Frisk asked.

“Oh, no, no,” Flowey said unconvincingly. “I… I don't feel sad. Not even a bit. Don’t even think about it.”

“It… it's alright to admit you feel sad,” Frisk said. “I mean, I do and I don’t even know this town. What? Are you afraid I'll laugh at you again like back in the forest?”

Flowey didn’t say anything. Just stared down at the snow-covered road like she knew the answer.

“That was different,” Frisk said. “I mean, it was still kind of a dick move and I'm sorry, but I was laughing because I was surprised not because you were scared. Like, if you truly feel sad here I won't judge you.”

“Really?” Flowey said unenthusiastically while still looking at the ground.

“Yes,” Frisk answered.

Still looking away, Flowey gave a short sigh.

“Alright, fine,” Flowey said. “Perhaps I feel a teensy bit sad but… no, wait. T-that shouldn’t be possible. I shouldn’t be able to feel sad. I… I… what's going on? Why do I feel this? I'm not supposed to be able to feel any of this. Why am I…?”

“What are you talking about Flowey?” Frisk asked, worryingly.

“Nothing,” he answered, sounding somewhat teary. “Nothing I…”
He sighed and closed his eyes for a bit.

“Let’s just get to the stupid library, ok?” he then said. “I really can't stand to look at this town much longer. The library is to our left and has a large, misspelt sign the last I remember. We won't miss it.”

“Hmm, alright.” Frisk said, feeling a tinge of worrying suspicions.

With that said, she with her companion in her bag, began to walk down the snow-covered road to her left.

Chapter End Notes

So yeah, if you are one of the two peoples or less that give a crap about the author's notes... yeah, sorry about the late notes.

But anyway, here we are in Snowdin, the town that is, which might be farther than where most fanfics get to if I were to brag. Now, this is a chapter/arc I have been looking forward to writing because here is where the major deviation from the standard UT AU route begins. I have teased that a lot of the fic will involve new areas of the underground never seen in the game, and I have so many ideas I am excited to develop. There will also be new characters and monster types... god I am excited.

This is also a short chapter, and it was originally going to be much longer, but then I decided to split it in two... bla, bla, bla.

But I will say ahead that there might be a slight delay, as usual, NOT with the next chapter, but the one after. I ain't gonna spoil, but I will say that that chapter will involve some pretty heavy subjects which will be revealed at the end of the next chapter as a sort of cliffhanger- whoops, I am saying too much.

Anyways, I'll see you soon my readers. The next chapter will most likely be out next week, but I am terrible at promising those things so... let's just hope for the best.
“Is this the place?” Frisk asked sceptically.

“Yes, this is the place,” Flowey confirmed.

They had only walked a few minutes before reaching it, as the town wasn’t half as big as it looked from afar. The building they stood in front of wasn’t much different from the other ones in the neighbourhood, or even in this town, being only one floor, with colourless walls and windows filled with holes and torn wallpapers. Inside the front windows, which were, strangely enough, the finest part of the building, they could see a dark room dimly lit with old fashioned candles strewn about, and only a few bookcases carrying few books. The small space of the house in question mixed with the lackluster collection made Frisk wonder if this could even constitute as a library in this state. That is unless there was a basement level she couldn’t see, as she dimly hoped there was.

“The Snowdin library, in all of its glory,” Flowey continued. “Looks like they decided to remove the sign instead of just fixing its spelling error. Smart move. Really smart. But not really though. It’s the equivalent of cutting off your hand to fix a papercut.”

“I’m sure it looks much worse than you remember?” Frisk asked.

“Eh, not by much honestly,” Flowey said. “I mean it was slightly better in that it had electricity and other things, but I’m more surprised that it’s still standing. I would’ve assumed it would be one of the first establishments to go, especially since barely anyone reads books down here anymore. Or at least, not since the last time I was here.”

“Yeah, not reading books anymore is not just a monster thing,” Frisk said.

“Anyway,” Flowey continued. “This place wasn’t the best, even before this town went to shi- I mean, to the trash. Sorry.”

“Hey, that reminds me,” Frisk began. “I’ve been meaning to ask. What’s with your constant unease about cursing? You know I don’t mind that shit.”

“Oh trust me, I’ve noticed that,” Flowey said. “But honestly, I’m not really sure why I do. I guess it’s just an old habit I have. Or maybe it’s related to something I-”

“WATCH OUT!” cried out from close by an unfamiliar kid’s voice.

“What the fu-” Frisk began as she turned towards the voice

Before she could finish, or even react properly, she felt something large painfully bump into her stomach, causing her to lose her balance completely. The only thing Frisk saw was that it seemed to resemble a yellowish blur the size of a small child.

As she fell on her back into the snow, almost crushing the backpack with Flowey and breaking the
empty alcohol bottle she got from Gyftrot, she felt great pain in her abdomen from the sudden heavy force. It was as if someone kicked her in the stomach. But as the pain quickly faded and Frisk came to, she, sitting upwards in the snow, could now see the little surprise attacker in all their glory

Laying down opposite on the ground of her was what seemed to be a small, dizzy monster kid. It resembled a small yellow dinosaur, or at least similar to how humans viewed dinosaurs back when it was thought they had scales instead of feathers, and they had roves of white, small spikes covering the top of its head which stopped by what looked like a youthful yet androgynous reptilian face. The kid wore a long, sleeveless shirt with yellow and brown stripes that was covered in lots of tearings and dirt, and Frisk couldn’t tell if the kid even had arms or if they were simply hidden underneath their clothes.

The kid, who Frisk still wasn’t sure was a boy or a girl, then looked at her and smiled an embarrassing smile.

“Gah, watch where you're friggin going, kiddo!” Frisk exclaimed.

“Sorry miss,” the monster kid said apologetically as they stood up using just their legs.

“Woah, what in the blasted world just happened?” Flowey asked, dizzy and bewildered.

“I… I was sliding down the ice,” the monster kid said, apologetically. “I'm sorry. I… I didn’t even notice you until it was too late, and I-”

Then, as Frisk stood back up, the kid's face suddenly lit up in awe.

“Yo!” they exclaimed, sounding surprisingly mesmerised. “you’re an ape monster.”

“Umm… yeah so?” Frisk replied, playing along as best she could.

“You must be from Apetown then,” the monster kid continued. “That’s so far away. If you are here, then that must mean that you’ve seen like half the underground.”

“Huh,” Frisk said while dusting off some snow on her sleeves. “I kinda figured that they- sorry, we ape monsters were a somewhat common sight in this town.”

“Well, I don't know where you've heard that,” the monster kid said. “There haven't been ape monsters living in this town for, like, years. Won’t blame them. This town kinda sucks.”

“Yeah, I figured that,” Frisk said. “No offence.”

“But you're new,” the monster kid said. “I heard your kind often travels a lot. Wanderers my parents called you. Is that true?”

“I sure have,” Frisk said, somewhat dismissively. “Anyway, it was nice meeting you kiddo, but my friend and I have to go. We need to do some, uh… ape monster business.”

“W-wait, don’t go,” the monster kid said as Frisk began to walk away. “Can you tell me about the outside world? Have you seen any cool warriors? Cool cities or… or any awesome magic? Please? Most ape monsters walk past this town, and… and I haven’t seen one in years.”

Frisk sighed audibly and stopped in her tracks.

“Look kiddo,” she said, her back to the kid. “I am busy and dreadfully tired. So can you please just
leave me and my friend alone for now? If you really want to know more about the outside world, then just to leave town by yourself for a bit ok?"

“My… my mom never lets me leave the town,” the monster kid answered, sorrowfully. "Especially after what happened to my… other mom."

“Oh,” Frisk expressed, feeling a tinge of growing guilt.

She turned around and saw the kid stare down on the ground in a melancholy manner.

“Well umm… I’m sorry,” Frisk continued. “But I uh… I don’t time now. I wish I could speak but… maybe later. Perhaps tomorrow I’ll meet up with you and tell you some stories. Of the outside, that is. I promise.”

“Hmm, ok,” the kid said, still with a hint of sadness.

Geez, I hope I didn’t ruin that kid’s day, Frisk thought.

Without wanting to make this situation go on any longer, Frisk turned back around and headed towards the library. Before opening the library’s front door, she sneaked one last look at the monster kid and felt herself see a hopeful expression rise subtly on their reptilian face before the kid then proceeded to run away, making Frisk feel slightly better, although she wasn’t sure if she could keep the promise.

She tried not to think about it and instead put her focus on the library she was standing in. The look from inside didn’t turn out much better, unsurprisingly. In fact, it seemed to be even smaller and more cramped, with an oversized wooden square table in the centre, and several bookcases covering almost every wall that didn’t have a window. The place wasn’t even big enough for a bookstore on the surface. There wasn’t even a visible basement level as Frisk feebly hoped.

Now that she was inside, breathing the unclean, dust-filled air, Frisk realized something was missing from that dialogue she just had with the kid. Something snarky.

“Seriously Flowey?” she asked her companion. “You had no comment back there?”

“Oh, uh, no,” Flowey answered. “I’ve never been particularly good with kids. Didn’t want to come across as rude to them.”

“Wait really?” Frisk said, sounding surprised as if Flowey just confessed he was actually a girl the whole time.

“Uhh, yeah,” Flowey said once again with confusion. “How is that surprising? I don’t even remember what I was like when I myself was a kid. If I even were one that is.”

“No, it’s not that,” Frisk said. “I’m just surprised you… tolerated them.”

“Why wouldn’t I tolerate them?” Flowey replied and his tone of confusion began to be replaced by a tinge of annoyance.

“I just didn’t expect you to be the type that’s able to tolerate kids,” Frisk said. “Kinda expected the opposite in fact. No offence.”

“Oh, come now,” Flowey said, now undoubtedly insulted. “Did you just assume something about me? That’s just rude. I don’t hate kids. I don’t even hate everyone in fact.”
“I know I’m… sorry,” Frisk said.

“Hmm, alright,” Flowey said, still sounding mildly insulted. “Apology accepted. Just for you though, because I'm liking you.”

“Aww,” Frisk said cheekily.

“Don’t push it,” Flowey quickly replied.

Frisk looked around the mostly empty library and finally noticed the monster standing behind the counter, staring silently at them, like a stuffed animal or mannequin.

“Gah!” Frisk expressed and closed her eyes for a few seconds. “Jesus.”

The monster resembled a green, anthropomorphic reptile, with slightly broken glasses but dressed in much finer clothes, or at least they were fine enough compared to most of the inhabitants in town, and despite being almost skinny to the bone, he gave off the aura of complete control and authority like he was the master of a great house or a family.

His yellow, reptilian eyes stared unblinking behind his glasses that were attached with duck tapes taped to his head, most likely done due to his lack of ears. But it was clearly still alive, thankfully, as Frisk could tell by his slow but hard breathing through his nostrils.

“Uh… hi?” she said awkwardly.

“Who are you?!” the lizard suddenly asked quickly and with surprising hostility.

“Uhh,” Frisk began, lightly startled. “We are-”

“I’ve never seen you before, girl!” the lizard interrupted in a quick manner. “And you, flower, I've not seen you here in years!”

“Yeah, about that-” Flowey began.

“Why are you back here?!” the librarian continued, sounding like an interrogator. “After all this time, why decide to come back to town now?! And why come to this library in particular?! Are you after something here?! After me maybe?! And also, who is this new friend of yours?!”

“Oh she's just-” Flowey began.

“I see she’s an ape monster!” the lizard interrupted. “Shaved, like they say Mickey is! A bit convenient, don't you think?! Almost like she looks up to him or something?!”

“Wait, what do you know about-” Frisk began.

“Nothing!” the lizard said, slightly more anxiously. “I have no dirt on him if that’s what you think! Why are you asking me though?! Do you think I have some info on him, huh?! Did he hire you to come here?!”

“I don’t-” Frisk began.

“Why is she here Flower?!” the lizard asked Flowey in a demanding manner. “What business would an ape monster have in this town?!”

“I’m just a tourist!” Frisk said, beginning to feel annoyed.
“Really now?!” the lizard asked, sceptically. “Yeah, right! No-one in their right mind would come to Snowdin as a tourist unless they had a pretty good reason! What are you really after here, girl?!”

“I’m not after goddam anything!” Frisk exclaimed. “I’m just passing through this town! God!”

“Uh-huh!” the lizard expressed with doubt. “And what are you hiding in that pink bag of yours?! Weapons?! Recorders?! Or is it maybe something like-”

“Can you please shut the hell up?!” Flowey angrily blurted out. “Uhh, heck up I mean. Whatever. She’s just a tourist alright? Both of us are just tourists. I personally have no ill will towards you, and if she did, I would have long noticed it by now, trust me. Now unless you want to lose some valuable customers you might need in this impoverished trash pile of a town, then you’d better calm. The. Heck. Down.”

Flowey’s sudden outburst seemed to have worked, as the anxious lizard librarian turned as quiet as a rock, immediately after Flowey closed his mouth. But it was clear the lizard was not entirely convinced yet, as the lizard eyes suddenly squinted behind the glasses and he eyed the flower quizzingly like he was trying to memorize every pore and leaf on Flowey’s pistil.

“Alright,” the lizard said, sounding mostly unconvinced. “If you say so…”

“Great,” Flowey said and smiled. “Glad we could be a bit more understanding.”

“But,” the lizard added. “I will be watching and listening to everything you do, and if I hear or see anything mildly suspicious from either of you, believe me, I will not hesitate to throw you out immediately.”

“Alright, jeez,” Frisk said.

She gave a tired sigh and moved away from the counter, trying not to think about the lizard monster most likely staring at her back. It would have been more noticeable if the place wasn’t the size of a small office lounge, but besides the presence of Frisk, Flowey and the librarian, the place was almost empty of life. There were also only a handful of shelves holding a handful of books, and two of the bookcases had even crumbled. So what Frisk could gather was that the total number of available books she could find in this “library” seemed to be small enough to fit just a single shelf.

*Better than nothing I guess*, Frisk thought.

After she had walked a few steps towards a random bookcase that hadn’t crumbled yet, she turned her head around towards the librarian she was sure was still tailing her.

To her mild surprise, the lizard librarian had moved its gaze from her and to the window. Frisk guessed that judging from the seeming desperation in his eyes, he was either searching for someone, waiting for someone or both.

Frisk took a few extra steps away from him until she was sure her whispers wouldn’t be heard.

“Pendejo,” she then bitterly whispered very softly.

“What did you say?” Flowey asked.

“Nothing,” Frisk whispered. “*Just called him an asshole I guess.*”

“Hmm, yeah he was,” Flowey whispered back.
He and Frisk looked back at the librarian who while staring at the window began to bop and move his head around like a feral animal looking for insects on a wall to eat. She noticed that his hands were also shaking wildly, to the point where Frisk imagined that simply adjusting his glasses would be a challenge for him.

“Is that guy usually like this?” Frisk asked.

“Don’t think so,” Flowey said. “At least, I don’t remember ever seeing him like this before.”

“I see,” Frisk said. “So something must’ve happened to him?”

“That’s must be it,” Flowey said agreeing. “Something… bad.”

“Like worse than what happened to most of this town?” Frisk asked.

“Guess so,” Flowey said. “Can’t begin to imagine what it could possibly be though. He’s the most anxious person we have met in this town so far, that’s saying a lot.”

“Do you think he-” Frisk began.

She stopped her words as the lizard, without any warning, quickly turned his head around in a half-circle and looked at the duo with an intimidating expression.

“Hey what are you two whispering about?!” he yelled at the duo. “You think I can’t hear you two?!”

“We were… whispering about nothing!” Frisk yelled back. “Just… random stuff!”

“Then why keep your voice down eh?!” the librarian replied with some snark. “It’s almost like you don’t want me to hear you two!”

“Because this is a library and we wanted to be polite!” Frisk replied, clearly frustrated. “Jesus…”

“Alright!” the librarian continued. “In that case, why not share your talk with me, eh?! If it’s nothing bad, then what’s the harm in telling?!”

“I-It was just unimportant stuff!” Frisk answered. “I’ve already forgotten like most of what I’ve said!”

“Aha, you hesitated for a bit!” the librarian exclaimed, sounding like he caught her in a lie. “Must mean you are hiding something!”

“I am not hiding anything you paranoid asshole!” Frisk exclaimed. “Jesus, why is this so important to you?!”

“Yeah, what’s gotten into you, uh… Lenny, right?” Flowey said. “Seriously, why are you acting so crazy?! What the heck happened?!”

The lizard just stared at them like a hungry hawk, his yellow eyes squinting behind his glasses like it would help him see them better.

“Allrighty then, keep your secrets you two,” he said. “But if I see or hear even just a tiny, just a tiny speck of something suspicious, then I will personally come over there and drag you out of this building myself! And if you DARE to refuse or hell, even fight, then, believe me, I am not afraid to go so far as to… as to…”
“Go as far as to do what?” Frisk pried.

The lizard just stared at her, his snout shut tight. In a seemingly related manner, his expression had turned into that of sorrowful refusal like he wanted to evade speaking more in fear of his own words. Then, without even acknowledging her presence, he moved his gaze down towards the counter and placed his clawed hands across his head as if to hide his face.

“ Oh, what are you doing Leonard? ” he muttered to himself. “ These are just kids. Harmless kids and tourists. They are not after you, they are just... no, no, no I can’t risk it. Maybe The Hunt, uh, started hiring younger, or maybe they paid some orphans to spy on me or... wait, in that case, why wouldn't they just pay some kids from Snowdin? That would be less suspicious. I mean, then again, they look pretty well off and dressed and... well, not the ape girl though. Not perfectly at least. She only got one shoe on for instance, and- ”

“Ok, he's just rambling to himself now,” Frisk said, watching the librarian go on and on. “That’s it. That guy has officially lost it.”

“Says you, Miss chatterbox,” Flowey replied snarkily. “Unless you're telling me you've long lost it as well back when you thought you were alone in the ruins.”

“Fair point,” Frisk said and shrugged.

She tried to ignore the sound of the librarian's panicked muttering as she turned to the bookcases. Up close, another let down she could see was that they were incredibly short, only being slightly taller than her. The few books on the shelves weren’t in particularly good condition either, with torn dusty covers and rot even seeping into some pages. Some of the books even looked so poorly taken care of, that Frisk partly believed they would immediately turn to dust just as soon as she touched them.

“Well, what are you waiting for?” Flowey began. “It’s not like you’ve got many options here.”

“I’m guessing the collection was much bigger the last you remember,” Frisk said.

“Obviously yeah,” Flowey answered. “It wasn't ever a grand collection, but at least all the shelves were full for the most time. Anyway, just pick the book that you think looks the prettiest or something, I don’t care.”

After a momentary examination, Frisk picked from the shelves the one she felt looked the least decayed. An average-sized, dark-green hardbound novel decorated in silver painted runes she couldn’t even begin to decipher. The front cover was slightly torn, but besides that, it was mostly plain, with no visible title or anything of the sort, except for some strange, faint runes at the bottom. It was clearly a very old book, judging by the rough feel of the paper pages, the antique smell and old look of the hard-cover. That this looked the least decayed book while also paradoxically looking like the oldest of them, Frisk found hard to understand. Perhaps, as she momentarily considered, the lizard cared especially more for this book in comparison to all the others.

She stroked off some bits of dust from the cover, and opened up to a random page, just to see what to expect.

“ Shit ,” Frisk cursed once she saw what was inside.

“ What’s wrong ?” Flowey asked.

The pages were filled with lines and lines of strange writings in a seemingly alien language she had
never seen before. Then she proceeded to flip through the pages haphazardly and saw disappointingly that every single page she opened to was filled with the same, foreign script.

“I can’t read any of this,” Frisk admitted.

“What do you mean you can't read this?” Flowey asked with slight surprise. “This all seems readable to me.”

“I mean I… I don't know this language,” Frisk said.

“You mean common monster-speak?” Flowey asked with a strange tone of surprise.

“Yeah that or whatever,” Frisk replied and sighed in disappointment. “God. Why did I not consider this before? Goddamn hindsight. I am so stupid. Obviously, a society isolated from humanity for god knows how long except for the occasional garbage wouldn't end up with the same language.”

“Oh yeah,” Flowey said. “So what? Do you want me to read this for you or-?”

“Nah, don’t bother,” Frisk began. “I guess I can just have someone-.”

She stopped her words immediately for it was at that moment that she realized something she should've thought of long before, but didn't even glance at for some unknowable reason.

“Wait a minute,” Frisk began. “How do we understand each other?”

“Excuse me?” Flowey asked as if that was the most bizarre question in the world.

“Flowey, what are we speaking?” Frisk asked. “Like at this moment?”

“We are speaking… umm, words?” Flowey answered in confusion.

“No, I meant like what language?” Frisk asked. “Like at this moment, right now, in what language am I speaking to you in?”

“Uhh, monster-tongue?” Flowey asked.

“Is… that a suggestion or-”

“No, I am pretty sure we are both speaking monster-tongue right now,” Flowey answered.

“What?” Frisk exclaimed.

“Alright, that’s it,” the paranoid lizard librarian exclaimed.

He then quickly left the counter and walked hastily towards Frisk and Flowey, eyesights focus on them, unblinking, and looking like they were full of hate.

“Uhh, sorry?” Frisk said to Leonard as soon as he came up to her.

Before she could react, the lizard strongly grasped her wrist and attempted to drag her.

“Hey, what are you-” Frisk began.

She stood strong and unmoving in her spot and seized the monsters grasping, scaly claw with her own loose hands.
“Get out,” the lizard said loudly. “Out of this library, now!”

“Let go of me!” Frisk exclaimed. “Let. Me. GO!”

And without much effort, she freed herself easily from his grasp and pushed him away. Lenny backed a few steps, looking shocked at her surprising strength.

“What the hell is wrong with you?!” Frisk exclaimed. “We haven’t done anything!”

“Not yet!” the lizard said. “But the way you’ve been whispering... you really think I’m an idiot, don’t you?!”

“Uhh, yeah!” Flowey replied. “Is this seriously how you treat all your customers?! Just look at yourself, Lenny.”

The lizard stared at the duo for a while, and his panicky expression began to fade and be replaced by a hint of regret. Meanwhile, Frisk just sighed audibly. She had enough and began to head out.

“Fuck it,” she said. “Flowey, let’s get out of here.”

“Look, it’s not personal ok?” Lenny said apologetically after her. “I’m-I’m sorry but... but I just can’t risk it with how things are here and-”

“Yeah, yeah,” Frisk said dismissively.

Without batting an eye, she opened the front door and went outside without closing, letting the soft blow of the wind do that work for her.

“Well that was something,” Flowey said as they now stood once again in the middle of the snow-covered street.

“Ugh, whatever,” Frisk said in an annoyed manner. “It was not like I was gonna be able to read anything in there.”

“Well, to be fair,” Flowey began. “I think there were a couple of books there written in human-speak.”

“Yeah, yeah- wait, did you say human-speak?” Frisk asked back

“That’s right,” Flowey answered. “Writing novels in human-alphabet was a trend with monster writers for a while. Still is in some circles. I mean, when your kind has lived in such a relatively small world for over several millennia, you kinda start to run out of things to do.”

“That’s... not why I’m confused,” Frisk asked, sounding almost as bewildered as when Flowey first spoke in the ruins. “I meant to ask... what I was gonna say...god, I have like a billion more questions right now. Like, what do you mean by human-speak, and why and how the hell am I speaking in a monster language right now?”

“Ok, first things first,” Flowey began. “Human-speak is what monsters call, well, what you humans speak.”

“As in?” Frisk pried.

“As in the language and writing you have,” he continued. “Why, what do you humans call it?”

“Umm, English I guess?” Frisk began. “I don’t know, we humans have like a trillion different
“Oh,” Flowey said with mild surprise. “Yeah, that’s… why in the world didn’t I consider that?”

“But in this country,” Frisk continued. “It’s mostly English that’s spoken. So to me, I guess I am speaking English now. But, how would monsters know what that language is like in the first place?”

“Well…” Flowey began. “I think it’s more like the closest we managed. So you remember when I told you about the fact that so much human garbage flows down here? Well since like, 90 per cent of that garbage contains at least a modicum of writing, some clever monsters managed to find some patterns in the placements of letters and such, and soon after, some even more clever monsters managed to recreate an alphabet of sorts. Or at least the best they could. Helps that one or more unknowingly helpful donors keep dumping whole videotapes and such down here, often with hours worth of content.”

“Uhh, ok,” Frisk said. “But what I am more curious about is… am I seriously speaking in your language right now?”

“Well… yeah,” Flowey answered.

“Ok, but how about now?” Frisk asked in the best Spanish she knew. “Do you understand me now?”

“Yeah, why wouldn’t I?” Flowey asked, mildly confused as if nothing about her speech changed.

“Ok wow, that’s kinda freaky,” Frisk said, sounding mildly uneasy. “What about uh… now, do you… know I… understand?”

Flowey turned to her with pure confusion on his face.

“Did you just have a stroke something?” Flowey asked.

“I was trying to speak some Mandarin,” Frisk said. “I’m not really good at that language, but I know some words and things from several of my relatives who speak it.”

“That’s a weird name for a language,” Flowey said. “Are many human languages named after fruits or…?”

Frisk snickered a bit from that response and shook her head in mild amusement.

“Seriously though,” she then said. “How am I speaking your language?”

“To be brutally honest,” Flowey began. “I don’t know. And I don’t think my ignorance is due to a memory loss this time. I think I just never bothered to find out.”

“Why not?” Frisk asked.

“Well I’m sure you’ve figured you’re not the first human down here,” Flowey explained. “And just like you, all the other humans were able to understand us. Me and monsters that is. I guess I just assumed that it was normal, that we all just happened to share similar, if not the same language.”

“So it’s magic?” Frisk suggested.

“Yeah, most likely,” Flowey said. “If all else fails or doesn’t make sense, it’s magic. It doesn’t need to explain more.”
Frisk smiled and chuckled. Then she turned her head around and managed to see through the library window behind her, where the lizard librarian was watching her intently behind his counter with paranoid, suspicious-looking eyes, and Frisk’s newfound smile quickly faded. So she took a few steps away to the side until she was sure she was out of his uncomfortable gaze.

“So… do you still wanna check around town?” Flowey suggested. “Maybe we can get some info about Mickey or the Hunt.”

“Yeah possibly,” Frisk said tiredly. “But right now, I mostly just want to-”

Before she could finish her words, she noticed the nearby presence of another strange figure, walking by the bookstore with big, strong footsteps. Once she saw him, or at least what she was almost sure was a “he”, Frisk felt her train of thoughts immediately halter.

“Holy…” she muttered.

“Frisk, what are you… oh…” Flowey said before he managed to look at what she was gazing at.

Once he did, he also became worldless as well but to a much lesser extent and more due to a sense of confusion rather than awe.

Walking on the street in front of them was a large, humanoid rabbit monster of great height and mass, with bulging muscles and the healthy physique of a bodybuilder, making him stand out incredibly like he was an animalistic god amongst the rest of the small and scrawny rabbits in town. He walked proudly with the posture and finesse of a seasoned hero figure, adding, perhaps unintentionally, another sense of comparative privilege to his clean and kempt look. Another thing that stood out was the cleanliness in his modern-looking clothes, being a plain blue wool shirt underneath a brown winter jacket alongside some fitting brown trousers and white shoes, all of which neatly compilated his white fur and green eyes. Finally, in what seemed like a token used to dispel any doubt of warrior prowess, there hung on his back a scabbard holding a massive sword, almost half the size of Frisk herself.

This humongous rabbit paid no heed to the staring duo, either intentionally or not, as he noiselessly went into the library where he had to crouch just to fit through the door. It was a clumsy affair, as for a moment his scabbard got stuck in the door frame, but after a few seconds, he got through.

“Holy crap,” Frisk said as she stared at him through the window. “Look at the frigging beef on that rabbit.”

“Hey, I actually remember that guy,” Flowey replied. “That's, uh, RG 01. What in the world is he doing all the way down here in Snowdin though?”

“Who is this… RG 01?” Frisk asked curiously.

“Well, for starters he was a member of The Royal Guard once,” Flowey explained. “That was the name for the precursor group to The Royal Hunt. Don’t remember his actual name at the moment, but he was often called RG 01 or Royal Guard 01. Not because he was the first Royal Guardsman or anything, but because of long, overly complicated series of misunderstandings involving tourists, a broken pencil and a dose of insomnia I think.”

“My God,” Frisk said, unable to move her eyes from the large and muscular monster. “That is, without a doubt, the beefiest rabbit I've ever seen.”

“Don't tell me you have a crush on him,” Flowey said, somewhat teasingly but also with a surprisingly mild bitterness.
“What?” Frisk said, sounding mildly insulted, and turned her eyes towards Flowey, finally breaking the dazzling spell. “No, I don’t have a crush on him or... anything. I don’t even know that guy. This is just unusual for me. Rabbits, or at least rabbits where I’m from, aren’t supposed to be that… built.”

“Mhm,” Flowey replied in a cheeky tone.

It was then that Frisk looked around and saw that she and Flowey weren't the only ones in town that showed more than a single glance towards this monster. But unlike Frisk and Flowey, the other gazes, the one from the townsfolk, showed more contempt or fear rather than awe or confusion, and many hurried in their steps to get away faster. Frisk even saw one feeble looking monster lady even fearfully covering the eye of what appeared to be her child.

“Whatever,” Frisk simply said back to Flowey. “But seriously though, do you think that guy knows Mickey perhaps? Or maybe something about the Royal Hunt?”

“Possibly,” Flowey answered. “A few ex-members of The Guard ended up joining The Hunt. Not all but some, but I don’t think we should take any chances now. We don’t really know that guy’s allegiance yet, so if you would heed my advice, please don't go do your usual head-first-into-danger thing by just waltzing up to him and ask questions ok?”

“You really think I would do that?” Frisk said and lightly chuckled.

“Uhh, yeah?” Flowey replied as if it was the most obvious answer.

Frisk ignored his snark as she proceeded to slowly walk up by the walls of the library as silently as she could. Eventually, she reduced to crouching underneath the windowsill, seemingly by instinct, not really bothering to care how silly her crab walk looked to outsiders. On the other hand, Flowey began to grow red from a sense of embarrassment, as only he was able to notice the growing number of prying eyes on the duo while Frisk had all her attention focused on crouching towards the store. He said nothing though, as fortunately, none of the poor monsters paid more than a little heed on it, with most of them shrugging it off as being just a weird ape monster thing.

Once Frisk was up to the walls and could not go a step further, she peaked up to look through the window above, and from her angle, managed to get a decent look at the other end. To her surprise, the paranoid librarian managed to look even more frightened than ever, as she seemed to stare stunned in fear at a spot in the library, unseeable from her angle, but Frisk figured he was most likely looking at the beefy white rabbit.

"Man, I can't believe I'm saying this," Frisk whispered. "But that guy looks even worse than last time we saw him."

Flowey didn’t say anything at first, as he was beginning to grow more uncomfortable from the now growing number of curious eyes. So instead, he quickly racked his mind to find anything he could change the subject to.

“So anyway,” he began with a subtle snark. “Are you sure you don’t like what you’re seeing? Not even... a teensy bit?”

“If you're still talking about the rabbit guy, then no, I don’t,” Frisk answered. “Not even a teensy bit. That guy must be like 20 years older than me, and besides, not sure if you've noticed, but... I'm a human, and that's a rabbit. You think I'm a furry or something?”

“Uhh, I fail to see how not being a creature made of fur has anything to do with this,” Flowey
said, sounding confused. "Unless you're suggesting that only furred monsters are allowed to be with other furred monsters, then, in that case, that's just ignorant and even a bit prejudiced."

"Wha-no that's not what I-" Frisk began.

"Wait, I think there is someone behind us," Flowey said quickly.

"Yo, what are you two doing now?" said a familiar childish voice.

"Gah, fuck!" Frisk exclaimed in surprise.

She almost fell down flat on her back once again from the surprise and even felt a quick sting in her heart. She then looked behind her, her hand on her chest, and saw the same, armless monster kid from before with their apologetically smiling snout at uncomfortably close proximity to hers.

"Oh sorry," the kid said. "Didn't mean to scare you."

"Jesus," Frisk said. "Is it just a thing with monsters down here to- uh, I mean other monsters down here, to just spontaneously appear behind someone?"

"So old Lenny kicked you out, didn't he?" the kid said. "Yeah, he does that."

"Ok, this is not a good time kid!" Frisk whispered.

"Yeah we are trying to be discreet here," Flowey whispered. "Can you leave us alone for a moment? Or at least be quieter?"

"Oh don't worry, he can't hear us from in there," the kid said. "The glass window is like super strong."

"Wait, really?" Flowey asked. "Are you sure?"

"Yeah, let me show you," the kid replied.

The armless reptilian kid then walked towards the window, but not before coughing lightly, which Frisk found weird to see someone do without arms to cover their mouth.

"Hey," Frisk began. "What are you-"

"Yo Lenny!" the monster kid yelled into the window. "Your store is being robbed, you... umm... turd!"

Frisk immediately ducked and covered her head, while Flowey pressed his vines upon where hist ears would've most likely been located if he had ones. Yet, to both their surprise, there came nothing. Frisk then rose slowly back up and Flowey anxiously followed, and to both their surprise, the paranoid lizard librarian looked unmoved by the kids shouting, still staring intently at the something, most likely the rabbit, in the library.

While Flowey began to look at the glass window more analytically, Frisk simply grew impressed. Just as she was beginning to think she was starting to somewhat understand the rules of this strange new world, Frisk found it was still finding ways to surprise her.

"How in the world?" she asked no-one in particular.

She turned to look down at the small kid, who had what resembled a smile on his yellow, reptilian snout. A type of smug smile that seemed to say "told you so".
“See?” the kid said. “Nothing to worry about.”

“Well, I'll be,” Flowey said as he looked at the window in surprise. “That’s magi-glass.”

“A what now?” Frisk asked and turned back to him.


“Yo, how can you tell?” the kid asked.

“Look closer,” Flowey explained. “Notice those strange but subtle purplish hues?”

Frisk and the yellow monster kid moved their faces closer to the window and with Flowey's pointer in their mind, the aforementioned signs were hard to miss on closer inspection. What looked like strange purplish serpentine things covered the ends of the glass window, and, while it could have been simple optical illusions, they seemed to slither and move subtly up and down like waves.

“That’s how you know it’s magi-glass,” Flowey explained. “Once you notice it, it's hard to miss.”

“Huh,” the kid replied.


She pressed her face onto the window and yelled:

“Hey, asshole! Over here!”

Once again, the librarian did not even flinch from those words.

“Holy crap,” Frisk said while removing her squished face from the glass. “That’s something.”

“But why would he bother adding such a strong window though?” Flowey asked curiously. “It's also incredibly expensive, or at least it used to be so last time I was here.”

“Paranoia most likely,” the monster kid answered. “They say Lenny just out of a sudden grew a bit too paranoid during the last few weeks.”

“Oh we've noticed,” Flowey said.

“Hey, do you know anything about that kid?” Frisk asked. “Flowey says he wasn't always like this, so something obviously must’ve happened. Any clues or…?”

“Well… truth is no-one really knows what's going on with him,” the monster kid answered. “But my first mom says he most likely got the Baron’s Sickness like mister Papyrus at the edge of town.”

“Baron’s Sickness?” Frisk asked curiously.

“Yeah, yeah, can we talk about that later?” Flowey asked. “As we said, we are kinda busy here at the moment kiddo, so we'll see you in the morning or something.”

“If you two are trying to eavesdrop on Lenny here,” the kid suddenly said. “Then I know a much better spot to do so.”

“Ok, how in the world would you know that?” Flowey asked curiously.
“Think you're the first monsters to be spying on him?” the kid answered. “You wouldn’t guess it by just looking at it, but Lenny is like the richest monster in town for some reason. Everyone wants to know more.”

“Well that could very likely explain his paranoia,” Flowey muttered subtly.

“No one knows how or why he’s so apparently rich,” the kid continued. “But I think I've figured it out. He's secretly a drug maker. Must be. That would also explain why he's always so shaky and stuff. Because he’s got the Baron’s Sickness and he got it from all the Baron's Breath he's been making in his basement.”

“I don't think he has a basement,” Flowey added.

“You are not gonna be able to eavesdrop anything from here,” the monster kid continued. “The downside of this glass is that we also can’t hear what he's saying. Or at least, not from this spot.”

“Oh yeah,” Flowey said in realization. “That’s… duh. Why didn’t I consider that? Am I slow today or what?”

“Alright kid,” Frisk said. “So… where is this magic spot then?”

“Follow me,” the kid said enthusiastically.

Without another word, the monster kid quickly ran to the left before Frisk could get another word out.

“Hey, wait up!” she called after them.

Frisk then wasted no time either and quickly stood up, which mixed with the weight of her bag made her lose balance for a moment and look clumsy from afar before she managed to adjust her self and run after the kid's direction.

She only took a few steps to the left side of the building before seeing the kid again, who was using just their teeth to seemingly remove a loose piece wallpaper covering the eastern wall, slowly as if to make little sound. Frisk walked up to him once they seemingly finished tearing and spat onto the snow some loose paper pieces, and she and Flowey looked at what the kid had opened up.

Under the hidden gap of the beige coloured wallpaper covered in rot and tears, there was a white, seemingly paper-thin wall underneath with some small, almost thin cracks that were thankfully big enough to glance through at crouching level.

“This is the best spot,” the monster kid said. “There are no soundproof windows on this side of the building, and Lenny hasn't noticed these cracks yet. Somehow Don’t ask me why he hasn't. Been here for a few days now even.”

To Frisk, this being the best spot was seemingly no exaggeration. It was a great spot even. The thin wall, torn wallpaper and cracks seemed to mix together into a great sense of unprofessionalism, that also, luckily on their part, made it the perfect setup for spying and eavesdropping on whatever was inside.

“Why are you helping us?” Flowey asked suddenly. “For all you know, we could be planning on robbing this guy.”

“Eh, I don’t really care what you are doing with him,” the kid answered. “Plus, you seem nice enough. But Lenny though. He's been kinda… nothing but an ass to me and my parents. Oh, and
also to everyone else in town for the past few weeks. Honestly, I don't really care why you are eavesdropping. I told you, practically everyone in town is curious about him.”

“But do you expect anything in return or…?” Flowey pried.

“Nah I'm… good,” the kid said thinking. “Although… maybe now that I’d helped you, you'd be willing to tell me some stories of the outside world or…”

Frisk chuckled lightly and shook her head.

“So is that the real reason you helped us?” she said, smiling. “Wanna use this moment as like a sort of blackmail in case I go back on my words earlier?”

The kid's cheerful expression now began to grow a large noticeable shade of embarrassment.

“Erm…” they said awkwardly. “…no? I mean… I wouldn't call it blackmailing but…”

“It’s fine kiddo,” Frisk answered. “I promised, didn’t I? You really didn’t need to, but thanks for the help either way.”

The kid embarrassment faded from his yellow, scaly cheeks and a warm smile formed on his snout.

“Yo, so I kinda need to scram now,” they then said. “My second mom gets pretty upset when I spend too long outside, especially on weekends. Sorry.”

“Oh, don’t worry I get it,” Frisk said. “I mean, I don’t get it with the mom part but-”

Frisk stopped herself from continuing she saw that the kid was starting to grow a confused expression from her words.

“Sorry, I said too much,” Frisk said in an excusing tone. “I'm tired and not thinking straight and… it was nothing.”

“Right…” Flowey said, looking up at her with intrigue. “Anyways, I guess we'll be seeing you later kid.”

“Yeah I'm off now,” the kid said.

“Wait!” Frisk exclaimed before the kid even finished turning around. “Sorry but I… I don’t think we ever got your name.”

“Name's Max,” the monster kid said. “Y’know, like the old Royal Guard Maxo. But you can just call me MK.”

“Well, in that case, MK, my name is Francisca,” Frisk said. “But you can just call me Frisk.”

“And I'm Flowey,” her companion added. “But you can just call me… uh, Flowey.”

With that, the kid, MK wasted little time before turning around and running towards an indeterminate place in town. Then suddenly, in the middle of the run, MK tripped, and with no arms to support, they fell face-first into the snow, but before Frisk could properly absorb what she just witnessed, MK had sprung themselves back up with just their legs and continued running as if nothing happened. As her momentary worry and shock quickly faded, Frisk quickly pieced together that this looked like a regular occurrence with the kid. Then, just as MK vanished behind some houses, she smiled softly. Either towards MK themselves or as a result of watching the
clumsy event occur, but Frisk herself wasn’t sure which it was.

“Well that was a fine kid,” Flowey said. “A bit pushing at times, but mostly bearable.”

“Are you like a professional critic of kids now or something?” Frisk asked cheekily. “What, are you also gonna rate them on the scale of one to ten?”

“Uhh…no?” Flowey said.

“Sorry, shitty joke,” Frisk said, mildly embarrassed.

“Mhmm,” Flowey simply expressed, agreeing.

A short moment later, Frisk turned around to the thin library wall to focus back on her mission. Now on closer look, it was now clear to both of them that it was unfortunately too small for both of them to glance through at the same time unless they two would bend into a strange and uncomfortable position.

“Should I look first or…?” Frisk asked Flowey.

“Go ahead,” Flowey said. “I think I’m better suited for keeping watch.”

Frisk nodded in agreement and crouched down close enough to the wall so she could smell the fumes from the rotting wallpaper. Then she leaned closer and peeked through the crack.

Her view from this angle was sadly, but unsurprisingly, very limited. Thankfully, the dozens of candles around the place proved to be handy markers, so Frisk wasn't completely in the dark, both literally and figuratively. She could even if just barely see the paranoid librarian who seemed to stand still as a statue by the front desk, which was to her right in her line of sight.

Then, to her fortunate surprise, she saw that the towering rabbit monster, RG 01, was still inside, looking around the library seemingly for nothing in particular.

“Good, the rabbit guy is still here,” Frisk said. “Man he's taking a really long time. Lucky for us though. But the store's got like what, 12 books?”

“So are you still sure you don’t feel perhaps just a tingle from him, eh?” Flowey asked in a devious manner. “You can deny it, but I saw the way you looked at him.”

Frisk rolled her eyes. It was clear to her that her flowery companion wasn't going to drop this all too soon.

“Whatever,” she said. “So what? Maybe I did get a teensy bit... interested after seeing that, but only in the uh, human aspects so to speak, and don't tell me you've never seen a stranger on the street that you found attractive. Doesn't at all mean you want to hit it or date them right away.”


“Oh, ok,” Frisk answered. “I mean, that's neat but... I don't really care.”

“Heh, I bet you don't,” Flowey said, somewhat snarkily.

Frisk paid little to no heed to his last comment, and all the reply she gave was another quick roll of her eyes.
As Frisk continued to spy on the massive rabbit who she could barely see was now looking at some shelves, she realized that there was a hint of bitterness from how Flowey was speaking just now. Like he secretly held a deep-seated grudge towards him. But then she shrugged it off as her possibly just overthinking it.

“It's hard to see a lot from here,” Frisk admitted as she squinted her eyes even more. “Do you think it's a good idea to move closer or what?”

“You mean run straight up to him like how you often did to strange noises and stuff back in the forest?” Flowey asked cheekily.

“Well if you say it like that,” Frisk began. “Then fine. For your sake, I ain't gonna do that this time. But the other times were different though, because... well, none of us had any idea what to expect.”

“That... that just sounds like an extra good reason not to do those things,” Flowey said. “But whatever. If you ain't gonna do it now, great. That's all I needed to hear.”

“And if we're spotted and the rabbit realizes what I am?” Frisk began. “Then I'll just kill myself and reset.”

“Nah, let's not risk that either,” Flowey said. “We have no idea when you last saved, so to speak. We could possibly end up all the way back in the ruins.”

“Oh, good point,” Frisk said. “But there must be a way to figure that out, right? When I last saved that is. Like, is there a pattern?”

“Hmm, let me think.” Flowey began. “Well... when's the last time you felt very determined? Like more than usual?”

“Umm, I don't know,” Frisk answered. “Sometime back in the forest I guess.”

“Alright, that’s not too far,” Flowey said. “Still, let’s not -”

“Hang on, the rabbit guy is finally doing something,” Frisk said.

The flower shut his mouth before she even finished speaking. As Frisk examined whatever event was occurring through the cracks, she thought for a moment she was mistaken until she saw RG 01 reach for an unseen book on a shelf away from her limited line of sight.

“Oh, sup Lenny,” the rabbit spoke to the librarian in a sort of a deep, surfer-esque voice. “Been a while since I've been here.”

“R-Reggie?” Lenny replied in a tone somehow even more panicky than usual. “I-I uh, d-didn’t know you were... in town.”

“Oh yeah, his name's Reggie,” Flowey whispered. “Knew it was something silly like that.”

“Yeah, I’m just visiting for today,” Reggy answered. “Good to be here for nostalgia sake though.
Sucks about what happened to it though. No offence. But anyway, I wanna buy this book.”

There came an almost subdued thump as he dropped the book on Lenny's counter, but it was somehow enough to make the lizard librarian startle backwards like a cat.

“Oh sorry, Lenny,” the beefy rabbit added. “Didn’t mean to scare ya bro. Is something wrong? You seem a bit on edge today.”

“N-nothing,” the librarian said nervously. “There’s nothing wrong at… a-all.”

While Frisk couldn’t see properly through the cracks, she could almost feel sweat begin to leak down his green scales.

“So are you gonna charge me for the book or what?” Reggie asked the librarian.

“O-oh, uhh,” the lizard said anxiously.

Lenny was in the most shocked and clearly frightened state Frisk had ever seen someone be in, human or animal. Just from her angle, every muscle, every essence of the librarian seemed to be shaking wildly, and even the simple act of him picking up the book Reggie handed him seemed to be a great obstacle. It was like watching an elderly man attempting the idlest works.

It was undeniable now to everyone watching, even Reggie, that something was clearly wrong.

“Bro, what’s wrong?” Reggie asked him, with a hint of worry.

“I…” Lenny muttered as the book shook wildly in his arms. “I…”

Suddenly, the book dropped from his hands and slammed on the counter, almost breaking the rotting wood, before he began to squeal and placed his clawed, scaly hands around his head, and gave out a painful wail of pure terror.

“OH GODS, PLEASE DON’T KILL ME!” he cried. “DON’T TORTURE ME AND TURN ME INTO DECOIR. I’M SORRY I TOOK THE BRIBE! I’M SORRY, I’M SORRY!”

“Woah, bro!” Reggy said, greatly surprised.

“I SHOULDN’T HAVE!” the librarian continued. “I KNOW I SHOULDN’T, BUT I WAS DESPERATE, I-”

“Lenny, calm down bro, I-” Reggy began.

Before the rabbit could finish, Lenny grabbed his shirt and held fast as he looked pleading into his eyes.

“Reginald, please!” Lenny cried into his face. “Please tell Mickey that it was the only way! The library was going under and… and… I had no choice. Otherwise, it was… c’mon. Someone as great as Mickey must understand the importance of libraries and knowledge and-”

“Bro, I don’t work with Mickey anymore!” Reggie stated. “Nor with the Royal Hunt! Not anymore that is.”

Lenny looked at him in disbelief, still shaking and sweating, but now seemed to have a tinge of hope in his green reptilian face.

“W-what?” he asked in surprise.
“I quit,” Reggie said. “A few years ago actually. I haven’t been with The Royal Hunt for a long
time.”

“Y-you can d-do that?” Lenny asked, now in pure disbelief. “F-from The Hunt?”

Plus, I think I may have ended up on Mickey’s enemy list as a result. But I’m alive at least. So far 
that is.”

Still holding the much larger rabbit by the shirt, the lizard seemed to stare at him in complete 
silence like he was dazed. Then, after a few seconds, he calmly let go and slowly sat down on his 
wooden chair behind the counter.

“Oh,” Lenny said calmly and regretfully. “Well umm… in that case I… I’m sorry I… I did not 
know Reggie, I… I hadn’t heard. Somehow.”

“Eh, you are probably not the first bro,” Reggie said reassuringly. “I’ve only been here for half an 
hour at most, yet half the town has already given me the side-eye. Didn’t think much of it, but now 
it makes more sense.”

“But you heard nothing, alright?!” Lenny said with more intensity. “Please. I said nothing back 
there and… you heard nothing from me. Nothing at all.”

“Oh don’t worry bro,” Reggie said reassuringly again. “Your secret, whatever it is, is safe with me, 
bro.”

“Uhh, yeah,” Lenny said, unsure. “So umm… anyway, what brings you to town?”

“I’m uhh,” the rabbit began, sounding clearly uncomfortable. “I’m here for the funeral. Just decided 
to look around first since it’s been a while.”

“Funeral?” Lenny asked curiously.

“Oh, you haven’t heard?” Reggie asked back, a bit surprised. “It’s kind of a big one. Half the town 
is attending from what I gather.”

“Oh, I… I don’t go out much these days, heh,” Lenny said somewhat awkwardly. “But umm… 
whose funeral is this?”

There came a moment of quiet between them, and from the little that Frisk could see through the 
cracks, she felt like she noticed a large hint of grief and sadness on Reggie’s expression.

The innkeeper’s.”

Chapter End Notes

Yep. Reggie is talking about that kid at the end. The little rabbit you can find at the inn 
in Snowdin.

Anyway, here is the second part of the Snowdin chapter/arc/whatever-you-wanna-call-it. This was a surprisingly difficult chapter to write, as I kept going through so many
different variations and ideas I kept changing and discarding. For example, Monster Kid wasn't originally supposed to appear here, but I realized that since I hadn't figured out a way to introduce them, I basically just went up and added them here. Even gave them some developments. They will return, don't you worry, and their role will be similar but not much longer than in UT. This is not a jab at the game BTW.

But if I thought this chapter was hard, then the next one will be perhaps even harder. You can see why at the end there. I am going to deal with some pretty heavy stuff in the next chapter so be prepared. It will also explain why it will take me a while to write it, so keep that in mind.

So here is also another character introduced, or rather reintroduced, RG-01, who came perhaps much earlier than any of you anticipated. Like MK, they had a minor part in UT but will have a bigger role in this AU. How bigger their role will be, I won't spoil. Just be prepared that these two will appear again, sooner or later. As to the location of RG-02, well read the prequel story for that. He makes an appearance if you haven't figured it out.

This chapter wasn't going be this long at first, but it is now, and I don't know why. Maybe I went too far into some detail, but if you think that then please let me now. Criticism is completely appreciated, just try to be respectful with it ok?

Anyways, see you later.
The snow fell lightly on the soil and dirt, flowing out from the wind and cavern sky like ashes of a great pyre. The fog came next, subtle and light, and it slid down the hill before passing over the small lake, giving it the false impression of a warm hot-spring.

On the field the lake ran through, there was a tree. A single, large and ancient tree of pine, rotting and without leaves, kneeling in a formation resembling a half-closed fist of a monstrous skeleton. Beside that tree, there was a small house or cottage. It was barely half the size of the tree and appeared hastily put together with loose planks and bricks, resembling a cheap, self-made shack rather than a proper home.

Standing right outside of it, on the plain, snow-covered field, there was a plain, polished oak table. Several items were scattered on it. They were a dirty bowl, a striped blue and yellow t-shirt, and a wooden toy car. Then there was a fourth item, one clearly too big for the table. It seemed to resemble a large plushy, one that almost resembled a large, living rabbit.

Lastly, besides that strange assortment of objects, there stood a singular painting on an easel. A simple but clear painting of a young monster boy resembling a white rabbit. He smiled, playfully, like he was happy and at peace. No more hunger, no more sickness and no more pain. A comforting thought, it seemed was the painter’s intention.

There was writing at the bottom of the painting. Written in cursive monster-speak, it simply wrote: Ivan, may he find peace.

Practically half of Snowdin had gathered there in that field just south of town. The half that could arrive, that is. Of course, there were a few outsiders as well. Some distant relatives from distant towns or regions. Some cousins or old friends. There were even some strangers or even passerby who didn’t know young Ivan very well but arrived the same to give their respect.

All of them, family and friends, strangers and acquaintances, old, young and adult, young, old and ancient, bipedal, quadruped and legless, all dressed mostly in either black, grey or white, stood together in a half-circle right outside the cottage by the old tree.

While there were the occasional soft mutters and whispers here and there, there was still a certain shared quietness between all of them. A quietness noise of respect, of understanding, one where each monster had a moment to reflect, in order to remember their own, fragile yet often forgotten mortality. To remember, that despite being able to live perhaps hundreds, if not thousands of lifetimes, throughout how many centuries or millennia, each of their lives could still be taken at a moments notice.

A priestly figure stood in front of them, dressed in dark-grey robes, ones so unkempt and dirty they were more closely similar to the rags of a hermit. The hood was also very large and covered their
entire face, snout and whatever lay there hidden in shadows. It also walked with a crooked back, and in one of its two hands, it seemed to hold a wooden staff of sorts.

Then, he, she or it drew a small copper bell from under its robe and rang it, and all the other monsters around stopped whatever mutters, whispers they were at in an instant and simply watched in unison like time itself had frozen. But there was no spell at play here, no hypnosis, simply an understanding between them all of what it meant.

It was time for the funeral ritual to begin.

Frisk stood just outside of town, at the top of a hill, watching the event from a distance. If she didn’t know any better, she would’ve assumed this was the start of some strange cult meeting or ritual. But with all the context in place, the painting, the objects and the word of the rabbit from the library earlier, it was hard to deny what this was about.

Frisk simply followed the group of monsters who had gathered together in a walk to someplace just outside of town. She understood the somberness of it and what it was about and wanted to know more while, but not enough to join the moving group, either in a sense of respect or fear, including a fear that she would be discovered amongst such a large group of strange and unreal creatures. Perhaps it was due to both of these reasons, Frisk figured. It was only once they arrived at the place that the somberness of the situation hit her.

“What’s with the stuff on the table?” she curiously asked Flowey, whispering as if the monsters in the distant gathering could hear her.

“These are… the kid’s favourite items in life,” Flowey answered, with somberness he was clearly trying to hide. “Supposedly that is.”

“Hmm,” Frisk said, feeling her throat tighten. “Guess only he would’ve known for sure.”

“True,” Flowey said. “You’ll see what they’re for. Soon enough.”

As the silent mourning continued, Frisk tried to find the large, white rabbit Reggie, or RG 01 as Flowey called him, in the group, which proved harder than she expected. Even with so many strange and different looking creatures, there was a strange abundance of white or whiteish rabbit monsters, and while most of them were fairly thin and small in comparison, finding the large one, even from this distance was hard. It was almost as if he wasn’t in the group at all, which Frisk found plausible but strange. Did he have to suddenly do something more important, Frisk wondered. What could be more important currently than attending the funeral of his own cousin?

Just as she was pondering this, the hooded figure rung the bell again. Frisk still found hard to figure out what they were, as from her distance it was hard to make out any detail under the hood. Maybe there was nothing under there? Maybe there was just shadow or perhaps even not that? Just nothing. Frisk didn’t know what to think. She didn’t know what to think anymore.

Then finally, they began to speak. Frisk expect that she would glimpse something from this creature from their words, be it gender or age, but as strange as it was, they’re voice managed to hint at almost nothing in fact. They spoke in a strange, aged but genderless voice, making Frisk start to wonder the possibility if they even had a gender. Or at least the same human concept of gender.

“We are gathered here today,” the hooded figure began. “To bid our farewells. To say our last
goodbyes… to young Ivan.”

There came a few but quick sad murmurs from the crowd.

“...I didn’t know him much in life,” the hooded figure continued, once all had silenced. “Nor do I pretend to. But many of you did. And even those of you who didn’t, you still chose to arrive here nonetheless. Some who were invited have not come here, so I’m told, possibly due to events out of their full control. But I also don’t hold ill will to some of those that could make it but chose not to, and I don’t think you should either. Not completely at least, for I understand that this is a loss beyond the scale of normal grief.”

They gave a small pause as if waiting for someone else to speak.

“Ivan Haren,” they continued after a while. “I am told, was tragically young. Only ten years of age, he was taken too soon from this world. From this life he had, and from the ones he could’ve had. But sickness came upon him, and several days later, that sickness took him in his bed, while he slept peacefully and unaware.”

They took another pause. The only thing that could be heard for a few seconds was the soft wind breezing by.

“He had few friends, I am told,” they continued. “A mother of course. An aunt and many cousins, some close, other distant. His father, Valdi Haren, Ivan could never meet in life, for he had perished from a sudden sickness in the heart when Ivan was but a few months old. I was gathered then, ten years ago, in this very place, with many of you as well. It was the only time I met Ivan as well. He seemed so… small then. A young monster with full of hope and dreams.”

They took another moment of silence. This time though, it was seemingly for themselves, judging from how he stared at the ground as if stricken by a sudden sadness.

During this new moment of silence, Frisk took a quick look at her flowery companion, who had extended his vines so he could take a closer look. She found it mildly surprising that he seemed to be just as invested in this as her, but only mildly, as Frisk began to feel him be a constant surprise for her.

Finally, the hooded figure looked back up and spoke again.

“Now though,” they said. “It is time to say the final goodbyes to him. Our last farewells… to young Ivan.”

They then turned to the centre of the crowd.

“Isabell Haren,” they called into it. “You may come now. When you’re ready.”

The crowd, slowly and carefully, parted until a lone rabbit lady stood alone. She looked incredibly frail, almost bony, and wore a dirty and torn orange woollen sweater and a matching skirt, clearly not able to afford fancier clothes for this funeral. Her fur was white with a pinkish hue, and in her uncanny human-like palms, she held a small, full blue pouch. She stared down at the snow-covered ground as if to hide her face from the others.

“Oh my gods,” Flowey suddenly muttered, seemingly in shock. “That’s… that’s the old Snowdin innkeeper.”

After an uncomfortably long pause, the rabbit lady began to walk towards the table with objects. The way she walked was incredibly slow, pausing momentarily with every step like she was
walking on needles. Even from a distance, Frisk could see her expression was wracked with pain.

When she was finally in front of the table of items, she stopped. Then stared at it for a while like she didn’t know what to do next. Then, as slow and shaken as her walk, her palm reached into the small bag she held. Frisk could see a few tears form on her eyes now, and run down her cheek slowly. It was hard to miss in fact. This was, perhaps, the clearest and most glimmering tears she had ever seen, much more than from any human. The tears went past her cheek, past her torn sweater and fell down on the snow, instantly vaporizing into several dust particles that became unrecognizable from the snow.

Finally, the rabbit pulled her hand out again. Her palm was filled with what resembled a greyish pile of snow. But Frisk was certain this was not any snow. She had seen this essence before. From the old creature in the ruins. Her suspicions were only strengthened as the rabbit lady looked down at the dust in her palm, and began to sob. Her tears became thicker and faster.

From the crowd, another rabbit stepped forward, this one also female, but her fur was darker and purplish. This one wore a dirty white wool dress and had a straw hat with two holes for her years. This purplish rabbit hat placed one of her palms on the weeping rabbit’s shoulder. The white rabbit looked back at her for a moment and then nodded.

“Do you know who that is?” Frisk asked, whispering again.

“That’s her older sister, Clare,” Flowey answered. “She used to own the general store in Snowdin. When it still existed that is.”

Then once the purplish rabbit with the straw hat, Clare, let go and backed back into the crowd, the white one, Isabell, took another step. She then placed her dust-filled hand over the small toy car, and opened her palm, letting the dust slowly fall all over it.

“What is she doing?” Frisk whispered to Flowey, watching her action with confusion.

“Spreading his dust,” Flowey answered. “Whenever a monster dies, their dust is spread over their favourite objects in life. It is believed that their… essence will then… live on, forever, in those objects.”

Frisk kept watching as the frail rabbit lady picked up more dust and poured that as well over the toy, and then stopped once her palm was empty, her face grimacing as if holding another weep. Frisk found it a bit hard to watch but simultaneously couldn’t move her eyes away. There was a certain, tranquillity to this ritual, Frisk felt. A sad but clear mood in it that spoke more than any words of grief could.

“Is that true?” Frisk asked Flowey. “Does their essence really live on in the items?”

Flowey said nothing. Kept watching on, like he either didn’t hear her or simply decided not to answer. Frisk noted a strange discomfort in his last answer, so she decided not to pry, and just kept silent as well.

The white rabbit lady then turned her eyes on another object, this time, the striped t-shirt. It was at that moment Frisk noticed that several other monsters in the group were now tearing up as well, and just like the rabbit, their tears were just as clear and glimmering as well.

Once Isabell was done pouring over the shirt, she proceeded to the next one, the wooden bowl. It advanced like the last two, with her pouring two palms of dust over it.

Then she proceeded to the last item, the large, lifelike fluffy besides the table, but stopped it as if
something suddenly snapped within her. She stared at it, like a weak prey awaiting death from a predator, with one hand holding a nearly empty bag of dust. Then she broke. She fell down on her knees like her bones suddenly snapped like twigs, and cried. Her bag fell off her hands and onto the thin snow, and several particles of dust fell out, blending with the white ground. Isabell didn’t care about that anymore, simply placed both her palms on her teary face as if to hide her cries. The other monsters, even the strange hooded figure it seemed, looked at her with clear sympathy. Some even began to cry as well. Before Frisk realized it, she felt a single tear was running down her light brown cheek as well.

“Wow,” she muttered as she wiped it away with her hand. “That’s… Jesus.”

The purplish rabbit lady with the pink hat, Clare, her eyes full of tears as well, then came back from the crowd, knelt down besides Isabell, and embraced her softly. After a moment, her sobs lessened and she breathed heavily. The hooded figure came forwards as well and whispered something into one of Isabell’s rabbit ears. Whatever it was, it seemed to be enough to calm her down. She then finally moved her palms from her eyes, that were now red from tears, grabbed the bag, and slowly stood back up, Clare helping her onto her bare rabbit feet. There were still visible tears running down her cheeks and she still shook wildly, but a mild sense of strength seemed to push her a bit forward. It was not complete enough, so Clare then held her shoulders and led her the few steps to the plush like she was teaching her sister to walk again. Once they were close enough, they both simultaneously reached into the blue bag and poured the last of the dust all over the plush. Then, it was done.

Isabell took one deep breath as she faced the dust-covered plush. Then as if by magic, the dust seemed to fade into the items, almost growing stuck to them. Isabell lowered her head as if she didn’t want to witness this, and allowed Clare to lead her back into the crowd, still shaking and softly sobbing the way.

Once that was done, the hooded figure stood back to face their crowd, rung their bell once more and spoke.

“It’s easy to blame others for this,” they said to the crowd. “To blame your gods or spirits or the angel, or whatever power you believe. Whatever the case, the sad truth is, this is a chaotic, harsh world, and I agree that in a better one, things like this wouldn’t have happened, or at least not so frequent. But it is up to us to make that world. Not later, not even tomorrow. Today. We may grieve, we may anger or cry, but we mustn’t let ourselves fall into pure despair during times like this, even if the unknown abyss seems tempting and the world of the living hopeless.”

They took another pause as if to make sure the others absorbed what they spoke. Even from her distance, the hooded figure spoke so clearly that Frisk could hear the speech in full and in its whole eloquence. Just from their tone and words, Frisk felt a sense of grief rise in her, a sense of loss, despite the fact she never met this young Ivan. It was almost like their voice was magic in a sense, hypnotic even.

It was around this moment that she finally spotted the large rabbit, Reggie, in her sights. As she was no longer even thinking of him, she managed to glance at him in the distance by pure chance. But he was not in the crowd as it turned out. Like her, he stood watching from a distance, on a different hill opposite the house from Frisk’s perspective. Under a small pine tree, he simply watched the funeral from above, smoking what looked like a small cigar with green smoke.

*Why isn’t he with the group?* Frisk thought.

“Did something happen with Reggie?” she asked Flowey. “Related to Ivan?”
“Why you ask?” Flowey replied.

“He’s… distant for some reason,” Frisk answered. “He’s just under the tree at the hill over there. Not even in the crowd.”

“Hmm, that’s weird,” Flowey said. “No idea why that is. But… whatever. I just… I don’t care anymore.”

“Ok, I’ll shut up then,” Frisk said.

“You don’t… you don’t really have to,” Flowey said, now sounding like he had a lump in his throat.

Shortly as he finished saying that, Frisk saw Reggie throw his cigar on the ground and bury it in some snow with his feet. Then he turned around and walked into the woods, his large sword and scabbard visible on his back from her view.

About a few minutes passed before the crowd of monsters finally separated. Some headed deeper into the woods, others, including the hooded figure, went by of to a beaten path leading north, while the rest headed up the hill towards Snowdin. Among them was Clare, the frail purplish rabbit, who Frisk saw heading towards the shelter. Isabell meanwhile, simply entered the ruined cottage by the tree alone, not even bothering to close it behind her. Before they separated, there was a moment where Clare and Isabell spoke about something inaudible. Whatever it was, Frisk figured it wasn’t something nice.

Frisk watched it all from beginning to end, not moving her eyes away by much. It was hard for her to do, either from a deep-seated sense of respect or from some type of morbid curiosity she had. Either way, she had a feeling that Flowey felt just as bad if not worse than she currently did.

“So what now?” she asked him, watching the monsters move past her.

“I… I don’t know,” Flowey simply said, clearly in a bad mood. “I don’t… I don’t think we should’ve come here. To the funeral I mean.”

“Yeah, sorry…” Frisk said. “I just… I was curious.”

“It’s alright,” Flowey answered. “Now you at least know how funerals down here work. You got a live demonstration, you could say. Could’ve been in better circumstances but… it’s what it is.”

“Uh-huh,” Frisk simply replied.

“So… is it anything like this on the surface or…?” Flowey asked with curiosity.

“Well, where I’m from, not really,” Frisk answered. “But… maybe this is how it works in some foreign cultures I don’t know of. In my country though, hell even in both my parent’s countries, we usually just dig a hole and bury them in a box. Ok, to be fair, there’s actually a bit more to it than that.”

“Uh-huh,” Flowey replied simply, not looking at her.

“Of course, there’s cremation,” Frisk said. “Which… is kinda similar to this, actually, now that I think about it. Burn the body to ash and spread it. Mostly over special places though rather than over any particular object, but it’s a similar mindset I guess.”
“I see,” Flowey said.

“Still, I’m sorry I put you through this,” Frisk said apologetically.

“Got your apologies the first time,” Flowey replied. “No need to say it twice.”

“Right, I… right…” Frisk said.

She kept watching down the hill, down at the house even though the crowd was still gone. The painting still stood there, while the items had been moved inside the house a while ago. She tried to imagine this boy in life, this rabbit monster Ivan. What was he like, having lived his whole life down here never even getting a chance to see the sun and star? That was hard for her to imagine. It made her also reflect how she took things like that for granted and reminded her how things that seemed normal down here felt so abnormal. Like her own normal, this human normal, like the star and sun, wasn’t the truth but a privilege she took for granted.

Frisk then took a look at her flowery friend. She wondered then why he was so hesitant to show his emotions. She found it obvious how he actually felt, that he had empathy. Why was he so strange about it, she wondered. Was it cultural? Does she herself have something to do about it? Or is there something about him he doesn’t want her to know? In fact, how much did she know about him? This strange creature that’s not monster nor animal? How much did she know about this world even? Once again, she had so many questions and few answers, yet at the moment had no energy or will to ask any of it.

What is the point? Frisk simply thought.

It was then that she looked back to look at the town, and with a quick spook, she saw a familiar standing near her and Flowey. A familiar bulging skeleton with a large, seemingly permanent grin on his face that made her feel uneasy just looking at.

“Sup kiddos,” Sans said to them.

“Jesus,” Frisk said, mildly startled. “Didn’t expect to see you here.”

“Looking for us or something?” Flowey prodded.

The skeleton exhaled audibly through his grin and shook his head.

“Had to get out of the house for a moment,” he said. “Me and my brother we… well, we got into a bit of a fight. I caught him sneaking in some of… his stuff. Something he had promised to quit after I took some of it away but… turns out he just snuck some behind me.”

“What is this “stuff” you keep mentioning?” Flowey asked.

Sans stood still and looked at them momentarily as if he was thinking of something else.

“Eh, sorry but that’s kinda personal territory,” he finally answered after a moment. “Let’s just say it’s something… addicting.”

“Hmm,” Frisk simply replied.

“It’s nothing related to me, is it?” Flowey suddenly asked.

“Erm, no,” Sans said. “He’s never mentioned you even. Not in relation to this, that is. Now that I think about it, I don’t think he has mentioned you for several years now.”
“Oh,” Flowey said, sounding like he didn’t know how to react. “That’s… ok…”

There came a short moment of pause as if all three of them were waiting for someone else to speak first. Frisk simply didn’t have much to say now. Or rather, not much energy to control the conversation. She just stood, listening to the blows of the soft wind blowing by her clothes.

“Never been fond of funerals,” Sans said after a moment, breaking the silence.

“I doubt most people are,” Flowey replied.

“You wouldn’t think that,” Sans added. “Y’know Considering I’m a skeleton after all but… whatever. I’m not really in much of a joking mood now, if you couldn't tell.”

“Neither am I,” Flowey replied.

“But why are you here though?” Frisk asked him directly.

The fat skeleton shrugged.

“No idea,” he admitted. “No reason I guess? I was just walking around town, saw you nearby and wanted to say hi.”

“Huh, ok,” Frisk replied.

“Since when do you take walks?” Flowey asked.

“I walk… sometimes,” Sans said. “Not much but… ok, not much. It’s rare actually. You caught me.”

“Well, at least it’s nice to know someone cares about us two though,” Flowey said. “Someone who’s not… you know who I mean Frisk. Right?”

“I think so,” she replied, thinking back to the creature in the ruins.

“Even if the care comes from this smiley trashbag,” Flowey added with more bitterness.

“Is that your only insult towards me?” Sans asked. “I mean… it’s not like it’s wrong per se. I do smile a lot, and I am a bag of trash, admittedly.”

Flowey gave out a small pout.

“Whatever,” he said and looked away. “Not in the mood for this now.”

“I can see that,” the skeleton said. “So anyway, did the shelter take you in kiddos? Sure hope so. For your sake that is, ’cause then I won’t have to share with you my hilarious jokes all night. I already have my bro Papyrus to suffer through them.”

“Not really,” Frisk answered. “The shelter was full. In a literal sense, apparently.”

“Still feel like there was room there ,” Flowey muttered.

“Hmm, shame,” Sans said, still grinning. “Well, my offer still stands you know? Unless you wanna crash at some other monster's hole.”

“I… think we've decided to take your offer,” Frisk answered, trying to hide her slight discomfort at the thought.
She hoped the skeleton didn’t notice her unease. From his still expression, Frisk found it hard to say whether he did.

“Yeah, we are… doing that,” Flowey confirmed, clearly not hiding his tone of disappointment.

The flower then gave out a small sigh of defeat.

“Oh cool,” Sans casually said through his still uncomfortably wide grin. “Good to hear. But eh. Let’s not go to my place just yet. Not when my bro is currently having one of his cranky moments.”

“Got it,” Frisk said. “I know how that feels. I have a… family member who sometimes has outburst so… yeah.”

“Mhmm,” Sans simply replied.

“So what should we do until then?” Flowey asked. “Just stand around in this growing cold?”

“Oh, I was thinking of going to Grillby’s,” Sans answered. “Have you two ever been there kiddos?”

“You mean that big building with the large, broken sign?” Frisk asked. “The one that seems the most stable?”

“The one and the same,” Sans answered. “I always go there when I… well I never have a good excuse to, honestly. I just go there a lot. They sell the best burgers with the best ketchup in town. Also the only burgers and ketchup in town.”

“Mhmm,” Frisk answered simply.

“That could explain your “big bones” syndrome,” Flowey muttered under his breath.

“Anyways,” Sans continued. “I was wondering if you could… maybe be… interested in having a bit of lunch with me there?”

“Look, if this is your way of asking me out-” Frisk began.

“Oh, no, no, no,” Sans said reassuringly. “While I’m honestly kinda flattered you thought I was going there, I wasn’t. I was more thinking of dining together as… newly met acquaintances. Or as companions. Just a nice gesture for you and your pothead friend there.”

“Ugh, told you I’m really not in the mood for this now,” Flowey muttered with annoyance.

“I don’t really do romance if you wanna know,” Sans added. “Never been my thing.”

“So you’re like asexual?” Frisk asked curiously. “I mean I’m not judging.”

“Nah, don’t think so,” Sans said. “More like aromantic, I’d say. Not sure if by choice or if it’s just how I’m wired. I just know that currently, I feel like relationships are far too much work for me.”

Frisk smiled a bit.

“I can understand that,” she replied.

“So you wanna come or…?” Sans asked.

Frisk shrugged.
“Yeah, I’m game,” she answered and turned to her companion. “What about you Flowey? You in or…?”

“Whatever,” her companion answered, sounding drained. “I just… yeah, let’s go.”

“I mean,” Sans began. “He doesn’t have to come with. I can just drop him at my place and-”

“I said I’ll go,” Flowey blurted out, sounding irritated. “Sorry. I… well, I’m not sorry actually. I’m never sorry to you that is.”

“Alright kiddo,” Sans said. “Just don’t come complaining to me if you change your mind in there. Anyway, follow me, kiddo. I happen to know a shortcut.”

With that, the duo, or Frisk rathered, followed behind the bulging skeleton.

The bar slash restaurant was slightly better than what Frisk had come to expect from the town. It was dirty and smelled foul, of course, but mixed with the grease and heat from the kitchen, the stench was unforgettable in the worst way. But the wooden floor was at least stable enough, so was the roof and walls, despite the occasional tear in the wallpaper. It even had electricity, but seemingly only a little, for there was just a single ceiling light turned on. Despite those setbacks, Frisk perfectly understood why this place was considered the most stable one in town. But compared to most bars on the surface though, the place was pretty much unrecognizable from a run-down motel bar you could find in a poor city neighbourhood.

Still, it proved nice enough for the town, and as Frisk saw it was filled with so many strange monsters and creatures. The place seemed almost as busy as the shelter from before. Some of the monsters she recognized from the funeral, probably here to distract themselves from the memory of it, she assumed. But there were also dozens of other monsters and monster types she had never seen before. Not all of them were even humanoid, including what resembled a large plant monster sitting in the corner of the bar, and it reminded Frisk of a piranha plant creature from old an antique musical she couldn’t remember the name of.

“Hey, is that one of your kind?” Frisk asked Flowey when she saw it first. “I mean a living… plant or whatever?”

“Nah, that guy’s a pure plant monster,” Flowey confirmed.

“How can you tell?” Frisk asked.

“Eh,” Flowey said and shrugged. “Ever seen a plant like that in nature?”

“Hmm, I think I see,” Frisk said.

Of other lovely strange denizens of the bar, there was a group of three seemingly elderly monsters all playing poker by a large round table. Frisk guessed they were old judging by their crooked posture, greyness on their fur or feathers, or by what appeared to be wrinkles on some places. Or maybe they weren’t even old, Frisk then considered, and maybe she was just assuming they were, based on her biased human perception of old.

The monster that caught her attention the most though was the that stood behind the bar counter. Unlike all the other monsters she had seen so far, except for maybe Sans and that one ghostly figure in the ruins, who all seemed to be resembling something organic or things that would be considered living in the surface world, be it animal or plant. This one, however, was a being of pure
fire. An orange flame that took the shape of a humanoid figure, wearing what appeared to be dirty but fireproof bartender outfit complete with glasses on it’s “head” that seemed to be held in the air by nothing. Currently, this flaming bartender was cleaning an empty beer glass, and judging by the position of his spectacles, the figure seemed to be watching her, Flowey and Sans approach him.

“I’m… I’m guessing that’s Grillby?” Frisk asked Flowey, somewhat nervously.

“Uh-huh, that’s him,” Flowey confirmed.

Without even hesitating, Sans took a seat on an empty barstool in front of the counter. Then he patted on another loose seat by his left.

“C’mon kiddo, I won’t bite,” he said without turning back.

Frisk, starting to feel the growth of some sudden dread within her, took a seat on the stool.

“The usual Grilbz,” Sans said to the bartender. “But a triple serving this time. Also, get two more for my two friends here.”

The flaming humanoid nodded and walked to a back door to the kitchen.

“What’s the… usual?” Frisk asked.

“Burger and fries,” Sans asked. “You like burgers right?”

“Uhh… I guess?” Frisk answered.

“Come now,” Sans said. “Who doesn’t like burgers?”

“She’s clearly not in the mood trashbag,” Flowey suddenly said.

“Ok, gee,” Sans said, still with a grin on his face. “Just trying to lighten the mood.”

Frisk took a quick look at her flowery companion. Despite everything, she did not expect to hear something like this from him.

She then turned to look more around the bar, to further look at all the wondrous denizens. There was not much speaking going on, only some grumblings from the three gambling elderlies, or whom Frisk assumed were elderlies. Thankfully, her doubts were quickly squashed just a moment later, as some of them finally began to talk out loud, and they sounded just as cranky as they looked.

“Hey,” said one that looked like a large brown elderly hen. “Did ya hear about that funeral today?”

“Ay, the one for Ivan,” said one that resembled a large, reddish feathered humanoid bird wearing a greasy tanktop. “Shame about that. That boy was too young.”

“Far too common now,” said the third one, who looked like a human with a donkey head. “Ain’t nothing like that happening under the old Asgore.”

“Poor ol’ Isabell,” the chicken said again. “Outliving yer child. I can’t imagine that.”

“Mhmm,” the reddish bird said simply.

“Oh right, sorry, Avy,” the chicken said apologetically. “I momentarily forgot about your… about your…”
“That was several years ago,” the reddish bird, Avy, said back. “Doesn’t hurt me that much no more.”

“I see,” the chicken said.

With that, they all three became silent again. Frisk looked around the bar once more, turning in her stool to take a better look. She looked around, quickly, almost like there was something that moved in the corner of her eyes, but she always just missed once she glimpsed at its location. For some reason she couldn’t understand at first, she wanted to yell at all the silent monsters to start talk or sing or even fight. Just anything that could destroy this eerie silence amongst all of them. But she realized then that this silence was possibly just a symptom of what actually bothered her. This entire bar was filled with creatures she had never seen, beings that resembled not just animals, but plants, fires and even corpses, but they all were living, breathing like her. She felt like everywhere she wasn’t looking, there were strange eyes of what were supposed to be unnatural creatures glaring at her, staring. Watching. Waiting for her to sleep, or to make a misstep. She figured she was just imagining things. But she couldn’t tell anymore. She couldn’t trust herself anymore, on what was real or what was-


“Oh, right,” Frisk said, mildly spooked.

Pulled from her thoughts, she turned back towards the counter, with her back to whatever horror, if any, were watching her. She looked down at her food. The burger seemed uncomfortably wet from the grease and sauce, and the fries looked stale and undesirable. But Frisk didn’t think much of it and just grabbed the burger with her hands and pressed it in her open mouth.

“You seem tense,” Sans said, with the same grin on his face like he was mocking her.

“Is… something wrong Frisk?” Flowey asked, but with much clearer worry than the skeleton.

“I’m fine,” Frisk said, her mouth full.

It tasted just as sweaty as it looked, with the vegetables feeling soggy before they even touched her mouth, and the sauce, if there was one, was almost tasteless. But the meat was thankfully satiating, perhaps the only thing in the burger that was. Whether it was a mix of some strange seasoning or oil, it proved juice enough for her. But then it hit her. She was eating meat. So she paused and looked at it, at the half-eaten bitten insides. It looked very similar from the inside like an average burger. Even the meat.

She slowly put it down feeling a tinge of shock. She turned around back to other monsters at the bar, all munching on the same or similar burgers, including what looked like an anorexic cow.

“Uh… Flowey?” she asked.

“What?” the flower asked while clumsily eating from his plate.

“What… what are we eating?” she frightfully asked.

“It’s a burger,” Sans said before Flowey got a word out.

He was eating as well, just as messy, if not more, as Frisk’s companion. But unlike Flowey who at least had an excuse of handicap, Sans didn’t, so he clearly just didn’t care how messy he looked or was.
“I know it’s a…” Frisk began. “But… I mean… what’s in it?”

“Oh,” Sans said before licking his bony fingers. “Well, there’s… vegetables. Tomatoes, kale, ketchup, meat, and—”

“Yeah, that!” Frisk said, on the verge of panicking now. “What… where does this meat come from?! I mean… where does it-?!”

“It’s lab-grown,” Sans causally said.

“Wait, what?” Frisk asked.

“Yeah, with magic and science,” Flowey confirmed. “Stuff like that.”

“Oh…” Frisk said, a bit calmer now.

She felt like the biggest idiot in the world now, but she felt also relieved along with her embarrassment.

“Oh god I thought that…” she said, smiling at her dumb assumptions.

“You thought what?” Sans asked while casually taking another bite.

“I thought that…” she began before stopping. “Nevermind.”

“Does meat come from somewhere else on the surface?” Flowey asked.

“Uhh…” Frisk began, unsure of how to answer this question. “Kinda? In some places, that is. I mean, in my country it’s lab-grown as well but… I just didn’t expect this town to have the technology or… budget for those sorts of things.”

“Well, it actually comes from The Capital,” Sans said. “Used to be made here but… eh. But that’s just what I read.”

Clearly not interested in this subject, he took another bite of his burger.

“Ok…” Frisk said, unsure.

“Wait, where else would meat come from?” Flowey asked her curiously.

“Uhh, nowhere?!” Frisk quickly answered. “I don’t know?! The farm or whatever?!”

“Hmm, ok,” Flowey said and proceeded to continue with her food.

Frisk looked down at her half-eaten food. It no longer looked desirable. Whether that was due to her anxiety or embarrassment from her terrifying yet wrong sense of realization, she didn’t know. She was never sure of her own emotions, even before she came to this strange world.

“Never seen you here before,” said a calm yet unfamiliar masculine voice nearby.

“Uh, what?” Frisk asked, taking a moment to realize it was meant for her.

She looked up and saw the burning bartender seemingly looking at her, almost with intrigue.

“You’re an ape monster aren’t you?” the bartender continued.

“W-why you ask?” Frisk asked nervously.
“No reason,” Grillby said. “Just curious.”

“Did something happen Grillby?” Flowey asked suspiciously.

“Oh, no,” the bartender said. “Nothing has happened. Yet. I am in a fine mood in fact.”

“Right…” Flowey replied, eyeing him suspiciously.

“Y’know, the Great Mickey is an ape monster as well,” Grillby continued.

There’s that name again, Frisk thought, her interest peaking but still shivering mildly from the namedrop.

“You… know him?” she pried.

“Eh, not personally,” Grillby answered to Frisk's disappointment.

Should've known it wouldn't be that easy, she thought.

“Do you?” Grillby suddenly. “Do you know him? Since you’re also an ape monster that is?”

“Erm… no,” Frisk said awkwardly. “Not that I… know of. Must be from like a… erm... a different… tribe or something.”

“Apetown has tribes?” Grillby asked with intrigue. “Huh. Didn’t know that.”

“Uh… yeah…” Frisk said awkwardly.

Please don’t let this bite me in the back later, she thought.

“Anyway, sorry for assuming,” Grillby said apologetically.

“It’s… fine,” Frisk said.

“Well, either way, Mickey’s a true hero,” Grillby said. “You should be proud. If you ask me, he’s much better than this Ashu-Tsuki figure.”

“Ashu-Tsuki?” Frisk repeated, her interest suddenly changing. “Huh. Why do I feel like I’ve heard that name somewhere before?”

“You probably have,” Sans said. “They are like a local hero around these parts. Maybe you've heard it in passing from someone.”

“Nah, I don’t think so,” Frisk said. “Or at least, not from around here I mean.”

“They are more like a filthy vigilante,” Grillby said with a strange hint of personal bitterness.

“Uh-huh,” Sans replied, clearly in disagreement.

“Or maybe I have?” Frisk said, thinking. “I dunno. Do you know who that is, Flowey?”

“Yeah, of course,” the flower confirmed. “I only remember like bits though. I know. Typical.”

“Well, what do you remember?” Frisk asked him curiously.

“Nothing more than the basics, unfortunately,” Flowey said. “They are some sort of a vigilante type around here, no one knows who or what kind of monster they really are and… yeah, that’s
about it. Nothing no one in town can’t also tell you. I’m not sure if I have ever even managed to encounter her personally.”

“Her?” Frisk repeated.

“Oh, what did I say?” Flowey asked back. “Sorry. Think I had like a mind fart there.”

“Either way, you shouldn’t be listening to what the kids tell you,” Grillby said. “They just don’t know any better. This… Ashu-Tsuki is not to be idolized. They don’t follow any rules or sense of honour, but rather their twisted self made code. Now Mickey, on the other hand, now that is a true hero. Someone I wish more kids, even my own daughter, looked up to.”

“Why is that?” Frisk asked curiously.

“Well, why not?” Grillby simply said. “Mickey truly lives to his moniker of Great. He is strong, compassionate and-”

“Bullshit!” someone else in the bar said strongly.

It took everyone a moment to realize who said that, even Frisk who mildly recognized that voice from just moments ago. It was Avy, one of the three elderly monsters playing poker on the round table, who had spoken. Following the suit of everyone else in the bar, except for Sans, Frisk and Flowey turned to look at him. The reddish bird sat by the end of the round table, his bird face expressing tiredness and irritation, and holding a stack of cards in his feathered hand. Even his two companions stared at him in surprise.

“W-what did you just say?” Grillby asked him, sounding both insulted and nervous.

“It's bullshit,” Avy reiterated. “Compassionate? Mickey? Bah. It's all lies. Cheap propaganda and you know it. Yet you perpetuate it. Why? Hell, now that I think about it, maybe you perpetuating of it is the reason you, your family and this place are so well off compared to the rest of the town.”

“Are you… are you accusing me of taking bribes?” Grillby asked, now clearly insulted.

“Nah,” Avy said. “Or at least not straightly. I’m just saying you're a coward. You all are. Everyone in this town is a gods-dammed coward.”

He threw his cards on the table and angrily took a sip from an alcohol bottle nearby, seemingly careless about the countless eyes staring at him now. His two elderly companions seemed to sense like something was afoot and sp rushed to gather their money and things.

“I uh… I forgot to do something at home,” the donkey said, clearly excusing.

“M-me too,” the hen said.

And as fast as their old muscles and bones could manage, they rushed out the bar, leaving a trail of floating feathers behind them. So now only Avy sat by that table. Him against the entire town, but with a visible sense of rage, pride and assuredness.

“What's going on?” Frisk whispered to Flowey.

“No idea ,” Flowey answered, sounding confused.

“What, you all got nothing to say?” Avy asked. “Too scared to even face the truth, huh?”

“How-how dare y-you!” Grillby said in an attempt to sound tough. “Mickey is our hero. A…a true
champion and a… and a…”

“Y’know, Mickey ain’t gonna fuck you if you keep praising him like that,” Avy said and chuckled.

Grillby, despite having no discernible facial features, still seemed clearly insulted now. But there was also a hint of fear, judging by how he trembled.

“I used to think Undyne was bad, back in the day,” the old bird continued. “And yeah, she was loud, extreme and often thought with her fists rather than her brain.”

He took another big swig from his drink.

“But,” Avy continued once he was done. “At least she had honour. At least heart and thoughts were towards us, towards the people. And most importantly, unlike Mickey, she never ever… fetishized cruelty. Or at least, never so openly.”

“You’re… you’re saying Mickey fetishizes cruelty?” Grillby asked him.

“Oh, what else would you call it?” the bird asked without looking at him.

“You… know about Mickey?” Frisk felt herself blurt out without thinking.

It took her a moment to realize what she just asked. She didn’t have the question on her mind, or at least so she thought, but the words seemed to come from some deep part within her, a part that seemed to demand answers now after being too long left in the dark.

“Heh, what gave it away?” Avy replied to her. “You’re right. I do know a lot about him. A lot more than most living monsters in this town in fact. Which says a lot, considering the event with poor old Ferdinand we were all were privy to, many years back.”

“We all promised Mickey and The Hunt to not talk about that with newcomers!” a young donkey monster nearby said to him sternly.

“Well, don’t worry, I ain’t gonna talk about that,” the bird said. “Despite the fact that what happened that day was… utterly terrible.”

He then took a quick look at someone else in the bar before taking another swig of his alcohol bottle.

Frisk turned to see where he looked and saw a monster resembling an unhealthily skinny brown bear in the corner, wearing a torn and dirty orange jacket and clearly too drunk to notice his surroundings. That monster seemed to be doing nothing but mumble raving nonsense to himself and drinking from a large bottle before then quickly passing out.

“Nah,” Avy said, turned back to the rest of the onlookers. “I have another story. One that does more than just hint at the depravity that only this ‘Great Mickey’ is capable of, as someone like the poor ol' brother of that fat skeleton over there could tell you.”

“Wait, is he talking about you Sans?” Frisk whispered. “You… know something about him.”

Sans didn’t answer. Just kept eating his food like he didn’t hear.

“Hey wait a minute,” Flowey whispered with a hint of realization. “Did something happen to Papyrus? Sans, what happened to Papyrus?”

“Told you before,” Sans simply answered. “I can’t tell you. Sorry.”
Frisk noticed the same hint of unease from him as when she first asked him about Mickey. To her, it was undebatable. He was hiding something. Something he knew about Mickey and The Royal Hunt.

“Alright,” Grillby sternly said to the old bird. “What is this story you have?”

Avy grew a smug grin on his beak.

“Well go on,” Flowey said to him.

“Yeah, we’re ready,” Frisk said, turning her attention back to the bird.

The bird took a deep breath before he put the bottle of booze to his mouth and chugged. He chugged and chugged like it was the last time he could ever do so. Then once the bottle was empty, he slammed it down on the round table, and Frisk almost expected it to shatter from the impact. Then he took a deep breath and smiled smugly again.

“So… you want to hear about Mickey?” Avy said. “Alright then. Sit down and listen. This might take long, but I will tell you all the truth about Mickey.”

Chapter End Notes

"So Jay, what did you do during the quarantine?"
"I wrote a chapter for an Undertale Fanfiction that featured a child funeral."

So yeah, this was something. Admittedly, this might be the darkest scene so far.

No, this ain't some April fools joke. I just happen to upload this today, of all days. Once again, sorry for the delay. This was kind of a difficult chapter though, so now I at least have an excuse for it. Honestly, I don't have much to say here. I just want to say that I really want to give out these chapters on a much faster rate, but who knows? I still haven't lost interest or anything, so don't be worried. I just take my time sometimes.

Anyway, here is the next chapter. This is a bit of a downer one, I admit. The next one will be kinda gruesome though, so be prepared for that.

End Notes

And here it is. The first(?) chapter of The Shattering. As you can guess, this AU can get very dark, but would you believe me if I told you this is perhaps NOT the darkest this story can get?
So this cheerful introduction is basically my way of saying: "This is not going to be a happy story, and if you don't like that then you don't have to continue reading."
But anyway, I have been looking forward to making this story. I have like dozens of ideas
for it, but I have planned a beginning and an end for it, so I'm not really just making up everything as I go along, although that might happen a few times. I have no idea when the next chapter will come out, but I have planned that one as well. One thing I wasn't happy about in AHTR is that I felt that the chapters were perhaps too long, and so I have instead decided to cut every chapter into a few parts, and releasing them individually.

So to finish this off, I hope you enjoy reading this fic and more will come soon. (If you want more rambling, then you can check out the note on the first chapter of A Hunt to Remember which can be found in this collection (I think, I haven't been that much on this website))

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