The Road To Redemption

by Hanari502

Summary

Those who are willing to walk the road to redemption will always be given the option to be saved

That includes you

Act 1 (A Bone To Pick): 1 - 20
Act 2 (Temporally Boned): 21 - 34
Act 3 (Dislocated): 35 - 55
Act 4 (Repossession): 56 - 64
An Ending - 65
One Year Later (Epilogue) - 66

Notes

This story was originally three separate works, all titled A Bone To Pick, Temporally Boned, and Dislocated respectively. After talking to another author I came to the realization that the events of the story didn't seem as if they belonged to separate works, but part of one whole. They have since been compressed into this all-encompassing story, for convenience.
sake, and has expanded past the original plot.

To my new readers, Comment and Kudos. To my old readers, I hope you understand, and also comment and kudos. To those readers who are unfamiliar with Undertale, feel free to google any name in the story for clarification.

If you would like to contact me on tumblr about this story series, or any suggestions or requests, my tumblr is Hanari502. And I do read every comment.

If you'd like to see a reference sheet of the main protagonist of the story (and don't mind a spoiler) You can see her right here: http://hanari502.tumblr.com/post/135655362725

See the end of the work for more notes.
It was a Monday. It stuck out in your mind like a sharp sink corner. The beginning of the week was always rough for you, even though it technically shouldn’t have been. You had a typical schedule for a part-time restaurant worker. Nights and weekends, and weekend nights. It was unfortunate, considering you liked being up and about at night. It was especially unfortunate that your shift schedules screwed up your sleep schedule and left you snoozing through half of the day, but you did what you had to do to get by. You would have liked to have weekends for yourself, but those days were doubles and you couldn’t pass up the money.

Mondays, however, were your scheduled days off. You had two days off per week, Monday and Thursday. A good schedule, you thought. Mondays were the days you could get things done for the week and Thursdays were the days you rested before a big and busy weekend. Monday was also great for absolutely dying in bed after said big and busy weekend.

Monday was also the day you did your food shopping, so really you could blame your current situation on the fact that it was a Monday.

“HUMAN?? ARE YOU ALRIGHT? DID I DAMAGE YOU?”

You stared at him from your place on the sidewalk. You could have sworn you were hallucinating if the throbbing pain of your forehead wasn’t there to convince you otherwise. You didn’t expect to run into anyone while you were out. Of course, you didn’t expect to turn a corner and literally run into anyone either. Certainly not a six foot tall skeleton in armor. You stare at him, hand on your forehead in nursing disbelief.

“Uh…” You looked at him and brushed your hair out of your face, the chin-length dirty blonde locks getting mussed in your fall. He was a skeleton. A living (breathing?) skeleton.

You had to be dreaming. The skeleton took in your confusion and then leant back, putting a hand on his chest in what was probably meant to be a valiant move.

“FEAR NOT HUMAN. IF YOU ARE INJURED THEN I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU ARE FIXED AND UNINJURED.”

“Uh.” you repeat “N-no. No i’m…i’m fine. Are you…?”

Real? Alive? An actual skeleton? You could have finished the sentence with any of those but instead you trailed off, mesmerized by his eyes which managed to portray a concern in them you didn’t think possible without eyebrows. Monsters being a part of the ‘upper world’ wasn’t a new thing to you. It was kind of new, sure, just over a year or so new, but you’d adjusted pretty well to everything. The monsters seemed really nice, and you were shocked at how many different kinds there were. You even worked with a couple, and there were monsters visiting your restaurant occasionally. This shouldn’t have been as much of a surprise to you as it was.

You weren’t expecting a straight up skeleton to be one of them. You were completely not prepared for that.

“YES, I AM PERFECTLY FINE.” The skeleton, Papyrus you guessed, responded, holding out his hand. You grabbed it and were instantly hoisted back up onto your feet. You took him in. He was tall. Taller than six feet probably. Broad shouldered, if the armor had anything to say about it. His outfit looked ridiculous on him, but at the same time it seemed to fit him very well. There were
several medals on one side. You silently wondered what they were for.

“Right…” you said, fixing yourself and bending down to pick up your bags. “Sorry about that.”

“IT IS QUITE ALRIGHT.” he said, rather loudly, as he too bent down to pick up your bags. He held out one arm to you, gesturing for you to hand over the two you were carrying. “ALLOW ME TO CORRECT THIS MISTAKE.”

You looked at him, and held out your own hand. “No, it’s fine. I can carry them myself. You don’t have to.”

“NONSENSE.” He said as he grabbed the bags out of your arms anyway. “IT’S THE LEAST I CAN DO TO MAKE UP FOR YOU RUNNING INTO ME.”

You could tell by his expression that he wasn’t going to back down. You sighed, resigning yourself to your fate.

It was a Monday.

“You’re going to carry those all the way back to my house for me?”

“YES.”

“And there’s nothing that I can say about it?”

“YOU ARE SAYING THINGS ABOUT IT RIGHT NOW.”

“I don’t mean…” You sigh again, putting a hand to your head and wincing a bit. “You don’t have to carry them all. I can carry a few too.”

“he’s not gonna take no for an answer.”

You jumped at the voice. Turning around, you find yourself face to skull with...another skeleton? How many skeletons were there. You didn't hear him approach you at all. He was smiling lazily and resting against a lamp post, hands in his pockets and ankles crossed. He was significantly shorter than Papyrus and a bit wider in build by the looks of it. He had on a plain white shirt, a blue hoodie, black sports shorts, and...house slippers? He didn't seem that much taller than you. Actually, he seemed to be an inch shorter than you.

He was much more relaxed looking than the skeleton with his hands full behind you.

“Whoa.” was all you could manage before Papyrus spoke up behind you.

“SANS.” Papyrus chided, a bit angrily. “WE ARE HELPING THIS HUMAN TAKE HER GROCERIES HOME. TAKE ONE OF THESE.”

The shorter skeleton, Sans, grinned a bit wider. “nah bro, you look like you got this in the bag.”

“SANS I SWEAR-”

You laugh, loudly. Its an ugly unexpected laugh that takes you a bit off guard. It was bad. It was a horrible pun but it was brilliant. You cover your mouth with your hand and clear your throat. “…sorry.”

You looked between them. If the Cheshire Cat also existed, Sans could be his twin. Papyrus looked exasperated. They were both looking at you pretty hard.
Your cheeks felt very hot.

“My house…” you started. “It's not really that far from here. A couple of blocks down the road. If you really want to carry those.”

“OF COURSE I WANT TO CARRY THEM.” Papyrus responded, turning to his blue clad brother (were they brothers?). “SANS. TELL TORIEL THAT WE WILL BE LATE FOR DINNER. LEAD THE WAY HUMAN.”

You rubbed your head again, watching the Sans skeleton pull out a phone to probably text whoever Toriel was and let them know they would be late. Heading right back in the direction you were originally walking in, skeleton duo in tow, you silently resigned yourself to whatever fate had planned between you and these new walking bone sacks.

It was going to be a long week.
The walk to your house was short and eventful. After exchanging formalities with the two boneheads you came to the conclusion that they were pretty okay. You learned, through Papyrus’ monologuing, that he used to train to be a member of the Royal Guard, which was apparently something pretty important back when all the monsters were still underground. Of course you’ve never heard of it, and it disbanded after all of the monsters came to the surface according to him, but it seemed to mean a lot to him and the passion in the way he talked made you smile. His brother, who you had learned was actually his brother, was mostly quiet for the trip and contributed to the conversation with snarky offhanded comments about whatever topic Papyrus was excitedly rambling about. By the time you reached your door the conversation had flipped to food and you listened as Sans chided his brother about putting glitter in pasta.

“HOW IT IS SUPPOSED TO LOOK NICE IF IT DOESN’T SPARKLE.” The taller skeleton questioned, insulted.

“i’m pretty sure food isn’t supposed to sparkle. not literally.”

“Food isn’t supposed to sparkle.” You chime in, turning the key to your apartment in its lock and opening the door. “It can sparkle sometimes, when there’s enough sugar or a glaze over it but spaghetti normally doesn’t sparkle.”

“Well it should.” Papyrus huffed as he followed you in, still carrying all of your groceries. He was very adamant about not letting you take any of the bags. His brother slinked in behind him and you watched as they both took in your home.

It was a roomy apartment, you thought, considering you were the only one who lived there. It opened up to a living room on the right side that was peppered with two oversized beanbag chairs, a green and a purple one, a wooden coffee table, a large television, and several video game consoles that were two generations old. Behind the living room was a partially open kitchen, and behind the kitchen was the guest bathroom. Directly to the left was a wall separating the master bedroom, which you used as a makeshift office/computer room, from the rest of the house. Your bedroom was behind it, across from the guest bathroom. There were articles of clothing and a couple of empty soda bottles lying around the living room. You turned to them.

“I uh...wasn’t expecting company, sorry.” You apologized and started rounding up the clothes strewn about the floor. Mostly shirts, one pair of pants, a bra, and two jackets. You quickly hid the bra underneath the rest of the clothes. “You can put the bags on the kitchen counter.” you instructed them as you moved to your bedroom to discard the clothes ball into your hamper. Some of those might be clean. You’ll wash them anyway, just in case. You exit your room to find Sans already at home in the purple beanbag and Papyrus looking around your tiny kitchen. They seemed to have settled themselves in rather quickly.

“nice place.” Sans complimented from his spot. “seems a little bit much for one person.”

“Yeah…” You sigh, walking into the kitchen to shoo away the taller skeleton as you started putting away groceries. “My dad used to live here with me, before he moved out. I tried to have a roommate once but it didn’t work out very well.”

“WHY DIDN’T IT WORK OUT?” Papyrus asked, shadowing you as you put a box of poptarts in the pantry.
“Because she married my dad.” You answered, a bit venomously, pulling two boxes of mac and cheese out of a bag.

“I DON’T GET IT.” He said, pulling other things out of their bags and leaving them haphazardly on the counter. “WOULD THAT NOT BE A GOOD THING?”

The mac and cheese boxes join the poptart box on its shelf. “It is to some people.”

“but not to you?” Sans asked, tilting his head towards the kitchen in interest.

“Not to me.” You told him, gathering up the plastic bags and shoving them in the plastic bag drawer. Everyone should have a plastic bag drawer. “They ended up moving into a bigger house to start a new family and I opted to stay here near the shopping district.”

“you pay for this place all by yourself?” Sans asked again.

“You’d be surprised how much money you can make working as a server.” you tell him, opening your fridge to put away several gatorade bottles and a jug of green tea. “Today is one of my two days off actually. Normally i’d be working by now. It's a good job but sometimes monsters that come in don’t understand how little we get paid and that almost all of our take-home pay is from our tips. Saturday shifts are difficult sometimes because i’m there all day and there’s almost no time for me to take a break. Doubles are hell.”

You stop yourself, suddenly aware that you’re telling these two skeletons your life story. You weren’t used to having people, or monsters, over. You’d gotten so caught up in the comfortability of them being there that you started rambling. You’re not even sure why them being there was so comfortable to you. You finished putting away two bags of rice and two cans of beef stew and turned around to see Papyrus staring at you with a look you couldn’t quite place on his face. You went to say something but whatever you were going to say got stuck in your throat. Papyrus filled the silence.

“YOU ARE A VERY DETERMINED HUMAN.”

Your face felt hot again and you quickly looked at anything that wasn’t his eye sockets. You swallowed dryly and could feel his brother grinning at you out the corner of your eye. “Uh...thanks.” You started. “And uh...thanks for carrying my groceries. You didn’t have to make yourselves late on my account.”

“OH MY GOD.” Papyrus jumped, suddenly remembering they had a dinner appointment. “WE ARE LATE. TORIEL AND FRISK ARE GOING TO END UP EATING COLD FOOD BY THE TIME WE GET THERE.” He quickly walked out of the room and towards the door, opening it. “YOU HAVE A VERY NICE HOUSE HUMAN. I AM GLAD YOU RAN INTO ME. SANS, COME ON.”

You watched him close the door without even bothering to wait for his brother, who was still lounging in your beanbag chair. He slowly got himself up and shoved his hands in his pockets, turning to you to nod a goodbye.

“Hold on.” you stopped him before he could turn away. “He said Frisk...did he mean the Frisk who helped all of you out of the Underground?”

His grin grew wider. You questioned how considering it seemed plastered on his face in a permanent mask. “the very one.”

“Whoa.” you responded, for the second time, to him. You knew the name Frisk. It had become a
celebrity status name among monsters and the reason they could walk above ground. You were surprised to learn that the savior of the monsters ended up being a little kid, but that just made it all the more impressive. “That’s pretty cool actually.”

“yeah, my brother’s a pretty cool guy.” he shrugged. “there’s a high chance that he’s gonna come back here, now that he knows where you live. you’re probably gonna see a lot more of us around.”

“I wouldn’t mind that.” You told him. It was out of your mouth before you could think. He winked at you casually before shuffling out your door, closing it behind him.

You took a minute to process the strange encounter you just had and concluded that, as weird as it was, it was actually pretty...nice. Papyrus was hyper but his energy was very positive and it had lightened your mood considerably in the ten minutes he was in your house. His brother was much calmer but his demeanor gave you a sense of ease that you hadn’t felt in a while. It was a pleasant change, having two monsters interrupt your weekly routine. You walk over to the beanbag that didn’t have a skeleton indent in it and went to make yourself comfortable, until your eyes landed on a tiny white paper scrap in the center of the purple pleather. Picking it up you were taken aback as you read the blocky cell phone number to yourself.

He left his number behind. Well….he left a number behind that was probably his. It could just be a random number that doesn’t lead anywhere. It was probably his number though, and that thought made you happy. The thought that he had left his number made you happy.

You definitely didn’t mind seeing them again.
No bones about it

It took you three days to call. The first two days you had the paper sitting on your kitchen
countertop, a constant reminder that you glanced at before heading to work each night. You almost
didn’t think it was real and when Thursday rolled around you finally worked up the courage to call
you didn’t even do that. You sent one text as a test, sitting in the purple beanbag in your living
room and pressing the enter button with nervous curiosity.

- Hey -

You didn’t want to leave a whole long sentence explaining who you were. You wanted it to be
casual. You’d send the ‘hey’, get a text back asking who you are, tell him who you are and from
there it could go one of two ways. It could turn into a good casual text between you and Sans, or it
could be the wrong number. You silently hoped it wasn’t the wrong number.

Your suspicions stayed suspicions when you got a response, two minutes later.

- knock knock -

You looked at your phone, confused. Was it a prank? Your curiosity got the best of you and you
replied.

- Who’s there? -

You sat in anticipation for an answer. It took three long minutes before a new line formed in your
inbox.

- skeleton -

You had the right number. Part of you wanted to text him back saying that you knew a skeleton
was there, but you didn’t. You wanted to humor him.

- Skeleton who? -

- get ready for a skeleTON of bad jokes ;D -

“Ohmygoood.” You groaned out loud, grinning despite how horrible it was. He was trying, at the
very least. There was an attempt. You feel like he could have done better and that was probably
just a test. You responded in kind.

- Knock knock -

- who’s there -

- Patella -

- patella who -

- Patella better one next time -

You snicker to yourself. You were both horrible, so it seemed. It took a few minutes for the next
response to come back. you hoped one of those was spent laughing, or at least chuckling at your
stupid pun.
The question would have been better if it wasn’t a punchline, you thought. You were surprised he would have asked you that at all. You drop the knock knock setup and decide to reply like a regular person. Eventually one of you was going to have to.

- No. It's my other day off. -

You didn’t get a reply back for twenty minutes, in which time you turned on the TV and started flipping through channels to pass time until you got hungry. Three of the channels had shows starring that one strange robot that came up from the ruins, Mettaton. He had a really outrageous personality and two different bodies that you’ve seen. You never really understood why he was so appealing to other people. He was just a box. He was sort of funny and you liked the grandiose showmanship he had in some of the things he did, but his style really wasn’t for you. His humanoid body was pretty neat though, but he only used that one for movies. Monsters made movies much faster than humans did. You guessed that being a robot would probably help some when it came to filming and editing, but really you had no idea how it worked.

You jumped a bit when your phone beeped and immediately checked your texts.

- knock knock -

You rolled your eyes, grinning a little. The knock knock thing was going to end up playing itself out eventually. You’d play along, one more time.

- Who’s there? -

- my brother -

You raised an eyebrow. You didn’t know this one. You replied, cautiously.

- ...your brother who? -

Ten more minutes passed before you got your answer. You didn’t expect the answer to be a skeleton banging on your door at five in the afternoon. Then again you didn’t really expect anything that’s been happening lately. You quietly reminded yourself to stop expecting things to happen normally in the near future as you got up to answer it.

“HUMAN, THE GREAT PAPYRUS HAS RETURNED TO GRACE YOU WITH HIS PRESENCE. AND ALSO MAKE YOU DINNER.”

“What?” You ask rather loudly before opening the door to see the eccentric skeleton standing in your doorway. He was wearing a chef’s hat and a pink apron over his armor, like if it was straight out of a movie set. You stare at him. “You’re what??”

He pushed past you, making a beeline for your kitchen and leaving you at the door. “I HAD
COME TO THE CONCLUSION, DURING MY LAST VISIT, THAT YOU WERE A VERY DETERMINED HUMAN, TO BE LIVING BY YOURSELF AND WORKING SO MUCH SO THAT YOU CAN LIVE BY YOURSELF. SO I DECIDED THAT I AM GOING TO MAKE YOU MY NEW FRIEND.” He started, posing dramatically in the middle of your kitchen. His cape seemed to flow behind him, as did the apron. You didn’t have any windows open. “I HAVE ALSO DECIDED THAT I AM GOING TO VISIT YOU, BECAUSE LIVING BY YOURSELF IS RIDICULOUS, AND YOU NEED SOMEONE AS CHARISMATIC AND GREAT AS ME TO LIFT YOUR SPIRITS.” He stopped posing and looked behind you. “SANS, GET IN HERE WITH THE INGREDIENTS.”

You turn around to see Sans standing in the doorway, holding a grocery bag with a grin plastered to his face. (did it ever leave? probably not).

“my brother and i are stopping by for dinner. probably shoulda told you that first.”

“Would’ve been nice to know.” You quip back as he meandered in. You closed the door behind him. “What’s in the bag?”

“I AM GLAD YOU ASKED HUMAN.” Papyrus answered for him, walking over and grabbing the bag from his brothers hands. Sans took the opportunity to once again plop himself in one of your beanbag chairs. The green one this time. Papyrus continued. “I, BEING THE GREAT MASTER CHEF THAT I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN, HAVE BEEN MAKING A WIDE ASSORTMENT OF SPAGHETTI FOR MY DEAR FRIENDS FOR THE PAST YEAR. HOWEVER, IT HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT MY CULINARY EXPERTISE, CAN BE EXPANDED! YES!” He said, pulling a wide assortment of things from the heavy-looking grocery bag. There was a can of soup, a tub of mint chocolate ice cream, a jar of pickles, three small tubes of glitter glue, and a still-boxed tube of toothpaste. He looked so proud of himself as he set each one down on the counter. You didn’t have the heart to tell him that two of them weren’t actually food.

You did have the heart actually. A very strong one, in fact.

“Uh, Papyrus…” you started, picking up the toothpaste box. He interrupted you before you could finish.

“I READ A ‘HUMAN COOK BOOK’ AT THE LIBRARY AND CAME ACROSS A SECTION FOR ‘SOUP’.” he started, opening the jar of pickles immediately. “HUMANS CAN PUT SUCH A WIDE VARIETY OF THINGS IN THEIR SOUPS, AND IT SET MY BRILLIANT MIND WORKING. THAT I, PAPYRUS, EXPERT COOK AND CONNOISSEUR, SHOULD MAKE SOUP FOR MY NEW HUMAN FRIEND AS A TOKEN OF OUR FRIENDSHIP, WITH THE BEST INGREDIENTS I COULD FIND.”

You carefully put the box back down and reach for the pickle jar in his hands. “First of all, A. You can stop calling me human, I told you my name.” you reminded him, gently taking the pickle jar out of his hands and putting the lid back on it. “And B. Why don’t you leave the soup making to me? After all, I’m a human, and I’d know what best to put in it, right?”

Between the glitter glue tubes on the table and the memory of the ‘glittery pasta’ conversation, you desperately hoped that your quick thinking would have him abandoning his attempt to poison you. He seemed to think on it for a moment before reaching his conclusion.

“HM.” he said, bringing a hand up to his chin in contemplation. “YES. THAT WOULD MAKE SENSE. BUT. I HAVE, AN EVEN BETTER IDEA. YOU CAN MAKE THE SOUP, AND I WILL WATCH AND DIVULGE MY WORLDLY ADVICE, AS YOU WORK, AND OBSERVE
YOU. THIS WAY, WE WILL MAKE THE ULTIMATE SOUP OF FRIENDSHIP, TOGETHER! NYEH HEH. NYEHEHEHEHEHEH.”

His laugh was such a strange thing to hear. It reminded you of Skeletor, if Skeletor was alive during King Arthur’s reign. It sounded regal and ridiculous at the same time. You decided you liked it.

“Sounds like a plan.” you agreed, thanking whatever gods exist that he sort of went with your idea. You could handle him standing behind you as you cooked, that wasn’t that big a deal. You could show him what actually went in a soup, anyway. “Lemme put these away and wash my hands.”

“YES, EXCELLENT IDEA. HANDS NEED TO BE CLEAN WHILE COOKING!” He said, walking out of your kitchen and making straight for your bathroom. He turned left at the last minute, and ended up walking right into your bedroom, closing the door behind him. You gawked after him.

“That’s….not the bathroom…” You said out loud, more to yourself than Papyrus. You turn to his brother. “Damn. Does he have a chill switch?”

“flick him on his cervical vertebrae.” he offered, putting his hands behind his head “it normally works.”

“Which one is that, the neck or the back ones?” You ask. You didn’t have all of the bones of the human body memorized except for like, seven. Your vague memory of fifth grade anatomy wasn’t helping you very much. You quickly take the glitter glue tubes and drop them in the bag drawer.

“the neck one.” he answered. “you might wanna pull him outta your bedroom too. it might help a bit.”

You sigh, putting the pickle jar and ice cream tub in your fridge and freezer before turning back to him. “You gonna help with pulling him out?”

“can’t.” he said, shrugging from his spot. “i don’t have the muscles for it.”

Your hand flies to your face as you crack a smile at the terribly well executed joke. “Oh my god, are you shitting me right now.”

“no, i’m sitting right now.” he wasn’t even facing you but you could feel him smirking at the wall. “my brother’s the one who ran to the bathroom.”

You laugh and cover your mouth to stifle it. “Christ.” You manage through giggles. It was so bad. “Knock it off, i’m serious.”

That made him turn your way. Sure enough, his permanent smile was definitely wider. It even looked a little crooked. The bastard was smirking at you. “nice to meet you serious, i’m sans.”

“I swear to god!” You’re laughing so hard your face is red, you can feel it. You cover your face with both your hands and hide how much you enjoyed how stupid it was. “I hate you.” You mutter to him, still chuckling, as you quickly walked to your bedroom door. You rap on it three times and Papyrus answers, chefs hat and apron now gone.

“YOUR BATHROOM IS VERY STRANGE.” He started. “IT LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE A BEDROOM.”

You clear your throat. “That’s because it is my bedroom.”
“OH.” He looked to the side, sheepishly, but quickly recovered. “WELL, THAT EXPLAINS ALL OF THE CHILDREN'S CLOTHES.”

“Children’s clo-” you cut off “I’m twenty three. Where do you see kids clothes?”

“YOUR CLOSET IS FILLED WITH MANY DIFFERENT STRIPED SHIRTS.” He replied, as if it was the most obvious thing ever.

You peer around him to your open closet which, yes, did have different shirts hanging up that happened to have stripes. All of them were black and white with different band thicknesses and gradients. “Yeah,” you tell him. “It is. I thrift a lot. I like black and white.”

“its a trend with monster kids to wear striped shirts.” sans clarified from across the apartment. “to them, and other monsters, it shows that they’re kids. its a status thing.”

“I think I remember hearing about that somewhere.” you mumble, before turning back to the skeleton that went through your closet. “Anyway, this isn’t the bathroom. I thought we were making soup?”

“YOU’RE ABSOLUTELY CORRECT.” He answers, swerving around you to get right back to the kitchen. You sigh at your door and follow him.

Your kitchen was, thankfully, much less messy than you thought it would be when you had finally finished making the soup. You’d grabbed the can that Papyrus had brought and had successfully managed to squeeze three helpings of Chicken Noodle Soup out of it. Adding some water and noodles helped a bit. Papyrus was amazed when you showed him that pasta noodles could be used for more than just regular spaghetti.

The dinner itself was normal. As normal as it could be with two skeletons. You gawked a bit as you tried to figure out exactly where the soup went when Papyrus ate it. Sans didn’t touch his soup and instead asked you for a bottle of hot sauce. As soon as you handed it to him he guzzled it down and handed you back the empty bottle. You didn’t use tabasco sauce on anything really, but he still could have warned you.

They stayed around as you cleaned up after the dinner, putting the non-eaten soup in a tupperware container and washing the rest of the dishes.

“YOU COOK VERY WELL, FOR A HUMAN.” Papyrus complimented. “WHERE DID YOU LEARN HOW TO MAKE SUCH DELICIOUS SOUP?”

“she works in a restaraunt, she’s gotta know how to make good food.” Sans answered him. You scoffed.

“Nah, i’m a server, not a chef.” you corrected them, putting a bowl in the dry rack. “I mean, I can be a chef if I want. I have the job code. There’s more money in serving though. Better hours too sometimes.”

“YOU CAN HAVE MORE THAN ONE JOB AT THE SAME PLACE? WOWIE.” He turned to his brother. “SANS, TAKE NOTE OF THIS HUMAN’S HARD WORKING DEDICATION. YOU SHOULD BE MORE LIKE HER.”

“nah, i’m pretty sure i like being me just fine.” He replied lazily, sinking down further into the
beanbag chair. He’d become a part of it if he tried hard enough.

Papyrus huffed “FINE. BE A LAZYBONES FOREVER. HUMAN.” he turned back to you “TELL ME WHERE YOU WORK SO THAT I MAY VISIT YOU WHEN YOU ARE THERE.”

“Please stop calling me human…” You mutter under your breath. You shut the sink water off and grab a hand towel. “It’s a small restaurant in the town center. Benjamins. It gets pretty busy on the weekends.”

Sans turns to look at you “that’s right around the corner.”

“Yeah, its walking distance.” you tell them, walking over and plopping yourself between them. You only had two beanbag chairs, you’d let them have them. “It’s convenient. The staff’s also pretty good. We have some monsters working there now so we’re all trying to get used to what everyone’s boundaries are.” You unconsciously pull out your phone from your back pocket to check the time. It was nearing nine. “Damn…it’s later than I thought. I should probably get ready for my double tomorrow.”

“you go to bed this early?” sans asked

“No, it just takes me forever to sleep because I sit in my bed and read for three hours.” You stood up. “Thanks for coming over though. I wish you could’ve given more warning.”

Sans grinned at you “at least you found the number i lost.”

You put a hand to your face, holding back a grin yourself. “That was illegal. I’m calling the police, get out of my house.” You tell them with suppressed chuckles. Papyrus takes it seriously and stands up, turning to you.

“PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE POLICE. HUMAN OFFICERS ARE FAR TOO NICE TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH MY BROTHER.” He reaches over and grabs the back of Sans hoodie, lifting him out of the beanbag chair like a crane and dragging him to the door. “I’LL ESCORT HIM OUT MYSELF, FOR I’M ALSO 100% DONE WITH HIM. ALSO, WE WILL BE BACK.” he told you, opening the door to your apartment and dropping Sans over it. “I WILL BE BACK, AT THE VERY LEAST. HE MAY COME WITH ME, MAYBE.”

“Please call next time.” You warn them. Sans gives you a thumbs up from his spot and you watch Papyrus close the door on them. Sighing harshly, you drop down into your purple beanbag to give yourself a few seconds to recuperate.

Those two were exhausting. How could someone with so much energy exist in the world? Barging into your house, offering to make you dinner, locking himself in your room.

Oh, yeah. He went in your room.

You stood up from the beanbag, once again, and walked into your bedroom. Nothing seemed out of place, aside from your closet being open. Something about a skeleton being in your closet made you chuckle as you crossed the room to close it. Before you could slide it closed your attention shifted to the pale pink apron and white chefs hat lying on the floor next to your bed. You couldn’t see them from the doorway, but now you know where they went. You sighed and picked them up, fishing out your phone to text Sans about it.

- Your brother left his apron and hat in my room. -

You turned to your closet and hung the apron up on a hanger. Your phone went off just as you
hooked the hat over it too. You checked it.

- guess i have a reason to come back, then. -

You smiled at the words, and rolled your eyes as more followed it.

- later though. -

- Yeah. -

You responded.

- Later. -
Doubles were hell. Doubles on Saturday were a special level of hell. Two servers had called out, leaving the section next to yours open almost all day, which the hosts had decided to seat consistently throughout the morning. You had essentially doubled your workload by picking up the tables, some of which they never asked you about. You always said you could handle a six table section but you knew deep down you couldn’t handle more than four at a time. You didn’t want to ask for help either, which stressed you out more. It wasn’t until the shift change that you were given mercy and went back down to three. It was a brief mercy, because one of the new hostesses (Chatty? You don’t remember) sat you as soon as you were about to go on break.

“Are you kidding me?” You asked her “I was going to go on break, i’ve been here since ten.”

“Like, sorry girl but like, they were reeeaaally adamant about sitting with you. Its a call party y’know?” She argued as she bounced back to the podium. You groaned.

“Fine, if it’s a call party” you called after her “But don’t seat me any more, what table is it?”

“Thirty-three.”

God dammit. You cursed to yourself, that was a big table. So much for getting a break.

You turn out of the kitchen, signaling your exit, and come face to face with none other than the two boneheads that have been visiting you all week. Except this time they weren’t alone. You walk up to the table and Papyrus smiles at you, carefree and very eager. Sans smiles too, but from what you’ve seen he never stops smiling.

“FINALLY.” Papyrus said

“What do you mean ‘finally.” You say, approaching the table. “You’ve been sitting for two minutes.”

“I MEAN FINALLY I CAN INTRODUCE MY NEW FRIEND TO MY OLD FRIENDS.” He turned to his old friends, who were the most colourful bunch of monsters you’ve seen together yet. It was like looking at a bowl of fruit loops, except it was a table and full of monsters, and one small human child. The logic center of your brain told you that the child was probably Frisk. “THIS IS THE HUMAN I’VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT.”

You scrunch your eyebrows together. “You’ve been talking about me?”

“He hasn’t shut up about you for the last two days.” The blue fish-girl with the bright red ponytail said, rather forcefully. Her entire body gave off a forceful vibe. “All day yesterday during our cooking lesson he kept talking about a human girl that put spaghetti in soup and how it turned into more soup. I thought humans couldn’t do magic???”

“IT WAS NOT MAGIC, IT WAS CULINARY EXPERTISE.” He corrected her and turned to you. “THESE ARE ALL OF MY OTHER FRIENDS.”

You surveyed the monster table as each one was introduced. The white goat lady next to Sans was Toriel, and the kid was Frisk. Undyne was the fish girl with the eyepatch next to Papyrus and the yellow dinosaur looking girl next to her was Alphys. You brought a hand to your face, taking a deep breath, and turned to Sans.
“I was this close to going on break.” You emphasize, holding up your fingers “This close. I just wanna let you know.”

“we’ll be quick, we’re all getting the same thing.” he told you, smirking a bit. You felt like it wasn’t going to be quick at all.”

“Good to know.” You look at the rest of the table. “Our manager has been grilling us lately on customer approach, so i’m gonna do my thing and then i’ll take all of your orders, alright?”

You pull out an order pad and a pen and go off. You tell them your name, pointing to your name badge with emphasis towards Papyrus, and tell them you’re going to be serving them today. You go over the specials and new promotion while checking out the corner of your eye for your manager. As soon as he walks away, satisfied, you release a breath you didn’t know you were holding. “They’ve also been cracking down on our check times so, if everybody knows what they want to order I’ll put it in the computer now and then come back to talk.”

“Burgers.” Frisk piped up, putting their tiny hands on the table to grab for their crayons. You couldn’t tell if they were a boy or a girl, and the fact that they were the savior of the monster race was hard to grasp. They were so tiny. “Burgers and fries please, and lots of ketchup for Sans.”

You narrow your eyes at the shorter skeleton. “Do you drink Ketchup too?”

“He only eats condiments.” Undyne answered for him. “Mostly condiments. You should’ve seen his sentry stations. They were always covered in Ketchup and Mustard bottles. I had to yell at him way too many times for it! That and the fact that he slept so much!!”

“those were union regulated breaks, thanks.”

“THEY WERE NOT.” Papyrus corrected him “THEY WERE SANS-REGULATED BREAKS, AND THEY WERE TOO REGULAR.”

“Now, now.” Toriel spoke up, putting a hand on Papyrus’ arm to settle him. He immediately retreated back into his seat. “I’m sure there’s a perfectly good reason why Sans slept during his shifts, isn’t there.” She looked at him and smiled, but it was one of those smiles that hid something behind it. He smirked back.

“what can I say,” he shrugged “i was bone tired.”

Everyone at the table groaned except for Toriel, who slipped him a high five, and Alphys who was rolling her eyes and smiling. You stood there with your eyes closed, holding the order pad. She set him up, they were both comedians. Wonderful.

“I’m going to go put in your order.” You say while quickly turning away. Everybody needed time to recover from that disaster. You walk up to the monitor and start typing in six orders of burgers and fries. Your fry cook was going to love you. Halfway through your button-mashing your phone went off. Looking around to make sure your manager wasn’t around, you fished it out of your apron pocket and looked at the screen

- sorry about your break. -

“Oh, now he’s sorry.” You mumble sarcastically as you shoot back a reply.

- I expect 20% -

You pocket your phone and finish ringing in your order. Six burgers wouldn’t take too long to
cook, six orders of fries, however, would take a while. It was strange how the kitchen worked sometimes. You head back to the table, now on Frisk and Alphys’ side. You scooch into the booth next to Frisk.

“Alright, order’s in. I’ve been here for 7 hours and I’m obviously not going on break today, so I’ll just sit here and chill while they’re making your food.” You take a deep breath and re-address everyone. “Hi, sorry. It’s a pleasure to meet you all. I’ve heard absolutely nothing about any of you.”

Undyne looked offended and turned to Papyrus. “Hey! You didn’t tell her anything about me?? What the hell?? I thought we were friends!”

“She didn’t ask.” He replied, matter of fact-ly.

“Grrrah! Whatever!” She turned to you, grinning. Her teeth looked like daggers in the restaurant lighting. “I’m Undyne, head of the Royal Guard. Well, former head of the royal guard. We don’t have one of those any more, but I used to be the fish in charge of it! I’m also teaching him how to cook, which he sucks at!!”

“I’m getting better. I’m reading cook books.” he argued “I even learned how to make soup.”

“Yeah but you didn’t learn it from me!!!” She shot back, banging her hand against the table roughly. It cracked a bit and you prayed to god that you didn’t have to pay for the damage. She turned and put her arm over Alphys’ shoulder. “And this is my girlfriend Alphys. She’s like, the best and smartest person in the world. She’s the Royal Scientist. She turned a phone into a jetpack, how awesome is that!”

Alphys blushed at the compliments and stuttered, nervously. “I...I also made Mettaton.”

You gawked at her. “Wait, you made Mettaton? That’s...insane.” you put your elbow on the table and put your head in your hand. “And impressive. That’s so impressive. I can’t even imagine being able to make anything that complex.”

“Well, it wasn’t that hard....” She fixed her glasses “He really has a mind of his own though.”

“I’ll say...” You roll your eyes sarcastically and turn to Toriel. “And you, miss Toriel. Are you a royal something too?”

“Kind of...” She put a hand on Frisks head and ruffled their hair. “I’m a school teacher. I’m also Frisk’s adoptive mother now.”

“She is also the queen,” Papyrus adds proudly. You do a double take.

“Wait...” you start, looking at Toriel. “Queen...as in queen of monsters? You’re the queen?”

“Well, not anymore.” she said, taking her hand off Frisk’s head. “I renounced my role to the throne when we came to the surface. Now I live a simple life and take after all of the children at my school. And the ones at this table.” She added, winking at you. There was a bout of protest from Undyne and Papyrus. You turned away from them and covered your face with your hand.

“This is insane. Everyone here is such high status.” You mutter underneath the protests. “Why am I even here.”

“You’re here because you’re filled with determination.”
You turn to your right to look at Frisk, who had shifted their body to face you. The table went quiet at their words and some part of you knew that that sentence was important. It was very important. Frisk continued.

“You’re also here because you work here.”

“Ohmygod.” You exclaim as you quickly stand up. “Your food. Right, I completely forgot. I forgot drinks too, oh my god. Okay, i’m getting everybody water and then i’m going to go check on your burgers. They should be done by now.” You race away from the quiet table to the drink station in the back. How could you have forgotten that you were at work. The conversation seemed so casual and friendly and it ended up pulling you in with it. You almost felt like you belonged there, and that you wanted to stay, but you have a job to do and hanging out with friends when you should be working isn’t productive or helpful.

You worked too hard to get to where you are now. You’re determined to keep it that way.

You bring them all water and then shortly after, the burgers. You bring extra ramekins of Ketchup for Sans and he almost looks disappointed. Probably because they’re not in a bottle. You stick around and sit down next to Frisk again, listening to everyone at the table tell stories about how they all met and how Frisk helped them out of the underground. You laughed and joined in, giving your own story about how you bumped into Papyrus. Everybody at the table was cheerful and friendly, if a bit extreme, and by the time you’d checked your phone a half hour had passed. You were so comfortable there. Or, you would have been, if you didn’t also feel Sans staring at you throughout the meal. He was being subtle, but you weren’t dense. You could feel him watching you, as if he was gauging your reactions to everything. It was a little bit strange. You stood up and pulled your check presenter out of your apron pocket and placed it on the table.

“Well, as great as this has been I’m afraid I’ve gotta leave this here. I also wanna eat at some point and I can’t do that until you guys take off.” You let them know as you walk back around to the other side. “I’d love to see you in here again though. Just...next time come on a weekday. I’m less busy then.”

“I WILL PERSONALLY SEE TO IT THAT EVERYONE HERE COMES BACK.” Papyrus said excitedly. “I’LL ALSO TELL EVERYONE I KNOW TO COME HERE, AND TO HAVE YOU AS THEIR SERVER, BECAUSE YOU’RE GREAT.”

“I’m only great because you knew me beforehand.” you tell him, placing a hand on his shoulder. “you guys paying in cash or card?”

“cash.” Sans answered. “we’re on a tight schedule.”

“Oh, we are!!” Alphys exclaimed, hopping out of the booth and pulling Undyne with her. “The third installment of Mew Mew movie series is on in twenty minutes! We have to go or we’re not going to be able to see it on time!!”

“Hell no we’re not gonna miss it!!” Undyne replied, grabbing Papyrus by the armor collar as she dragged him out with them. Frisk hopped out of the booth too, followed by Toriel.

“They’re so energetic…” She said, turning to Sans. “Are you coming?”

“nah, i’ll catch up.” he said, winking at her with his left eye “i know a shortcut.”

She nodded and turned towards the door, taking Frisks hand. You watch the two of them walk out the front of the restaraunt and sigh. The sight of how peaceful they seem to be puts you at ease.
It fills you with...longing…

You’re snapped out of your thoughts as Sans taps you on the shoulder with the check presenter.

“keep the change.” he tells you, pocketing his blue-gloved hands and slowly walking out. You check the inside of the bill and almost scream. You walks up to him quickly and pull him aside, whispering the best you could.

“What the hell is this?!” You quietly question him. You swear his grin stretches.

“oh...did you say twenty percent?” he asks, shrugging. “i thought you said two hundred percent.”

“Are you shitting me?!”

“no, i’m sans. we’ve been over this.”

You sigh, harshly. “What the hell do you even do that makes you able to afford giving me this much money?”

“i have a lot of jobs.” he shrugs, again.

“Is one of them watching over me?!” You ask, sarcastically and exasperatedly.

“it is now.”

You look at him, his smile goes nowhere. It doesn’t widen or falter, it just stays. It’s a serious smile. He’s being serious. You feel heat creep up your neck and onto your face and watch him turn around and leave, hand extended in a lazy wave. What the hell was that supposed to mean?!

You tell your manager you’re taking the night off, and then immediately head home.
Its nice out, you note. Its warm and sunny, and you can feel the heat on your face. The streets are busy, full of people, its your day off, and you were waiting at the foot of the steps to your apartment for Sans to show up. You mulled over what he said at the restaurant for a few days and came to the conclusion that you needed to know what he meant.

“it is now.”

It ran through your mind a hundred times and you still didn’t understand it. You needed to know what he meant. You didn’t realize he was in front of you until his shadow blocked out the sun. You looked up at him and smiled a tired smile.

“Hey.”

He kept his smile, as he always did. “hey, yourself.”

You stood up and brushed off your jeans. “Thanks for coming over, and for leaving your brother at home...tell him i’m sorry later.”

“i told him to use today to train with undyne.” he answered. “no apology necessary.”

“Cool...because I need to talk to you.”

“if you’re gonna confess your love for me, i’ve got bad news for ya.” he said “i’m afraid i don’t have the heart to return it.”

“I-I don’t…” You stammer, caught off guard by his bluntness and the horrible joke. Your face was as hot as the sun beating down on you and you cleared your throat, trying to recompose yourself. “Don’t...don’t put words in my mouth. Just...walk with me, okay?”

He shrugged and started walking ahead of you. You followed and caught up to him.

“so, what’s eating you?” he asked, eyes straight ahead.

“I just...have a question for you.” You answer him.

He turns to you. “if you ask me one, i get to ask you one too.”

“I’ll allow it.” You say, grinning. His smile stays the same. You take the offer. “What did you mean the other day, when you said that watching over me was one of your jobs now?”

“it means what it means.” he said, nonchalantly. “i watch over my brother too. and frisk. and toriel. and undyne and alphys. i’m always watching over them, just in case. its my job.”

Your shoulders lowered slightly, disheartened. It wasn’t the answer you were expecting. But then again, you didn’t really know what you were expecting. “Oh…” you say, looking to the side. “Thanks then...I guess.”

“my turn.” he stops walking and closes his eyes. You stop a few feet in front of him.

“do you think even the worst person can change…?” he started, eyes still closed. “that everybody can be a good person, if they just try?”
You’re taken aback a bit. You didn’t expect this to turn into a discussion about morality. You take a step forward. “Of course I do.”

“and why do you think that?” he asked, smile plastered eerily on his face. This was getting weird.

“I think...if someone’s determined enough, that they deserve a second chance.” You argue. “Just because someone does bad things, doesn’t mean they’ll be bad forever. A person can be good and still do bad things.”

He laughs. It’s a hollow sound and you search for warmth behind it, but there isn’t any. “alright. well, here’s a better question....”

He opens his eyes and the lights you’re so used to seeing in them are gone.

“do you wanna have a bad time?”

You take a step back. The ground beneath your feet changes color. The grey sidewalk morphs and smooths itself into a checkerboarded gold tile, and the buildings around you turn into tall looming pillars. Sans stands before you in a long, yellow hallway and you feel very small. Much smaller than you’ve ever felt before. You feel heavy inside, weighted down by something that you can’t quite place. You look down to your hand and see a knife. A real knife. You look back up at him.

“Sans...you’re scaring me.” You tell him, your grip on the knife firm. You won’t let go. You can’t let go.

“it’s a beautiful day outside...” he starts, hands in his pockets. His presence before you is intimidating. You are not outside anymore. “birds are singing, flowers are blooming...” he takes a step forwards. His smile is anything but friendly. “on days like these, kids like you...”

He opens his eyes and they’re empty. There’s a flicker of blue light in his left eye.

“S h o u l d  b e  b u r n i n g  i n  h e l l.”

You jolt awake, the shock pulling you a few inches off your mattress. It’s dark and you’re sweating so hard you can feel your soaked sheets beneath you. Sitting up, you take in a couple deep breaths along with your surroundings. Your clock assured you that it was four in the morning, on Monday. You groan externally and look at your ceiling.

You swear you can feel something crawling on your back, but you shake it off.

You groggily grab your phone off your night-table and text Sans, telling him to tell his brother to stay home today. You don’t bother waiting for a response before falling back into your damp blankets, and then immediately throwing the covers off and walking to the bathroom. Turning on the light, you took in your reflection in the mirror and grimaced. You reach under your sink and pull out your hair bleaching kit and flat sheets of tinfoil you kept with them.

You needed a fresh start.
Bone chilling discovery

The office in your apartment was roomy, mostly because it used to be a Master Bedroom and it didn’t have any furniture in it aside from the desk, chair, laptop, side table by the window with the potted flowers in it, and filing cabinet you kept your taxes in. The bottom drawer was locked, but you forgot why. You remember there being a random assortment of office supplies in the bottom of it when your dad was around, but you only used the cabinet itself once a year, and you only used the top so you didn’t really care to check. You were actually quite proud of your ability to keep up on taxes. You were always directly on it and consistently kept all of your bank statements, w-2 forms, and 1099 MISC papers in your desk. Being up on all of your expenses was the main reason you were able to afford your apartment for so long.

It was a good place to sit down and play some PC games. The setting sunlight cast the shadow of the flowers onto the carpet, turning the pale beige walls of the room a calming hue of orange-red. You hadn’t heard back from Sans, and his brother hadn’t knocked on your door all day. It put you at ease and gave you time to break out the Minecraft and get working on your MEGA DUNGEON. It had been a while since you expanded, and you were feeling pretty adventurous today.

Your blocky bliss was short lived as your phone beeped loudly beside you. Picking it up and reading the screen, a nervous apprehension settled in the pit of your stomach as your eyes scanned the text.

- knock knock -

You silently hoped it was just a setup to a joke. The dream replayed itself in your head and a mix of emotions crossed your mind.

The one that stood out the most to you was fear.

You didn’t have time to reply as two raps sounded from the front of your dwelling. So much for a setup. You exit out of the digital lego landscape and exit your office, heading to the door and standing before it. “....Who’s there.”

“someone humerus.”

You take a deep breath and unlock the door, opening it to see exactly who you expected. Sans stands there casually, grin lazy and full of life. You’re briefly relieved. His eyes drift to your now platinum blonde hair.

“that’s new. you keeping it?”

“Didn’t you get my text?” You ask him, not bothering to respond. You probably were going to keep it though. He pulls his hands out of his pockets and shrugs.

“you told me to leave my brother at home. that’s what i did.” he answered. “you’re not the only one who needs a break from him.”

You take a deep breath and exhale. “Go home Sans. I don’t want to talk to anyone today.”

“you look like you need to talk to someone. Actually,” he answered, his smile softening a bit. You couldn’t tell if it was really softening or if it was just lowering, like he was lowering his guard too.

“you look like you’ve got a lot on your mind.”
“I’ve known you for a week and now you’re reading me like a book.” Your death grip on the doorknob loosens and you step aside to let him in, motioning to your beanbag chairs. “Pick a color.”

He does, happily, and chooses the green one furthest from the door. You close it behind you and join him, plopping down in the other one, the purple a stark contrast to your now yellow-white hair. You sit in silence for several minutes before he speaks up.

“So,” he starts, putting his hands behind his head and nestling down into the soft olive pleather. “What’s eating you?”

You freeze, the de-ja-vu of the situation hitting you in your chest like a tackle from a great dog. You swallow dryly. “I….” you start, words bunching up in your throat. You ball your fists and push them out. “I wanted to ask you something.”

“I’m all ears.” he said, putting his arms behind his head and crossing his ankles. “You know, if I had any.”

“Hahaha…” it was a halfhearted chuckle. You look down to your hands and clasp them together. You didn’t want to talk about it. What were you going to say to him? That you’ve known him for a week and you had a nightmare about...well, you weren’t really sure what it was about. All you know is that it was terrifying and that you had a knife. It was almost like you were going to kill him, or worse.

Like he was going to kill you.

You can’t do it.

“Do…do you ever get hot?” You ask, backing out. You’ll pull a different topic. “With your jacket and gloves on at the same time?”

He gives you an appraising look. You know that he knows that you had a different question. You can see in his eyes that he knows. You silently wonder what else he knows.

“Not really.” He answers after a few seconds. “I can’t feel temperature. Neither can papyrus.”

This was news to you. You looked at him quizzically. A subtle joke about the cold going right through him played through your mind, but you shook it off. “Can you feel anything? Like, touch-wise?” You asked. “Like, if I touched you could you feel it?”

He pulled his hands out from behind his head and turned his body to you, propping his chin on his hand as he leaned against the beanbag. “Wow, you’ve only known me for a week and you can’t wait to get your hands on me?” he smirked and winked his right eye at you, to your dismay. “Goin’ a little fast there, don’t ya think?”

“I-I j-” You stammer and make an unintelligible noise, feeling your cheeks and nose heat up. You quickly find your voice and protest. “I’m just, curious! Is all…”

He stopped winking and his smirk fell into his regular smile. “…Curiosity killed the cat y’know.”

“Satisfaction brought it back.” You answer without skipping a beat. His face seemed to shift for a second before he sighed, sitting upright. You watched him pull off one of his gloves and hold his unsheathed hand out to you, closing his eyes.

“Knock yourself out.”
You stare at it for a minute. Yeah, that sure was a skeleton hand alright. You didn’t really know what to do, so you reached your hand out and took it, carefully, scooting yourself out of your beanbag onto the ground. It was cold, really cold, and hard, like a skeleton would be. His hand was bigger and wider than yours. You rub your thumb over the...shit what were the middle bones of the hand called again. Google would be helpful right now.

“God, my anatomy is horrible…” You whisper without thinking.

“capitate.” He said, answering your invisible question. He opened his right eye to watch you. “the one your thumb is on is the capitate.”

“Is there a name for all of these together? Can you feel me?” You ask, gesturing a finger to all of the small bones surrounding it before placing your pointer back on the capitate.

“yeah, i can.” He opened his other eye. “ and they’re called the carpus. you really didn’t know that?”

“I have a very vague memory of being taught skeletal anatomy.” Your words come out absentmindedly as your attention is completely on the bony hand in front of you. You scoot closer to it and turn his hand palm-down. You do it all very carefully, you don’t know if his bones are fragile or not and you don’t want to take the chance. “I know these are the metacarpals.” you say, taking his hand with both of yours and running your thumbs over the long bones in the middle. “And these are the phalanges.” You pinch the tips of his fingers lightly with your thumb and pointer finger. You’re completely transfixed on his hand as you push it up, his palm facing your face so you can get a better look at the bones in the middle.

The intimacy of the situation doesn’t hit you until you see his face through the gaps in his bones. He’s looking at you like he’s not sure what to make of you and you can feel yourself blushing under his gaze. Your grip on his hand tightens unconsciously and you stare at each other for five of the longest seconds of your life before you release his hand, backing back into your beanbag chair. You feel very hot, very uncomfortable, and very...something else.

There’s a pulsing feeling in your stomach and you avoid looking at him as he puts his glove back on, staring straight ahead at your unpowered TV. The silence hangs heavy in the air for half a minute before several loud beeps cut through it. Your Skype notifications were going wild. You must have set it to ‘Away’ instead of ‘Do Not Disturb’. Standing up quickly you look towards your computer room.

“I’ll be right back.” you declare quickly before making a beeline out of the living room, towards your screaming computer. The walls were dark now, sun gone a while ago, and your Skype was blowing the hell up. You quickly walk around and turn it off, setting your status to silence it permanently. Why did Skype have to suck so much. You move to head back and a pale yellow slip of paper catches your eye from the floor of the desk. Reaching down to pick it up you realize that it’s not a piece of paper, but an empty yellow file with a name on it that strikes you as familiar, but you don’t quite recognize it. You don’t remember using yellow folders to do your taxes...or the taxes of whoever this person is. Its way too weird for you. You move to head back and a pale yellow slip of paper catches your eye from the floor of the desk. Reaching down to pick it up you realize that it’s not a piece of paper, but an empty yellow file with a name on it that strikes you as familiar, but you don’t quite recognize it. You don’t remember using yellow folders to do your taxes...or the taxes of whoever this person is. Its way too weird for you. You walk over to your file cabinet and open it to put it away and you pause, startled, as a sea of yellow floods your view. Every single folder in the cabinet was yellow, each tab a different name that you didn’t recognize. You put the folder you were holding down and picked up another one, opening it up and checking through the papers.

Each paper had a name on the top left corner, a LV1 in the center, and an assortment of numbers on the right that increased in value as you flipped through them. The bottom held names of...things you didn’t know. Places.
Ruins Entrance, New Home, Snowdin, Waterfall Entrance.

They stopped at a place called Hotland.

You close the folder and put it back, picking up another one. It had a different name on the front, and the pages were the same, except halfway through the LV1 changed to LV2, and then LV3. There were different pages now, more pages. Pages between the pages. They ended at The Last Corridor.

You close it and rummage through the other folders, briefly. Several of them had the same name and were filled with only two to three papers each. It was the weirdest thing you’ve ever seen. You don’t even know what they were or what you’d saved these files f-

They were Save Files.

You slam the drawer closed, the metal clang echoing loudly in your head. A scraping noise and a small muffled ‘tik’ alerts you that there’s something else in there, something that’s not a file. You open it and cautiously reach your hand towards the back of the tray, grasping something cold and sharp and pulling it out.

You stare at the red key and have the urge to put it on your keychain. You know better though. The bottom drawer of your file cabinet gazes up at you with the intimidation of an undiscovered cave. You feel like you’re going to be swallowed by it.

This key only goes in one place.

Like a magnet, the key in your hand gravitated to the lock and slipped itself inside. The click it made as it opened the drawer made your heart drop, and the contents inside made it jump into your throat.

On the bottom of the drawer was a deep red file that was three times the size of any of the files up top. Below it was a knife, a real knife. The same knife you were holding in your dream. In big black inky letters, the name “CHARA” bored into your soul from it’s bloody red canvas.

You have never been more terrified of your name in your entire life.
You stagger back at the sight of the envelope, the blotchy letters filling your entire being with fear. Your head was spinning faster than a magnetized top. Why did you have Save Files in your file cabinet? What were they for? Who were they about? How did you know they were Save Files? Why did they seem so familiar? Why were there so many of them? Why did the bottom drawer have a file with your name on it? Why were the others yellow and this one red? Why was it so big?

When you came out of your stupor the red file was in your hands, along with the knife. You stared at it, its crimson visage radiating off of your hands and turning them pink. You blink your eyes and for a split second you can see blood on your wrists and forearms. You gasp and drop it in surprise. Your grip on the knife, however, tightens. You stare at it for what feels like an eternity.

A knock on the door pulls you out of your daze. Sans stands there, looking between you and the file, and the knife in your hands. His smile falls, as do his eyelids. He suddenly looks very tired and...disappointed. There’s something else in his look that you can’t place and you know it was something far worse than both of them combined.

“you were taking a while, and i heard a slam.” he said, slowly. Cautiously. Like he was talking to a wounded animal. At the moment, you kind of felt like one. “is everything okay?”

“I…I don’t...” You start, looking back at the file. It intimidates you and you’re not sure why. You feel sick and the knife in your hand feels heavy, weighted down with an unspeakable burden that you feel like you should know. You feel like you’re going to throw up, or worse.

You feel like you’re going to have a bad time.

You sink to your knees and keep your eyes on the botched folder. You can’t turn them away “I don’t know…I don’t understand.”

Sans sighs and looks off to the side “it was only a matter of time, i guess….kinda hoped it wouldn’t happen to be honest.”

“Hoped what wouldn’t happen? What’s going on?” You question him, looking down at the sharp steel in your hands. “This knife...it’s the one from...my dream. My nightmare. You were there, and...and we were in a hallway.” you shakily tell him. “…I don’t understand any of this. Sans...”

You look up at him and you feel something fall down your cheeks. You didn’t realize you were crying. “What’s going on.”

There’s a long period of silence between the two of you. He looks like he’s trying to figure out what to say, but doesn’t want to say anything either. He’s watching you, carefully. You go to say something but a voice rings out and stops you.

“i can tell you!”

The voice caught both of you off guard. It bounced off the walls and hit you like a bullet. You saw Sans face scrunch into something uncertain, His smile tense with what you were sure was some kind of anger. You had a feeling you knew exactly who that voice belonged to but you couldn’t place your finger on what it was or where it was coming from until Sans turned his attention to the potted flower on the window table. You could have sworn there was supposed to be more than one flower in the pot, and that they weren’t bright yellow. You sat on the floor and watched as the flower wiggled and popped to life. Literally. It had a smiling face and moved its body side to side,
attention directly on you. Was it another monster? How did it get in your office? How long has it been there? It speaks before you can ask it.

“Hiya!” It says to you, either oblivious to Sans or ignoring him. “I’m Flowey the Flower. You look confused.”

You stare at it, because you are indeed incredibly confused. Sans takes a step forward, a bead of sweat visible on his head.

“What do you want.” It was a demand, not a question. He said it like he knew him. Flowey scoffed at him.

“None of your business, bonebag.” It turned to you, smiling happily. “Why don’t we go somewhere private.”

Before you could register his words you feel a wrenching sensation in your chest and your vision goes black.

When you open your eyes you’re standing in a small room with white walls and a black ceiling. The walls are too high for you to climb and there’s no exit or windows. Panicking, you go to run towards one and stop, noting that you can’t feel your legs or arms, or any other part of your body. The flower pops up on top of the wall in front of you. He’s much bigger than he was a minute ago and you feel very small under his gaze. There’s blippy music playing somewhere in the distance and it makes your head hurt.

“There we go, much better.” He says, looking down at you. His smile is friendly but you don’t feel safe at all. “Let’s get down to business. You’ve got some questions, I’ve got some answers, so let’s get this under way!”

“Who the hell are you?” You ask him. Your voice echoes around you from every direction and you can’t feel your lips move. You can’t feel anything at all. “What the hell is going on. Where am I and how did you get in my house?”

“Boy you sure do ask a lot.” Flowey said, bouncing slightly. “I already told you, i’m Flowey the flower, and this is a confrontation! It’s how us monsters can talk to the Souls of humans without anyone interrupting! Isn’t it convenient?” he said, popping down into the wall out of sight. He immediately resurfaces on the ground in front of you and a mirror forms on the wall. You gasp at your reflection, or...what was there of your reflection. All you saw was a floating, glowing red heart. Flowey continued. “See that heart? That is your SOUL, the very culmination of your being!”

You finally move, backwards and then forwards as a test. You feel like you’re floating, but also like you can’t float away. It keeps talking.

“You’ve got a pretty strong soul lady.” He tells you. “Normally souls start off weak and then they grow strong with LOVE, but yours is the strongest I’ve ever seen!”

You look at him, confused. The mirror disappears and he relocates himself back on top of the wall. You move forward. “LOVE? Like...like people love? The emotional kind?”

“Well, it is pretty emotional.” He says, looking down at you. “Considering it stands for Level of Violence.”
“It what?!” You ask. Violence? You’ve never done anything violent in your entire life. You may have cursed out the occasional asshole who tried to skip out on paying for his food but you’ve never done anything violent.

“Yeah!” He says, a little too happy. “And yours is all the way up to 20. That’s the highest it can go! If I didn’t hate you so much, I’d be pretty impressed.”

That surprises you. You’ve never seen this flower before in your life. “Hate me? What the hell are you talking about?”

“Oh yeah, you probably don’t remember.” It said, winking at you. “But that’s okay, I do! After all…”

“Who could forget the person who killed them.”

His face contorted into something demonic and sinister. The walls around you shrink and you panic. What was happening. The black sky that acted as your ceiling was filled with a ring of white pellets, all spinning in place. You feel like you’re hyperventilating and he laughs at your suffering, the bullets slowly closing in on you. You have nowhere to go.

“Any last words before you die, traitor?”

The pellets are getting closer, forming a ring you can’t escape from. This is it, you were going to die here. You have plenty of last words but your fear overpowers you and you scream.

“I don’t want to die!”

You feel yourself being pulled backwards before everything goes dark.

You’re slammed back into the wall, your chest and back pulsing in pain. The knife in your grip clatters to the floor and you can see your limbs again. You look up to see Sans standing in front of you, directly between you and Flowey. You’re back in your office and its dark, illuminated only by the backlight of your monitor against the wall. You feel like you just took your first breath of air after a long stint of drowning. His arm is extended and you can see a faint blue glowing in his left eye as he glares at the flower, grin menacing in the dim light. Flowey, face returned to its normal ‘happy’ self, chided him.

“Well, that was rude.” He told Sans. “I thought that you of all people would have wanted to see her die, considering you tried so hard to do it...how many times? Fifty? It’s hard to keep track, right?”

“flowers should be seen and not heard.” Sans retorted, putting his arm down. “so why don’t you make like a tree and fuck off.”

Flowey scoffed at him. “I’m not leaving because you told me to.”

You watched his yellow petals drop into the flowerpot below him and disappear. Sans turns to you, blinking once to rid himself of the blue glow. He turns to you and kneels down slowly. Your breath is coming in bursts and your lungs feel like they’re going to collapse. You’re having a panic attack. Bringing your hand to your head you clutch your skull, pale yellow strands of hair falling in your face in your panic. He speaks low and cautiously, holding out his hand to you.
“are you okay?”

“No.” You blurt. “No, i’m not okay. What the shit just happened?! I was pulled out of my body by a flower and, and there’s the file and the knife, and your eye was glowing and, and I was in a room and I had nowhere to go and I could see my SOUL and-”

“chara.”

You look at him, carefully brushing the stray hair strands out of your face. You’re shaking and you can see he’s just as upset about the situation as you are, but he’s still offering you his hand. You’re not sure if you want to take it.

“...He said you tried to kill me.” You say, low enough to be a whisper. He didn’t move.

“yeah...”

You suddenly feel very tired and heavy. You can’t lift your arm to take his hand. “This...this is too much. I can’t handle this right now, It’s just too much and too fast. I don’t understand anything.”

He waits for you and you do nothing. His eyes are observant, careful, and concerned. You’re not sure which of you he’s more concerned for.

“I think I need to lie down for a while...”

“I think that’s a good idea.” he agrees, standing back up to put his hands in his pockets. He waits for you to move and when it becomes apparent you can’t he walks over and picks you up bridal style. You cling to his shirt and your knuckles can feel his hard ribcage underneath its cotton cocoon. He takes you to your room and lies you down on your bed, turning to leave until you pull on the white fabric, stopping him.

“Dont leave...” You beg quietly. “Please...I need to know what’s going on. Stay with me and tell me everything when I wake up.”

He looks a bit taken aback before sighing and sitting on the floor, gently removing your hand from his shirt.

“don’t worry.” He tells you. “everything’s gonna be fine. hopefully, if we’re lucky, i won’t have to tell you anything.”

You don’t understand what he means, but you’re not in the mind to try. Your eyes close and for a third time that evening the world around you turns black.
Right through you

It's hot. Everything around you seems like it's on the point of boiling, including the air. You blink and see Sans in front of you at a booth, grinning. There’s snow on the roof and the logical part of your brain asks how it's still there.

You’re in Hotland and you just bought a hot dog from him. Or...was it a hot dog? It was a hot something. Everything here was hot, it was hard to tell. It quickly registers in your mind that he’s talking.

“...holding too much. guess i’ll just put it on your head.”

You gawk as he gently places the hotdog on your head. You try to look up at it but you don’t want it to fall. You carefully teeter around in front of the stall and then spin, watching the ‘hot dog’ fall off of your head and onto the ground. It disappears in seconds. Goddamn magic hotdogs. You walk back over to him, smiling like an idiot.

“Do that again.” you tell him. He’s taller than you a bit and you don’t question it when he pulls out another one and puts it on your head.

“here’s another hot dog. its on the house.” he puts his hand back in his pocket. “well, no. Its on you.”

You chuckle and go to walk away, but stop yourself.

“Another.”

He puts another one on top of that and you’re still smiling like you’ve started the greatest thing in the world. The trend repeats and you’ve got a yard of hotdogs balanced on the top of your head somehow. Goddamn magic hotdogs. You go to ask for another one, beaming, and he stops you.

“i’ll be ‘frank’ with you.” He starts. You giggle at the pun. “as much as i like putting hot dogs on your head...thirty is just an excessive number.”

You’re this close to bursting out in giggles but you don’t want the hotdog stack to fall. He continues.

“twenty-nine, now, that’s fine. but thirty…” He pulls his hands out of his pockets and shrugs “does it look like my arms can reach that high?”

No, you think, they can’t, as you smile and teeter away. You move back and forth to try to keep the stack balanced, but it topples in front of you.

You feel yourself topple with it.

You can’t open the door of the house. It was a nice looking house once, in the shape of a fish. Its too bad you both burned it down while making pasta. She can’t live here any more. obviously.

The only thing that lives here now is fire.

You quietly wonder if Undyne made it to Snowdin yet.
You should probably call Papyrus.

Your phone rings as you stare at the square robot before you. It was all an act, a hoax. There was no malfunctioning robot. He was acting, as he was programmed to do, and he fooled you.

“SHE WILL ‘DEACTIVATE’ ME, ‘SAVING’ YOU.” He told you. “FINALLY. SHE’LL BE THE HERO OF YOUR ADVENTURE.”

He sounded so bored and fed up.

You were starting to get bored and fed up too.

You didn’t know what you expected inside San’s garage. It’s a small undecorated room with a large something-or-other with a tarp over it in the corner. You walk over to the drawer closest to you and you open it, pulling out a picture frame of Sans with a lot of people you don’t recognize.

He looks happy. Really happy. His face wasn’t just a smile, it was a real smile.

You wonder why he doesn’t smile like that when you’re around.

You close the drawer and open the next one. It has an ID badge of some kind with some strange symbols written across the bottom. You close that drawer too, moving to look at the blueprints on the counter. They’re covered in the same symbols as the badge and you can’t read what it says. It’s probably some kind of monster dialect nobody around here uses, or maybe it’s just the handwriting. There’s small scribbles in the margins you can sort of make out, but you can’t tell whose handwriting that is either. It all looks like they relate to some kind of strange machine. There’s a clock symbol in the corner and you wonder what it’s for for a moment before it clicks in your mind.

You have a feeling you know what’s underneath the tarp. You decide to investigate.

You find yourself in the ruins, staring at the woman who thought she could keep you here. You can see Toriel standing before you, battered and sliced through.

“Y-you...really...hate...me...that...much?” She starts, eyes wide in realization and fear. She’s afraid of you. “Now...i...see...who...i...was...protecting...by...keeping...you...here. Not...you...”

She smiled wide. “But...them...!”

She disappeared into ash before you.

You’re filled with Determination as you walk through the door.

It was like looking in a demonic mirror. The child in front of you had on a green shirt and yellow
stripes, a contrast to your blue and red striped shirt.

“Greetings.”

It said to you, a blissful smile on their face.

“I am Chara.”

They weren’t Chara. You were Chara.

“Thank you.”

It continued. You could hear a high pitched whine coming from somewhere and it chilled your SOUL to the core.

“Your power awakened me from Death.”

“My ‘human soul.’”

This wasn’t right. You weren’t dead. This thing wasn’t you. You were just curious. You didn’t mean to cause this.

“My ‘Determination.’”

You just wanted to know. You just wanted to see what would happen.

“They were not mine, but YOURS.”

The words struck you like a knife through the heart. You did this. This was your fault.

You’re the reason everyone you cared about was dead.

It held out it’s hand to you. Its saccharine grin turned evil and you felt heavy. Their fingers were dripping, everything was dripping. Slowly it turned into a mound of black, inky tar, laughing a twisted devilish laugh that you thought only existed in the deepest nightmares your mind could conjure.

“Let us erase this pointless world and move on to the next.”

You couldn’t do it. You couldn’t erase it. You had to fix it.

You had to go back and fix it.

You shook your head and it looked at you funny. You could still see the outline of a child. A monster.

“No…?”

It started, the echo of its voice emanating from every direction at once. It wasn’t the only one talking.

“You must have misunderstood…”

You had to fix it. There was no way. Things were too different. They knew. No matter how many times you went back to the beginning you couldn’t do anything to help them. You have to make up for your mistake. You didn’t mean it, you just wanted to know what would happen and now you’re paying for it.

You stare at the tarp in the garage and it fills you with regret.

You just want them to be happy, and they can’t be happy if you’re there. Someone else needs to be their hero.

You pull the tarp off of the machine.

You yell as you bolt upright in your bed, tears streaming down your face. You’re hyperventilating as if you’d run a marathon through the ninth ring of hell. You’re pretty sure you just did. The light of day cascades through your window and comfortably lights your room, a stark contrast to the rumbling hell going on in your head. Your clock tells you that it’s 10 in the morning. There’s a shuffle just outside your vision and you turn your head to the door where Sans is standing, concern in his eyes. You look at him and swallow dryly, rubbing the tears from your face as more take their place.

You don’t have any questions any more.
You stare at each other for what feels like forever. You can feel your cheeks burning and your tears turn into small rivers running down your face. You feel like a guitar string ready to snap as you watch him walk closer and take a seat on the edge of your bed, propping up a leg to drape his arm over. He looks at you and grins like he’s enjoying watching you suffer. Or maybe that’s just what you think it looks like.

“looks like you had a killer time.” He tells you. You see now his grin is bordering shit-eating. You sob once.

“Th-that’s not funny.” Your head is pounding and you curl your knees up to your chest, wrapping your arms around them. You still have so many questions, but they’re not the questions you originally had. You have different questions jumping around in your head like a thousand loose rubber balls.

The silence sits heavy on both of you for a minute. You think he might have a couple of questions too. You speak first.

“...How do you do it….?” Your voice is defeated and worn. “How do you manage to smile like that...knowing everything...”

“i had a lot of practice.” He said, looking away from you. You both know exactly what he means. Practice talking to you, smiling at every iteration of you. Every name and pass and incident, every time you reset. He had to play the part of the happy skeleton guide who didn’t have a care in the world. He can’t afford not to care anymore, though.

“...why did you do it?”

You tightened your fists and pulled your knees in closer. He was asking about your genocide, your runs before and after it. Everything you’d done up to that point. “.........I was curious.” You admit, sniffling once. You could feel your emotions bubbling up inside you with every word thereafter. “I just wanted to see...what would happen. I wasn’t thinking. I thought I c-could do it and then go back and erase it, s-start all over again and h-have everyone back. I wasn’t r-ready for what came after. I didn’t...I didn’t know.” You were sobbing hard now, burying your face in your knees. It wasn’t helping, you just felt worse. “And w-when I fought you...I just...just w-wanted to see if I c-could win. I w-wanted to see ev-everything you had. It was...I was...I was s-so determined to beat you.” You were shaking now, fists latched tightly around the fabric of your jeans. “I k-killed ev-everyone. I t-turned into a m-monster. I’m s-sso ss-ssorry-y.”

You cried for a while into your knees, shaking and sobbing as all of the memories and the weight of your past came crashing down onto your shoulders. You gasped through your tears and tried to keep talking, broken sobs cutting off your words.

“A-and then w-when I saw what I be-became...” You had hiccups now. “I c-came face t-to face with myself….but it w-wasn’t me. I tried to run, t-to fix what I’d done but it was too late. Ev-everything you had. I t-turn into a m-monster. I’m s-sso ss-ssorry-y.”

You were still shaking, hyperventilating to try to calm yourself down. It wasn’t really working, but after about ten deep breaths you managed to unfluster yourself enough to speak without stuttering or sobbing.
“I couldn’t...I couldn’t keep going. Knowing that I did something so horrible out of...stupid curiosity. I couldn’t fix it by myself, and every time I tried I just...I felt so much worse. And then, then I came to a conclusion that I just...I couldn’t keep trying to fix it. I couldn’t keep going and fail when I knew that everyone...everyone I cared about and learned to love had to suffer because of what I did. I couldn’t save anyone...I was so stupid. I knew that as long as I was there...as long as I kept trying to fix my mistake that, that it would never get fixed....”

He was quiet as you spoke, taking in all of your words while staring at your wall. You kept going.

“I went back to fix it...one more time. I went...I went into your garage, to the machine. It took me a long time but I finally figured out how to get it to work correctly. I had to...I had to pull myself out of the equation. I had to make it like I was never there in the first place....”

You release your knees and your hands fall to your ankles, pulling on the fabric.

“I had to give you a hero that you deserved. I had to give you Frisk. So I did...and I pulled myself out. Rewrote my memories so that I would never have to worry about it. Give myself a life where I couldn’t hurt anyone ever again, and that I was too busy working to better myself that I wouldn’t even remember why I was trying to do it. But you still found me, after all this time...”

You finally look at him, face red from crying. Your tears stopped but your eyes were still swollen and the knees of your jeans were soaked.

“I don’t know how you didn’t kill me when you saw me.”

Sans didn’t look at you for a while, you didn’t expect him to. He put his knee down and leaned back on your bed, propping himself up with his arms to look at the ceiling.

“honestly, i didn’t know it was you at first.” he started. “i kinda knew, sorta felt it, but it wasn’t until you told us your name that i was sure.”

You shifted on the bed, slowly, mimicking him and throwing your legs over the edge of your bed.

“i did want to kill you, pretty badly too.” He went on. “i thought you were pretending not to know who we were at the beginning. kept my eyesocket on you pretty hard this past week.” you heard two small taps and guessed that he was tapping near his eyes. You weren’t looking at him to confirm it. “but after seeing how genuinely hard you laughed at my jokes and how you treated my brother and my friends, i knew you really had no idea who we were. and i struggled, lemme tell you. i struggled to figure out if you were playing an angle, or if this was another type of reset, which i guess it kinda was. and i tried to figure out whether or not i had it in me to forgive you for something you didn’t know you even did.”

“I wouldn’t.”

Your answer was immediate and unconscious as you stared at your floor.

“I wouldn’t forgive me. Not after all of that. I didn’t. That’s why I’m here now.”

He turned to look at you. “lemme finish, buddy. i wasn’t done.”

You nod and purse your eyebrows together, feeling strange at the use of the friendly name given the situation. He continued.

“hearing all that, if i’m gonna be straight with you, i don’t really know what to do.” he went back to staring at the ceiling. “you went through the underground so many times in search of something
i’m not even sure you found, and in the end you killed us all and destroyed everything like some kinda demon….BUT.” he paused, briefly. “...you hated yourself so much because of it that you completely erased who you were and created a whole new person to take your place, just so you could make a chance to save us. Its a split down the middle if i ever saw one.”

The atmosphere in the room teetered on tense and uncertain. You kicked your leg once and your grip on the bedsheets tightened the slightest.

“My entire life is a lie.” you say slowly, tired “The memories of my mistakes are going to haunt me now. I don’t know if I can keep living my life like this knowing everything I’ve done. And you’ve had to live with the memories of every encounter with me for the past year. You said that watching over me was your job now in the restaurant, but you only said that because you knew who I was and what I did. You said it because if I stepped out of line you would kill me. How do you stand it? How can you keep being so happy, knowing all of this for so long?”

“caus I know that this’s it.” he said, standing up from your bed to put his hands back in his pockets. You stared at the blue hood on his back as he stayed facing the wall. “i’ve got my memories, yeah. Memories of all the shit you did and all the times you tried to kill me, but i’ve got memories of the good times too. Good times with you and now good times with frisk, and my brother, and undyne and all of them. And I know that this time is the last time, and that this is real. its real because you made it real and you can’t do anything anymore.”

He says it with a certainty that settles like a rock in the pit of your stomach. You can’t do anything anymore. You rewrote the world and pulled yourself out of it. You have no save points, no reset button, no weapons or armor or determination.

You’re not in control anymore.

The thought simultaneously relieves you and makes you feel empty inside.

You reach up your hand, shakily, to grab his jacket sleeve, but you stop inches away. You don’t have the right to do anything. You don’t have the right to even be talking to him after what you’ve done. Your fingers curl into a fist and you leave it hanging in the air as he turns around to face you. You can’t look him in the eyes and your gaze lands on his chest as you murmur your next sentence.

“......What am I going to do now?”

He shrugs, his casual demeanor somehow making its way back into his body. “Far as i see it, you’ve done everything you can. Now all you need to do is make a choice. You can run from your past, like you’ve been doing, and work yourself so hard you don’t have time to think about it. Or, you can embrace the shit you’ve done and own up to it, since you went so far to fix it. You’re clearly beating yourself up over it the worst. Of course, not as much as i would, but i already did that fifty times so i’m not really in the mood to do it again.”

You lower your hand and lift your face to look him in the eyes for the first time since you started talking. You have one more question for him, but your voice is so hoarse it sounds like a whisper.

“Do you forgive me?”

He stares at you, hard, the sides of his mouth have been tense the whole time and you see them lower the slightest.

“yes, and no.” He said, turning to completely face you, tilting his head back and closing his right eye. “I don’t forgive what you did, no matter why you did it. Even though it didn’t happen in this
timeline it still happened, and the fact that it did is some pretty inexcusable shit.” He closed his left eye and opened his right one. “but right now, the chara that did all of that is dead. and you look like you’ve suffered enough in your quest for redemption, and you look like you want to leave all of it behind you.”

He closed both eyes and reopened them. the corners of his mouth twitch up and you can see him smiling, resolved.

“maybe all you need is, i dunno…” he pulls his hands out of his pockets and shrugs “some good food, some bad laughs, some nice friends. and maybe you won’t ever be really happy. i probably won’t either, but as long as you’re willing to try, well…” He winked at you, his left eye closing. “maybe we can both work something out, together.”

A wave of relief washes over you. You still feel tense, but it’s much less so now. Hearing that Sans is willing to spare you gives you a feeling that everything might be alright. You’re still trembling, slightly, since you did just go through an episode, but looking at his face and hearing his words of encouragement, even if they weren’t that big a deal.

It fills you with ease.

“now, i think we got off on the wrong foot. since we’re starting all over, anyway, why don’t we do this right?” he backs up a step and holds out his hand to you, grinning. “i’m sans. sans the skeleton. don’t you know how to greet a new friend?”

You stand up carefully from your bed and take a step forward to meet him, smiling. You reach out your hand to grab his and-

-PBRRRRRRRRRTHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh-

You gawk at him, completely taken aback at the loud and familiar noise. His grin gets wider as your cheeks turn red.

“hehehe.” He chuckles at your expense, still holding your hand. “the old whoopie cushion in the hand trick. it’s ALWAYS funny.”

You can’t stop yourself from laughing as you let go, falling on your bed as you double over. He laughs right along with you and it takes a few minutes for both of you to calm down.

“You fucking JERK.” you yell at him through giggles. “I cannot be-LIEVE you just did that.”

“hey, its not very nice to call someone you just met a jerk.”

“Shut up, ohmygod.”

“it’s not very nice to tell someone you just met to shut up.”

“I’m gonna kill you, holy shit.”

You’re laughing as you say the words but both of you flinch. You both go quiet as the calm air around you falls into something more serious. You speak up.

“If i’m really going to put it all behind me, i need to get rid of the remnants of my past that I want to forget…” You get up fro the bed, an idea forming in your head. You look at him, seriously. “Can you help me get to Hotland. There’s some papers I need to burn.”
He looks at you for a second, and then smiles and winks when he gets it.

“i think i know a shortcut.”

There’s a sense of pride and contentness when you push the file cabinet over the edge of the cliff into the magma below. Watching it slowly melt away under the heat of the molten liquid is the most tranquilizing thing you’ve ever seen in your life. Now all that’s left is the hard part.

You look down at the red file and knife in your hands, glaring at it with everything you can muster. Sans stands beside you, watching patiently.

“it’s now or never, buddy.”

He’s right. You grab the folder and toss it forwards, the papers inside scattering and catching fire in the air before hitting the red and orange pool, evaporating almost instantly. You look down at the dagger in your hand and take two steps back, winding up and throwing it with as much strength as you can muster into the magma. It slices through the surface like water and in an instant, is gone.

You feel like a tremendous weight has been lifted off of your shoulders. There’s nothing on your back anymore. There’s still something bothering you and it dances around in your throat. You turn to him.

“I have...I have no right to ask anything of you…” You start.

“you’re right. you don’t. but you’re gonna ask it anyway.” He says.

You swallow. “You said...that we’re in this together now. I want to make things better...I wanna redeem myself for everything but, I don’t know what i’m going to do. My life is a fabrication and if I keep working at it the way I am i’m going to burn myself out, and I have a feeling i’m going to have trouble sleeping now. And, I trust myself, I do. I’m...I’m determined to make things right but if I’m by myself i don’t know if i can keep-”

“then don’t be by yourself.”

You blink at him, not really sure what to say or where you were going with your ramble. He keeps talking.

“we put an expansion onto our house, since frisk likes to sleep over now. it’s a bathroom. we never needed one before but after figuring out that a human needed it we decided to make one, just in case.” he explained. You listened, a bit incredulous. You think you know where it’s going. “we’re pretty close to your work. my brother and i, i mean. And our place is paid off so, you wouldn’t have to work as much if you stayed. i could keep an eyesocket on you, make sure nothing happens. i don’t use my bed anyway and you’ve already seen my room.”

You almost couldn’t believe your ears. He was offering you a place in his home. You felt like you were going to cry again. Your eyes were definitely watering but you calmed yourself. If anything happened, he would be there to stop it. If you somehow suddenly flipped back into...something unpleasant, he would be there to end it.

“you’re gonna have nightmares, that’s for sure.” He continued. “at least for the first few months, anyway. the beginning is always the hardest, but i’m sure you’ll power through it. you’re a pretty determined human after a-“
You pull him into a hug, his words stopping in his throat as you clutch the back of his hoodie, tears falling silently down your face for the umpteenth time that day.

“Thank you.” You tell him. “I don’t deserve it…”

“no, you don’t. not yet” He says, wrapping one arm around you in comfort, “but you will.”

“Yeah.” You say, letting him go and wiping your tears with your hands. You smile softly at first, and then confidently.

Your true path to redemption has finally begun. You’re finally in control of your life again.

He teleports you both out of Hotland and you find yourself in front of his house. It’s in between two bigger buildings, and it has snow on its roof as if the white canopy is a permanent part of the house. Looking up at it, knowing that you’re not alone and that everything’s going to be okay,

It fills you with determination.
It's been two months since you started living with the skeleton brothers.

Papyrus questioned it in the beginning, asking why his new human friend was going to be living with them when they didn't have an extra bedroom. Sans told him that since Undyne stayed there for a while in the Underground that he had no room to argue. She'd since moved out to live with Alphys in her lab and their couch had been pretty empty, but Sans already said you'd be using his bed. You were pretty okay with it, considering it wasn't the couch.

To everyone else though, you told them that you were having trouble making the rent at your other apartment and that you'd be crashing at their house when you weren't working. Technically, it wasn't a lie. You did struggle a lot to keep the rent there, but you always managed it just fine. You thanked whatever god existed that you worked on a monthly basis for your rent, it made moving out so much easier. Your boss was also pretty okay with you taking less shifts and even seemed to encourage it. Maybe you really were working yourself too hard.

You ended up moving almost all of your things over to their house, or at least most of it. Your video game consoles and beanbags were there now, and you moved in your bed and bed frame in place of Sans old mattress. You also moved in your dresser, considering you actually changed your clothes every day.

It was very strange, living with them for those first two months. There was a lot of activity at their house almost all the time and you'd taken on the responsibility of cooking in lieu of Papyrus. Technically they didn't really need to eat, but you couldn't live off of spaghetti alone. Papyrus was disheartened when you told him that, but he quickly decided that he was going to learn how to make every food he possibly can so he could become a true chef for his 'new human friend'.

Sans was right about the nightmares, though. Every night a memory would drift through your mind as you slept. Sometimes they were good, most of the time they were horrible. Remnants of the terror you wrought that plagued your head every time you closed your eyes. You thought that after a while they would end up going away, and that once each memory flashed through your head once they would stop. You had really hoped.

It was when you jolted out of bed at two in the morning, gasping for air and shaking after watching yourself kill Papyrus for the second time, that you knew you were wrong. Hyperventilating, you watched your hands as they shook, balling them into fists and cursing as you wiped the tears from your eyes. You jumped when you felt a bony hand on one of yours, pulling it away from your face. Sniffing, you looked at Sans at his spot on the edge of the bed. He didn't sleep much during the night and didn't use the bed, but he was always there when you had a relapse and had formulated a way to calm you down. He held out his hand to you and you took a deep breath, nodding and taking it with both of yours.

“Triquetral.” You pointed to one of the bones, and moved onto the next. “Hamate, capitate, lunate, scaphoid, trapezoid, trapezium.” You moved to his fingers. “Metacarpus, phalanges, metacarpal, proximal phalange, middle phalange, distal phalange.” You read them off like a list. You'd done it enough times that you'd already memorized all of the bones of the hand. It was his idea, to name the bones of the hand in an attempt to calm you down. It worked most of the time, but you were still wound up when you finished. You lowered his hand. “Thanks...you don’t have to keep doing this.”

“you keep saying that, but we both know i’m not goin’ anywhere.” he tells you, leaning back to lie
on the bed. His chest ends up on your legs and you could feel his ribcage through the blanket. “looked like a pretty bad one this time. wanna talk about it?”

“They’re repeating themselves…” You tell him. He nods, putting his hands behind his head.

“They’ll do that.”

You fall back onto your pillow and stare at the ceiling. “Maybe I should just become an insomniac like you, and nap during the day.”

“You’ll end up getting yelled at by my brother too.” he says, grinning at you “we’ve already got one lazy bag of bones in the house, we don’t need another one.”

Your chuckle is halfhearted and you sigh. He was right, Papyrus would probably get on you about it. You’d just have to make it up to him by working twice as hard at your job. The silence of the room accompanied by the chirps of crickets and occasional passing cars outside was supposed to be calming, you thought. You wanted it to be calming as you both sat in the near silence of the night, but you still felt a wrenching in your gut.

“So, why ‘frisk’?” Sans asked, in his attempt to unwrench your stomach. He didn’t know that it was wrenched, but he always seemed to speak at the right times. “out of all the names you could have picked, and all the kids, why ‘frisk’?”

“I don’t know.” You admit, sitting back up to look down at him. You couldn’t pull your legs up to your chest since he was lying on top of them. “I guess...I wasn’t really thinking. I was kinda frantic. I wanted someone untouched by the world of monsters, someone with a really good and pure heart. I don’t know why I chose the name…”

“maybe because you were searching for a solution.” He said. You could hear the cocky joking in his voice and you flicked his skull for it, holding back your own exasperated chuckles.

“I did not make Frisk based off of a stupid pun!” You retort.

He shrugged. “i would have.”

“I know you would have!” You yelled before covering your mouth. Papyrus was probably sleeping. You bring your voice down to a whisper “I know you would have, but i’m not you.”

“of course you’re not me, you’re too soft.”

You protest “I am not soft. I went through hell thanks. I’m the most hard-ass bitch I know.”

He slowly poked your leg with his finger to correct himself. He meant you were literally soft. You swatted his hand away and flicked his skull two more times. He chuckled at his own joke.

“why’d you even choose to be a girl anyway?” He kept asking questions “and why so much older? you were like, ten when you ran through the underground.”

You pulled your pillow in front of you, hugging it. “I don’t know either. I think I wanted to make myself someone with a lot of responsibility and problems so that I just...wouldn’t have to think about...anything. I guess a twenty-three year old chick has just the right amount of both.”

The nightmares were a pretty big price to pay for what you’d done, but you’re pretty sure that period cramps was also your own sick sense of retribution on yourself.
“well, at least you’re here.” Sans tells you, finally sitting up. Your legs feel sort of numb and you pull them in to sit pretzel style under the blankets. “it’s better than disappearing completely between dimensions.”

“That’s an oddly specific thing to say.” You tell him, chuckling a bit and then pausing as a realization hit you. “Wait...is that what the machine was supposed to do?”

“no.” He tells you, heavily. You can tell there’s something else he wants to say.

You press a bit.

“Did that happen to someone?”

There was a long silence before he spoke. His words were weighted down with something that sounded like regret.

“yeah...” he says, gripping the sheets a bit. He put his glove back on his hand and it takes him a few seconds to continue, as if he’s not sure he wants to.

“his name was gaster.”
Sans didn’t talk about anything for the rest of the night.

You thought about asking him exactly who Gaster was, but decided against it. The tone of his voice struck a chord in you and you stayed silent, opting to go back to sleep.

Throughout the past two months you found yourself having a lot of late night talks with Sans. About the world’s existence, your existence, both of your memories slushed together, and every time you had a nightmare you two would end up talking. Sometimes the talking would turn into stupid back and forth jokes and one-liners, at which point Papyrus would yell through the walls for the both of you to shut up. You never understood why he didn’t sleep at night, but the fact that he could hear you through Sans walls meant you had to stay quiet or you’d both end up getting yelled at.

Most of the time the talks ended on a light note and you went back to sleep feeling better, but the sound of his voice when he said the name ‘Gaster’ made your heart sink.

You had to investigate.

You started with Papyrus. The thought process behind it was sound. If Gaster was someone close to Sans, then he was probably close to the taller brother too. It would make sense, considering Papyrus was the type to have a lot of friends. His circle of monster-knowledge was pretty big, even if he didn’t know someone directly. Hopefully there was a chance of him hearing about a Gaster, at the very least.

You decided to approach him casually, discreetly. You had to pick a time when Sans wouldn’t be home, or anywhere near the house to drop in on a conversation. It was on one of your days off that you’d successfully managed to convince Sans to go out and get Chinese food for dinner. You’d been determined to show Papyrus all of the different types of food that could be used with noodles, but you needed a break from cooking for once. His Italian skills were getting better, but you could only have so much pasta in a short period of time.

The two of you sat on the couch while you waited, tv bleeping along to one of Mettaton’s live performances. He was still pretty adamant about keeping up with the MTT network. You thought it was kind of endearing. Sans had been gone for a couple of minutes and you knew you didn’t have much time. If he teleported that gave you maybe 15 minutes. You prayed you’d be able to figure out something in that time.
“Hey, Papyrus,” You started, lounging on the couch and paying no mind to the tv. “Can I ask you a question?”

“ONE MINUTE,” he says, holding up a hand "METTATON IS ABOUT TO SERENADE THE CAPTURED HUMAN.”

You look at the tv for two seconds. The human is Frisk, you’ve seen this before. “It’s…kind of important. Like, really important.” You emphasize. He turns to you.

“HMM. I SUPPOSE, IF SOMETHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN ONE OF METTATON’S CLASSIC SHOWCASES, THEN, I WILL GIVE YOU MY FULL AND UNDIVIDED ATTENTION, AND ALLOW YOU TO PICK MY MAGNIFICENT BRAIN, AND ADD TO YOUR WISDOM.” He sat back and crossed his arms, looking at you. His camaraderie and eagerness to help was so stupidly noble that it was kind of endearing. You supposed that’s what you liked best about him, though. "BUT ONLY THIS ONCE. ASK AWAY."

“Have you ever heard of a Gaster?” You asked, carefully.

He thought for a moment and put his hand to his chin. “THAT…IS A GOOD QUESTION. I HAVE NOT HEARD OF A GASTER. IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING UNPLEASANT, LIKE THE NOISE OF ONE OF SANS’ WHOOPEE CUSHIONS.” He tells you. “MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY ASKING HIM.”

“NO!” You yell, clearing your throat immediately. “No, I uh…It’s…he doesn’t need to know about it. It’s just…something I’m trying to figure out on my own.” You clasp your hands together “Pleeeease don’t tell him about it.”

Papyrus raises an eye…bone…at you in confusion. “YOU’RE KEEPING SECRETS FROM MY BROTHER? THAT’S…IMPROBABLE.”

You knit your brows at him. “Why is it improbable?”

“Well, considering the nature of your relationship with my brother, according to the human internet, one would think that you would have no secrets to hide from him.” He told you, utterly sure of himself. “Unless you are planning to surprise him with whatever this ‘Gaster’ is.”

“Nature of…” You trail off, and then stare at him for a few seconds. “What kind of relationship do you think I have with your brother?”

“I…AM NOT ENTIRELY SURE.” he says, crossing his arms again. “From what I have read and asked about, your relationship is very close, to the point where you have moved your things into our house, and are living in his room and sleeping in his bed. Which I love, by the way. Having you here is great and you do much less property damage than Undyne.” He tells you, beaming. “You also know how to cook more food than her, so that’s also great.”

“Wait, wait. Backtrack a bit here.” You tell him, “You think…oh my god. You think I’m like…sleeping with Sans?!”

You can physically feel the bright blush creep up your neck and onto your face at the realization. He thought you were having sex with his brother. You’re not even sure if he understands what he’s implying.
“WELL, YOU ARE, AREN’T YOU?” he continues “YOU SLEEP IN HIS BED, AND I HEAR YOU TWO TALKING EVERY NIGHT, AND LAUGHING. VERY LOUDLY. WHAT ARE YOU TWO EVEN LAUGHING ABOUT AT THREE O’CLOCK?”

You blush harder. “That’s...it’s none of your business! I’m not sleeping with your brother, ohmygod.” You bring a hand to your face, exasperated. “I can’t even begin to describe how impossible that is. It’s literally and physically impossible. And ridiculous!”

He tilted his head at you. “WHY IS IT IMPOSSIBLE? THE PEOPLE ON THE INTERNET SAY THAT HUMANS SLEEP TOGETHER ALL THE TIME, AND SOMETIMES THEY EVEN DO IT FOR FUN!”

“I can’t believe this is happening to me.” You bring your other hand to your face and bury it into both. “I’m going to die. I’m going to die because you think i’m having sex with your brother.”

“YOU’RE NOT GOING TO DIE. I, WITH MY GREAT CHARISMA AND FRIENDSHIP, WILL PREVENT THAT FROM HAPPENING.” He tells you. You assume he’s probably doing some kind of other valiant pose but your face is too buried in your hands to see it. “BUT IT IS ALSO STRANGE THAT I HAVE NOT SEEN EITHER OF YOU GO ON ANY FORMAL DATES. OR, IS IT THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DATING BEHIND MY BACK THIS ENTIRE TIME??!!”

“No, we haven’t been dating behind your back. We haven’t even been dating!” You yell at him, exasperatedly. “Holy shit, i’m not going to sit here and explain how impossible it is for me to be having sex with your brother.”

“you’re not?”

You freeze, every muscle in your body tensing up. You want to turn your head to look at the clock but you can’t move a muscle. There was absolutely no way that was fifteen minutes. That felt like three minutes, maybe four. You sat with your hands gripping your pants and you feel like you’re going to overheat.

Papyrus does nothing to help the situation. “SANS! WELCOME BACK. WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT YOU.”

“really, is that so?” He said, holding up the bag of chinese food, if the paper and plastic rustling was an indication. You could hear his shit-eating grin as he talked. “don’t let me stop you, then. i’m hungry to hear more.”

You couldn’t do this. You stood up abruptly, fists clenched at your sides. “You know what, I’m not hungry!” You say as you walk quickly to the door, nudging past Sans to open it. “You can put my food in the fridge, i’m going to go for a walk.” you tell him, closing it in his face.

There was absolutely zero way you were going to have that conversation with anyone, especially Papyrus. ESPECIALLY in front of Sans and his shit-eating grin.

All you wanted was to know who Gaster was. You didn’t ask for this.

You managed to make it about three blocks down the road before you slowed, feet kicking the loose pavement stones as you tried to calm down. Taking a deep breath, you looked up at the sky and it’s hues of orange-golds. You always did seem to have pretty dramatic things happen around sunset, you mused. Maybe it was some sort of sign. Like everything you do and work for is just going to eventually fade into darkness and become silent and still, like the night.

No, that was stupid. You shook your head and ducked into an alleyway to lean against a wall and
think.

It’s not like papyrus was wrong. He was wrong, he was very wrong, but you could see exactly where he was coming from. You knew Sans for a week in his eyes, and everybody else’s eyes. Nobody remembers you from any of the timelines you traversed through. The only person they remembered was Frisk, because Frisk was the one they shared their real adventure with. Not you. The kid did everything you wish you could have, and that’s what they all know.

You were nothing but an outsider to them. A random human named Chara who came out of nowhere and started living with Sans almost as soon as you ‘met’ him. None of them remembered the things you did or the times that you killed them. You were thankful for that.

But still, the idea that you could sleep with Sans in the biblical sense was almost laughable. You wouldn’t even know where to start. He’s literally a skeleton. You wouldn’t even know what to do in bed with him, let alone the other way around. He’s also a monster made of magic, which was just...weird to you. It wasn’t weird because you were totally cool with monsters, but it was weird at the same time because you just...never thought about it before. And you weren’t even an inherently sexual person. You were pretty sure that you didn’t type yourself in as someone who had sex often when you rewrote your timeline. You were way too young to even think about it back then. Then again, ‘back then’ was only a year or so ago and as much as you’d aged yourself up, you didn’t feel like it was real.

You still felt like a kid. Young and lost and trying to find a purpose now, just like you were when you fell down into the Ruins the first time. You didn’t feel like you could be in a real relationship, let alone one that close.

You didn’t feel like you deserved it.

A splash of blue registered in your peripheral and you fought yourself to look at it, keeping your eyes on the ground in front of you.

“yo.”

You didn’t reply, instead pulling your arms in on yourself to clutch your elbows. You felt horrible.

“my bro got worried when you walked out and told me to come find you.” he said, stepping into your line of sight. “good thing you didn’t go very far, i’m not really good at running after people.”

“I’ll go back in a little while.” You tell him, closing your eyes. “I just...need to calm down.”

“yeah, a conversation like that’s pretty intense.” He says, taking his hands out of his pockets. “though, if you’ve got a b-”

“I swear to god if you say the word ‘bone’ or any variant of it I will hit you.” You prattle quickly, opening your eyes and looking to the side. “And it’s none of your business.”

“you were talking about having sex with me, i’m pretty sure it’s completely my business.”

“It didn’t start that way!” You tell him, loudly. “And your timing is horrible!”

“well then, i’m curious exactly how it started,” he said, taking a step forward into your personal space. “considering that’s a pretty interesting thing to talk about with my flesh and blood.”

“You don’t have any flesh or blood.” You tell him, finally looking him in the face. He was about a foot and a half away from you and he was smirking. The bastard was enjoying this. Asshole. You
couldn’t tell him that it started with you asking about Gaster. “It started...with Papyrus asking about my ‘relationship’ with you.” You tell him, air-quoting before grabbing your elbows again. “Because he’s like, your brother and looking out for you or whatever. I told him there wasn’t anything going on between us, and then he told me that he thinks we’re like, sleeping together, and then I told him that it was impossible for that to happen. And uh...and then...you walked in.”

Silence sat between you for a few seconds, refusing to move until Sans pushed it aside.

“well it’s not impossible,” he said, shit eating grin and all "but i’d like to hear your reasonings.”

Chapter End Notes

BOOM. THERE IT IS. YOU'RE WELCOME. Now you play the waiting game.
“What do you mean ‘it’s not impossible’?” You tell him, after staring at him for a while. “It’s completely impossible. For lots of reasons. How in the world could it possibly be possible?”

“physically, for one.” He said, taking another step forward to stand only inches away from you. He put his right hand on the wall next to you. “i could explain it to you, if ya want.”

“I...shit.” If you pushed yourself up against the wall any more you’d turn into a brick. God knows you were red enough to be one. “Is this a joke? Are...are you joking right now? You’re doing this to mess me up, right? Because it’s working.”

He gave you a look, and then lowered the lids of his eyeholes. You didn’t understand how he could be so expressive when his face had no expressive muscles. “why do you think i’m joking?”

“Because you’re almost always joking.” You tell him, looking down. You can see the back of his ribcage through the collar of his shirt. “Plus...I just don’t see how you could be attracted to me. After all I did...”

“that doesn’t matter anymore.”

His words catch you off guard. Of course it mattered. You were still trying to recover from it. The whole reason you were there was because it mattered.

“listen.” His voice is calm and low, and you’re drawn to it. “your past and what you did doesn’t define you. you’re a different person who’s learned from her shit and grown because of it, but you’re still beating yourself up over it. you’re not whatever killed everyone in a galaxy far far away. you’re your own human now and you’ve got a different path ahead of you. you’ve gotta move on.”

You can’t stop staring into his eyes as he talks and you nod slowly, half-consciously.

“and as far as i’m concerned,” he continues. “i wouldn’t have offered to help you if i didn’t see any good in you. i wouldn’t have stuck around and kept an eye on you if i didn’t care about you, and i wouldn’t be standing here telling you i was attracted to you if i hated your guts.”

The words gripped your chest like a vice.

“.....You’re attracted to me?”

Sweat materialized on his skull as he looked to the side, his grin widening a bit. “uh. yeah.”
You bring your left hand up to gently place it on the arm he was leaning on.

“Why?”

He seemed to struggle for a second before the sweat beads disappeared.

“because you’re cute.”

Your grip on his arm tightens a bit and your nose wrinkles as you blush harder. He keeps talking and the low tone of his voice makes you slide a bit further down the wall.

“you laugh at my jokes, you teach my brother to cook real food, you work hard when you don’t have to, you don’t look half bad in a pair of shorts, and you’re the only person in this world who i can connect with because you know exactly what i’m going through. so yeah, i guess i got pretty attracted to you in the past two months.”

You stare at him. Your face is bright red and burning and it takes you a second to remember you have a voice. “Uh…good. That’s good...because i’m pretty sure i got attracted to you too.”

There’s several seconds of silence after the words leave your mouth, and then he starts chuckling. The chuckles turn into laughs and you’re about to ask him what the hell he thinks is so funny, but he opens his eyes and winks at you and it makes your heart flutter.

“i know.”

You feel your heartbeat once before you put your hands on the sides of his skull and plant your lips on his teeth.

You didn’t know what you were expecting. It was hard and he didn’t have lips to reciprocate but you felt him lean in anyway. He slinked one arm around your waist and pulled you in those last few inches. You wrapped your arms around his neck in kind, pulling away and resting your forehead against his. You smile at him.

“And to think, we haven’t even gone on a date yet.”

He chuckles “what are you kidding, we’ve gone on a TON of dates.”

You give him a look “Sans, no.”

“you’re not gonna stop me.”

“I swear to god.”

He winks at you again. “A skele-TON.”

“I’m breaking up with you, right now.”

He wraps his arms tighter around your waist. “you’re still smiling.”

“I know.” You say, flicking his head once. “And I hate it.”

“you sound like my brother.”

“Oh Shit!” You say, pulling your head away from his. “The chinese food. Oh god I haven’t eaten yet either.”
“well then, how about this.” He says, letting go of you to step back and put his hands in his pockets. “I’ll get you home so you can eat your dinner…” He blinked once and the white pinpricks of light in his eyes shifted, his left eye glowing bright blue instead.

“And then I’ll eat you out for dessert.”

Your knees almost crippled under you and your throat is dry when you mumble. “That shouldn’t have been as attractive as it was.”

His grin widened. “I know a shortcut, if you wanna skip the meal.”

“Your house is three blocks down the road, you don’t need a shortcut.”

He stepped forward to wrap an arm around your torso.

“Who said anything about going back to the house.”

It happened before you could react. The towering buildings that made up the alleyway disappeared in a flash to be replaced with wooden walls and white carpeting. You hated it when he teleported without warning. A quick glance behind him showed you that you were in a small house-like building that only had one room. There was a bed against the wall, a night-table, a TV, and a purple beanbag chair that looked suspiciously like the one you owned before you moved. You looked out the one window to see snow outside and it suddenly felt very familiar.

“Is this the frickin shed? Did you teleport us to the shed in Snowdin?”

He grinned sheepishly. “Yeah, I kinda turned it into a lounge after the barrier broke.” He walked backwards as he spoke, pulling you with him. “And besides, this is where captured humans go, right?”

“You do have me right where you want me.” You humor him as he turns you around, the backs of your knees hit the mattress as you fall onto it. He leans over you and puts his hands on either side of your waist. “What ever shall I do.”

“Begging is a good start.” He says, moving his hands to your waist with half-lidded eyes. He moves his head down next to your ear. “You can work your way up to screaming.”

“Ohmygod.” His voice sends a shiver down your spine and a heatwave to your core. A thought suddenly pops into your mind and you put a hand on his shoulder. “Wait, how is this even going to work?” you ask him. “I’m...not really experienced...at all, and you’re…”

You gesture to all of him and he pauses, sweat beading on his forehead.

“Well uh, not sure if you noticed, but I’m kinda literally made of magic” He said, pulling back to show you his glowing blue eye for emphasis. “Anything you want, I can do.”

You stare into it, completely mesmerized. “Right...makes sense.”

“As for your inexperience...” He stands up, tugging off his gloves and shrugging off his jacket to toss them behind him. “That’s fine, we’ll go slow. Tonight’ll be an anatomy lesson. ‘Cause frankly, I know jack shit about your body too.”

It settles in your mind that his jacket makes him look so much bigger than he is. His bones are
thick but nowhere near as big as his jacket makes him. You reach up to grab his arms and run your hands down the length of the bones. It was so bizarre to you, to have a skeleton stripping in front of you. But it wasn’t just a skeleton, it was Sans, and he was alive and made of magic and every touch of his bones sent a spark up your arms and into your chest.

“So, who’s going to be doing the teaching?” You ask him as he slips his hands under your shirt. The feeling of his phalanges sliding up your sides makes you shiver.

“well, i don’t peg you as the schoolgirl type.” He says, pulling your shirt up and over your head and chucking it like his jacket. “so you can tell me what you want and i’ll learn what makes you tick.”

“Eating me for dessert sounded like a pretty good plan.”

The words are out of your mouth before you can think and it catches you more off guard than him. He doesn’t flinch. His blue eye glows and you watch as a blue corporeal tongue slips out from under his teeth, sliding over his smug smile in an attempt to lick his own lips. The look he gives you could only be described as hungry and you’ve never seen anything more arousing in your life.

“i think I can manage that.”

He starts at your neck, trailing a slow line up from the notch at your sternum to the edge of your clavicle. His tongue was cool and slick against your skin and you hummed as his hands wrapped around you to undo your bra clasp. You could feel him leaving something wet behind as his spectral appendage explored your neck. You were one hundred percent sure it couldn’t be saliva, and when he pulled your bra off to wrap his tongue around a nipple you realized you didn’t care.

“Shit, it’s like a tentacle.” You breathe, keeping a hand on the side of his face as the other one bunches up the fabric of his shirt. It circled your breast like it had a mind of its own and his deep chuckle sent a wave of warmth coursing through you.

“hey, if you’re into that.”

“I think I might be,” You tell him as he undoes your pants and slides them down and off of you, adding them to the pile. His tongue moves to your other breast and he rubs circles on your pelvis with his thumbs, dipping under your pantyline. You gasp. “Holy fuck, I want that inside me.”

He doesn’t say anything as he trails his tongue down your body. He spreads your legs and rubs circles on the inside of your thighs as his tongue lightly traces the edge of your underwear. You buck up into his face and his grip on your thighs tighten.

“Sans, please.” you try to roll your hips up but his grip is steel, holding you down against the edge of the mattress. You almost forgot how strong he was and you prop yourself up on your elbows to look at him. He looks back at you with half lidded eyes and trails his tongue up your thigh. His gaze is hungry, wanting, and you almost forget how to breathe when his mouth tilts into a smirk.

“please, what?”

“Please ravage me with your unholy tentacle tongue.”

“bone-appetit, then.”

You almost hit him at the pun. He snaps his fingers and in an instant your underwear is gone right off of you, replaced with his tongue sliding up slowly between your lips. You shudder and bring a hand down to his head to shakily grip it as you try to buck into his tongue.
“humans are so interesting.” he says as he teases you. You don’t even wonder how he’s talking with his mouth full. Chalk it up to magic. “you have so much down here, and it’s all so soft and sensitive.”

He emphasizes himself by placing his tongue on your clit, rubbing against it. You make a sound between a gasp and a moan and your hips jerk forwards. “G-god, keep doing that.”

He listens and you moan. You want to squeeze your legs together but his hands have you pinned and you’re sure you’re going to have bone-sized bruises on them later.

“So i was reading up on the internet…” he starts, voice low and lazy as his tongue continues to circle your clit. “and it says that i can get you off just by playing with this little thing here.”

“Nnnnnnnno-oh shit~” You breathe as he pushes against it. He could, you were already worked up enough, and you whined when he pulled away. “So much for...going slo-”

You were cut off with a gasp as his tongue pressed past your labias to wiggle into you. It squirmed inside you, stretching and moving against your walls as if it had it’s own sentence. The feeling had you moaning loudly and gripping the bedspread like your life depended on it. He kept talking in that low voice that made you hot all over.

“god you make the best noises.” he praised you, taking a hand off one of your thighs to rub a phalange against your clit. You leaned back against the mattress, arching your back and moaning loudly as you could finally roll your hips forwards. “i could listen to this all night.”

“Shhhhit...S-sans i’m-ohmygod don’t stop.”

You could feel his skull flush against your crotch as his tongue wiggled inside you, pressing in far enough to rub against your g-spot and cause you to moan loudly. Between the feeling of his magic inside you and his hand playing with your clit, it didn’t take long for you to hit your peak. You closed your eyes hard enough to see spots dance on the edge of your vision as you came, waves of pleasure flooding through you as your body shook. He pushed it one step further and sent a pulse of his own magic into you, warming your entire lower body as you came down off of your high. As soon as your body stopped shaking you sat up and watched him pull his tongue out and motion to lick his own lips again. It disappeared in an instant. The blue glow in his eye disappeared and the grin he gave you would have stopped your heart if it wasn’t beating so fast.

“Christ, I think i’m in love with you...” You tell him. He chuckles and stands up, flopping down next to you on the bed. He was still wearing his shirt and shorts, which you thought was kind of unfair, but you were too exhausted to want to do anything else. “Where the hell did you learn how to do that.”

“internet.” He said plainly. He snapped his fingers again and your underwear appeared in his hands. He twirled them around on his finger. “figured it would come in handy at some point.”

You gawked at him and moved to snatch back your panties. He pulled his arm away and you ended up drooping your arm around his torso instead. “How long...have you been planning on using that information?!”

He handed you back your underwear. “bout two weeks.”

You took them and looked down at yourself. His tongue had left a strange trail of...you wanted to call it slime...down your body. He seemed to get the memo and snapped his fingers again, completely erasing it. Magic was so weird.
You put your panties back on. “How long have you known.” You ask him.

“since the first time you asked me to stay with you.”

You looked at him blankly. Did he really know, that whole time? In the week that you met him you had grown pretty fond of him, but you didn’t think your attraction to him was very obvious. Looking back though, it made sense. You moved in with him, slept in his bed, trusted him with your life and cared about him.

You were both in this together, and you had been since he met you.

He wrapped a bony arm around you and you sidled up to him, resting your head on his shoulder. You could feel his bones through the fabric of his shirt and the thought of how solid and sturdy he was put you at ease. He was like a rock. Hard when he had to be, stable, and grounded. The complete opposite of his brother.

Oh shit, his brother.

“Papyrus is still alone at the house.” You said quickly, the realization hitting you. “Oh my god we’ve been gone for like an hour and a half, he must be freaking out.”

“shit...you’re right.” he said, both of you sitting up “i really don’t want him to yell at us over this.”

You stood up to collect your bra off the floor and put it back on. “We’ll just...tell him we were on a date. It’s not like it’s wrong, right?”

“if you can call a trip to the bone zone a date.”

You glared at him as soon as the words left his mouth, but you were smiling. You quickly rounded up your clothes and got dressed, turning to him. “So help me god if that’s what you’re going to call it every time we sleep together i’m going to hit you.”

“kinky.”

You swat him against his arm and he laughs at you, taking your hand and opening the door of the shed to lead you outside.

“c’mon. i know a shortcut.”

Chapter End Notes

Guess who's an Asexual who doesn't like dicks. Its meeeeee.

This isn't over btw. Far from it. Enjoy your halloween gift of smut.
The next couple of days went by smoothly. Papyrus had happily accepted that you and Sans were ‘dating’ and had encouraged even more dates between you two, often loudly leaving the room or house in order to give you two some time alone. You didn’t really do anything when he left, just cuddling together mostly, and you hadn’t gone anywhere near where you did the first night. You were just content being around each other. You were incredibly happy with it, but something in the back of your mind ate at you. As much as you loved the solidified relationship the two of you developed, you knew there was an entire other world of secrets that he was keeping from you. You still hadn’t gotten an answer for who Gaster was, either. You wanted to ask him more, but there were clear indicators that told your mind to hold off on it. You didn’t want to make him feel worse, but you just had to know.

You already asked Papyrus, and that conversation went nowhere. It was time to ask someone who knew about the sciences behind magic.

It was time to ask Alphys.

You thought it was a good idea. Then again, the last time you thought something was a good idea you accidentally became a skeleton’s girlfriend, so really even if this was a bad idea it could still turn into something good.

You definitely thought that visiting Alphys under the guise of a girls-only Halloween sleepover with spooky stories and halloween movies was a good idea.

Unfortunately, calling it Girls Only meant that you weren’t going to get her alone. Since Undyne lived with her it only made sense that she’d join in on the fun. You expected that much.

You didn’t expect Frisk to join in, but you couldn’t say no to the kid.

So there you sat with a little vampire-Frisk in your lap, watching the end of Nightmare Before Christmas in Alphys’s darkened lab, on her big screen, with her and Undyne sitting on the couch behind you. Back when Undyne had called Alphys her girlfriend in the restaurant, you didn’t think anything of it. When you got your memories back, however, it had been a surprise to you to learn that they were actually together. You kind of knew it would happen eventually. Every time you went through the underground you could see that they obviously had a thing for each other. Even Mettaton had made it painfully obvious, but every encounter you’d had with them you never saw it go anywhere.

You silently wondered if Frisk was the one who brought them together for good.
You silently wondered what else Frisk managed to do that you couldn’t.

You were snapped out of your thoughts by Undyne’s voice.

“Man, why is it snowing there? Everything looked way cooler without all the snow over it!” she complained loudly as the movie was ending. “I thought this was supposed to be a scary movie??”?

“It’s not technically supposed to be scary.” You tell her, leaning back as Frisk crawled out of your lap to get closer to the TV. “It’s just supposed to be a story about halloween. It’s supposed to teach you to like, stay within the boundaries of what you’re good at and to not try to take over something that someone else is doing or you’ll risk terrifying everyone, or something.”

She scoffed at your answer, obviously unhappy with it. “That’s so lame. I thought this holiday was supposed to be about getting the pants scared off of you, but this isn’t scary at all!!!”

Aphys shifted next to her. “W-well...there’s not many things that scare you, anyway.” she started. “Besides...there’s more to halloween than, uh, just scary things. It’s a tradition! It’s h-history, from way back when the uh, pagans? used to live. T-they uh, dressed up in skins of animals, to scare off ghosts.”

Undyne looked almost offended at the comment. “Why would they want to scare off ghosts? Ghosts are awesome!”

You roll your eyes. “You only say that because you know one. Humans are weird when it comes to things that aren’t human.” You stood up to turn off the tv once the credits were done rolling. “Hell, monsters are a huge blow. I thought that monsters were a myth until I f-”

You paused, catching yourself at the last second. You couldn’t tell them that you fell into the ruins. They had no memory of it. They first met you at your restaurant, and that was it. They looked at you expectantly and you cleared your throat.

“Until I first saw the news about it.” You corrected “About all the monsters coming up from the underground.”

Alphys nodded in understanding. “Y-yeah. We’re probably pretty scary to a lot of humans that don’t...uh...or, didn’t, think we existed.”

“I wasn’t scared of you.” Frisk piped up, getting up from their spot in front of the tv and waddling over to Alphys’s desk. “You’re all dorks.”

“Hey!!! Who’re you calling a dork, punk!!!” Undyne got up from her spot at the couch. “You’re walking around in a cape and fake fangs. If anything YOU’RE the dork!!!”

“I am no dork!” Frisk said, grabbing the edge of their cape and pulling it in front of their face dramatically. “I am...Friskula! The ultimate scary vampire! Blah!”

You laugh as Frisk hissed at you, poorly. “Frisk, sweetie, you couldn’t be scary if you tried.”

They puffed out their cheeks at you in childish anger. “I can be scary!” they said, running out from behind the desk and all the way towards the bathroom door. “I can scare you so hard.”

“Oh no, you’re going to the bathroom, i’m terrified.” You chuckled, playing it off, but something about the atmosphere made you feel uncomfortable. You turned around to make a comment to Alphys and Undyne and stopped at their expressions. They looked...nervous. Alphys looked up at Undyne, and then back to you and Frisk.
“T-that’s uh….It’s, um, n-not a….bathroom….” She said, fidgeting as Undyne put a hand on her head.

You raised an eyebrow at her. It wasn’t a bathroom? What else was it. Not once in any of your runs did you ever go into it, but you knew for a fact that it didn’t change. Judging from her expression, it looks like it was supposed to be a secret of some sort. You looked between her and Undyne and then to Frisk in confusion. For once, you had absolutely no idea what was going on.

“What is it then?”

Alphys hesitated and Frisk answered for her.

“Itsa elevator.” they said, pressing a button behind the bathroom sign to open the doors. You immediately get up and rush over to see it. Lo and behold, a set of buttons was on the wall adjacent from you, signaling that it was actually an elevator. You gawked a bit. How did you not find this, in all of your runs. How was it that not one single time you were able to figure it out. Did you not do enough? Was it always here? You stare a bit at Frisk. How much did they change in their travel through the Underground?

You turn to Alphys, one hand on the wall next to the Elevator. “Where does it go?”

She fixed her glasses once “D-down. Into a, uh...another lab.”

Your eyes widen. Another lab? That’s definitely something you didn’t know about, at all. “You have another lab? That’s...incredible. I had no idea…”

“Most people don’t, ‘cause it’s covered with the bathroom sign.” Undyne clarified. She seemed disinterested about it but her demeanor quickly changed, as did her volume. “Holy crap!!! That’s IT!!! THAT’S how we can make tonight scary!!!” She turned Alphys, excitedly, and grabbed her shoulders. “SCARING CONTEST IN THE OLD LABORATORY!!!”

Alphys stared at her incredulously “W-w-w-what?!”

“Yeah!!!!! It’ll be perfect!!!!”

“Spooky lab party!” Frisk joined in, grabbing your arm and pulling you into the elevator. They were so excited about it, it kind of made you excited too. Excited and nervous. You had absolutely no idea what to expect from this old laboratory and the thought of what could be down there in it made you a bit...anxious.

Undyne and Alphys trailed into the elevator as Frisk pressed the button and the doors closed behind them. Undyne kept talking.

“This is going to be SO MUCH FUN!!! We can have a contest to see who can scare the new human more!!! Right??? Won’t it be fun???”

“Scary contest!!” Frisk threw their hands in the air excitedly. “I will win!!”

“Nuh uh, no way punk!!!” Undyne grabbed Frisks head and lifted them up to her eye level “You may be my bestie, but there’s no way i’m gonna lose to the likes of you!!!”

The thought of them trying to out-scare each other made you giggle. Undyne would probably win, but she’d probably intimidate more than scare. Frisk was a pretty determined kid and was used to halloween japes, so it would probably be an even draw. It’s a shame they can’t work together to even each other out.
“Hey, I have an idea.” You say to them, sidling up next to Alphys who was eying you curiously. Undyne looked at you, and then turned Frisk’s head to look at you. “Why don’t we make it a team contest?” You continue “Two vs two. You and Frisk against me and Alphys. If you can successfully scare us, then you win, but if you can’t, then we win.”

Undyne’s face lit up. “Oh my GOD. That’s an even BETTER idea!!” She put Frisk down as soon as the elevator stopped moving. “We can work together as Besties, AND win, at the same time!!”

The doors opened and Alphys spoke up. “I c-could uh, probably lead you better, down here, anyway. I know this place the b-best, and I know the best uh...places to not be scared.”

“Then it’s settled!” Undyne jumped backwards out of the elevator. “C’mon twerp, we’ve got a game to win!”

“I love Halloween!” Frisk scampered after her as she ran down the hall, leaving you and Alphys standing alone in the old elevator. You listened as the echoes of their footsteps resonated down the hallway, back to the elevator, before they were gone.

Alphys coughed beside you.

“I uh...i’m not very good at, scaring.” She admitted, shuffling her feet. “B-but, I am good at knowing my way around, s-so...”

“It’s fine.” You said, stepping out of the elevator and looking around. The air was musty and smelled like metal and some kind of cleaning chemical you couldn’t place. Not bleach, but something acidic. The walls were tinted a dark green and the hallway in front of you was long and ominous. It was like being trapped in a horror movie and it sent a small chill down your spine. It also made you giddy with excitement. “I had no idea there was a laboratory down here.”

“Y-yeah it’s...not really something I advertise.” She said, stepping out of the elevator to start walking down the hallway. You followed her, resting your hands in your jean pockets.

“So, what do you work on down here? It seems pretty like...secret.” You ask her. She rubs the back of her head.

“Oh uh...just some...old experiments with, Determination. Back when uh, b-before the barrier was broken.” She said, slowing down a bit as she walked. You looked at the glowing screens as you passed by them, taking in the information that you could as you followed behind her. Their green glow made the hallway look eerily like an alien spaceship, but you pushed that thought to the back of your mind. They were monsters, not aliens. She kept talking. “I was, t-trying to figure out a way to...c-combine a monster SOUL and a human SOUL, t-to break the barrier...”

She trailed off, giving you the chance to finish for her.

“I’m guessing it didn’t work?”

“No...”

The hallway led to a small room with three exit options. The first was a very big and obvious metal door with four glowing lights behind it. The second was a hallway off to the right, and the third was a glowing red door off to the right. She walked to the red door and it opened, and you continued to follow her.
You shrugged, even though she couldn’t see it. “Well...I guess it doesn’t matter now. Since the barrier’s broken anyway.”

The hallway after that led to a larger room, decorated with large musty looking beds. Undyne and Frisk were nowhere to be seen and you counted yourselves safe for now. You walked over and plopped down on one of the beds, smiling at her. Your smile quickly died when you saw she wasn’t smiling back. She actually looked upset. You wanted to say she looked...guilty?

“Hey, if it’s that big a deal you don’t have to tell me.” You say, lying back on the bed and putting your hands behind your head to put her at ease. She shook her head.

“N-no. I’ve...i’ve made my peace with it. I did the right thing and...and everybody’s happy now. Everybody’s happy, and that’s...good enough for me!” She said, walking over and sitting down on the bed next to yours. She was smiling slightly and it put you at ease, knowing that she was content.

Looking at her soft smile, it filled you with...relief.

But you had a mission, and you were determined to see it through.

“Hey, Alphys…” You start. “Can I ask you a question? Like...not about this whole really neat laboratory or anything just, a question.”

She fixed her glasses “Oh. Uh...sure.”

You took a deep breath. You had to approach this one carefully too. “Have you ever heard of a Gaster?”

There was silence for a while, the hum of the monitor in the back the only sound in the room for several seconds until she replied.

“Where did you hear about that?”

Her voice was quiet, shocked and stable, as she looked at you, incredulously. Her eyes were wide and she looked almost afraid. You sat up immediately. Maybe this wasn’t such a good idea after all.

“Uh...just like...in passing. Randomely.” You try to keep your voice even but it’s higher than you’d like, your nervousness creeping up to the surface. She was looking at you so strangely and you immediately regretted asking her. She knew what it was, no doubt about it, but it seemed just as touchy a subject to her as it was to Sans and you didn’t want to lose any friends. You’d just gotten them back. “Y’know what, actually. Forget I said anything and forget that question completely. It’s not that big a deal, I don’t need to know.”

She looked at you for a long while and you could feel your cheeks turning red. She seemed to notice that she was staring and adjusted her glasses a bit.

“W-well…uh…I g-guess that answers a c-couple of questions, I had about you.”

You blink at her, furrowing your brow. Did she know? Did she know who you were? Had she known this whole time? Did she remember what you did?

No. She’d be acting much different if she remembered what you did.

“What do you mean.” You ask her, moving your legs to sit pretzel style on the bed. She shuffled
her hands together.

“W-well uh. I...I’m not, blind, or anything. Really the opposite a-actually. I have...very good
eyesight and i’ve been s-sort of...paying attention, to you.” She started, shifting her weight on the
bed a bit. “You’re...just like him.”

You raise an eyebrow “Like who, Gaster? I don’t even know the guy.”

“No! But, i’ll get to that too.” She said. “No, you’re...you’re just like Sans.”

“Whoa, okay, back up. I’m nothing like Sans. First of all, I have skin.” You joke, pulling at your
arm a bit. She laughs, nervously.

“No, b-but you are. You’re always l-looking at things like...like you’ve already seen them. A-and
you’re always h-holding back things that, that i know you want to say.” She fidgets “And,
whenever you’re w-with him, or around him, you two act like uh, like you’re...like you’ve known
each other f-for, longer than, well…” She stops to take a deep breath “Even now you...you’re
looking at me like, like i’m an old friend t-too.”

You leaned back, absorbing her words. You had no idea you did that, was it that obvious? If
Alphys had noticed it then…

“W-when I met you…” She continued, cutting off your thought process. “You were different.
You...looked like you just, didn’t know a-anything uh. Anything about...any of us. B-but now you
look like he does. Like y-you know...everything.” She wrung her hands together, looking down “S-
so...I guess what i’m t-trying t-to ask is, um. Just uh…”

She swallowed once and brought her head up to meet your gaze.

“Who exactly...are you?”

Chapter End Notes

This is technically the first part of a two-chapter thing, but I figured it would be better
to post this as a chapter since it was racking up to the 3k word area. To keep you all
satiated for now and stuff. Stay tuned for the second part next.
This chapter is literally nothing but spoilers for the game. I really hope you’re as deep into this fandom as I am. Warning you now. Also, 1k Kudos???? I’m blown away!! And I’ve still got quite a bit more to go.

It was inevitable, really. No matter how hard you tried to put everything behind you it still caught up to you. Memories and nightmares of running through the underground countless times not only kept you up at night, but kept you from really connecting with anyone. It was your own fault, though. You chose to stay a part of things. You chose to stay close to the monsters that you once called your friends.

You were the one who erased yourself in the first place. You were the one who chose to put yourself back in.

You should have expected consequences for your actions instead of praying that they wouldn’t happen.

“I…”

What could you say to her. That you were friends in another life? That you’ve gone through countless runs through the underground? That you constantly reset the timeline to get a different outcome?

She’d never trust you again. She didn’t trust you now.

Her eyes bore into your soul, looking for an answer you were too reluctant to give. You had to tell her something.

“…You’ve always been very smart, Alphys.” You sighed, smiling tiredly at her. Her eyes widened a bit, your words and tone proving her speculations true. “I’ll tell you what. You tell me who Gaster is, and I’ll do my best to tell you what I can about me, alright?”

She looked at you for a second and then nodded. “A- alright…”

She took a deep breath.

“Gaster was… he was a scientist. The royal scientist before me. He w-was…brilliant, with his discoveries and experiments. It was…very hard t-to uh, fill his shoes w-when I…took over.”

You listened intently. A royal scientist before Alphys. It made sense. The blueprint in the room behind Sans’ house and the machine you used to recreate the world must have been made by a truly brilliant mind. You were invested now.

“What happened to him?” You ask her, leaning forward a bit.

She shifted nervously “I… i don’t know. He was, uh, already gone b-by the time Asgore asked me to uh…become the new scientist. Nobody um… nobody r-really talked about him? Or knew who he
was, when I asked them. It was s-sorta like he just….disappeared completely.”

“it’s better than disappearing completely…”

You blinked as Sans’ words ran through your mind, his voice just as disheartened as Alphys’s.

“…wait.” You tell her. “If nobody knew about him, then how do you know about him?”

She fidgeted, looking towards the direction of the door in the back as if hoping one of the other two would come in and save her from answering. When it was obvious nobody was coming, she turned back to you with a determined expression.

“I think, uh, the better question is...why do you know about h-him?”

You took a breath. It was now or never to let everything out.

“Sans said it once, and i got curious.” You confessed. “I wanted to ask him about it but he looked so upset. I didn’t want to make him feel worse, so I came to you.”

A small awkward silence followed you. Alphys’s eyes shifted towards the back of the room, and then back to you. “That…that’s all I can t-tell you. About him. That’s all I know...so uh…”

She trailed off, looking at you expectantly. You kicked your legs over the edge of the bed to better face the bed she was sitting on.

“Right...well. I don’t know like, what I can tell you.” You started, nervously. “I can’t tell you very much, which is a horrible thing to say, I know. I wish I could tell you a lot but I just...don’t know. You’re right though, about me holding back and looking at people. I do know everyone here.”

You watched as her eyes widened at the information. You continued.

“I know you, Undyne, Papyrus...all the monsters of the Underground. And Sans...it’s really complicated and involves a lot of space-time bullshit, but you’re right about that too. We’re closer than you think, and we have a lot in common. And I wish I could tell you everything but...that’s his side of the story. He has to tell that.”

She looked at you with confusion. The information about Sans must have been new to her. You couldn’t have her ask him about it, so you pulled it back to you.

“All I can tell you is that I did something horrible. I did something I regretted so much that I made sure it never happened and that nobody would remember it. And now...i’m trying to make up for it and put it behind me. I just want everybody to be happy. Especially Sans.” You looked at her with pleading eyes. “Please don’t tell him I asked you about this. I’m not sure how he’ll take me prying into the secret, and I’m sorry if this makes you even more skeptical of me. I just want to make up for what I did wrong. You can understand that, right?”

She did, if you went by her expression. You gave yourself a second to look around the musty bedroom. You didn’t know anything about this lab, but you knew for sure that whatever Alphys did down here, she was trying to make up for it too.

Guess you had a lot more in common with her than you thought. Maybe you could have gone back to be a better friend.

-CLANGGGGGGG-
The noise startled both of you and you jumped up off of the bed.

“What the hell was that?!” You said, looking at every exit point. Alphys stood up next to you.

“I-I don’t know. I hope they d-didn’t break anything.”

You walked to the back of the room towards the door. “I think it came from this direction.”

She followed you and quickly took the lead, turning left at the fork and hurrying down the hallway. There were a lot of hallways here, you noticed. Sure enough, you soon saw Frisk running down the hallway, vampire cape flapping behind them.

“Alphyyyyyssssss!” They yelled, stopping in front of you and grabbing onto Alphys’s lab coat. “Undyne broke a thing!”

“Oh no…” She said as Frisk pulled her along down the hallways. “N-not the refrigerators…”

“‘S not a fridge. ‘S a machine!” Frisk clarified as they rushed ahead of you. You were too distracted by the gigantic red bird-head looking machine suspended from the ceiling. You stopped in front of it, trying to take it in. The thing was massive.

You checked the plaque on the wall to see if it gave any indications, but it wouldn’t turn on. You flicked it, once, to see if it would work, and it flashed to life. The screen was different than all of the others and radiated white as symbols began to slowly trail themselves across the screen. You looked at them carefully, trying to figure out what they were supposed to mean when it hit you.

You’d seen the symbols before.

They were the same symbols on the blueprint in Sans’s hidden room.

You couldn’t read them then, but as your eyes scanned over the shaky, floating symbols you could hear a voice in the back of your head, reading them to you. Telling you what they meant.

"ENTRY NUMBER SEVENTEEN"

The symbols disappeared, replacing themselves as more blotted themselves across it. The noise it was making sent a chill down your spine, but you couldn’t turn away.

"DARK"
"DARKER"
"YET DARKER"
"THE DARKNESS KEEPS GROWING"

You took a step back, an uneasy feeling settling in the pit of your stomach.

"THE SHADOWS CUTTING DEEPER"
"PHOTON READINGS NEGATIVE"
"THIS NEXT EXPERIMENT"
"SEEMS"
"VERY"
"VERY"
"INTERESTING"

The screen blinked as three dots appeared in the middle of it.
As soon as the question flashed across your mind, the screen died and you took in a breath you didn’t know you were holding. What were those messages? What did they mean?

You suddenly felt very unsafe. You looked around to see where Alphys went, but there was nobody around you. The only thing keeping you company in the musty worn hallways were the quiet hums of the monitors you’d passed on your way. You held your hands to your chest as you looked around, taking two steps back from the monitor and hurrying into the next room.

The amount of relief that washed over you when you saw the other three at the end of the hall, was big.

The amount of anxiety that washed away the relief when you saw what they were standing next to, was bigger.

Frisk was right, Undyne had definitely broken a machine. There was a huge fist-sized dent in the side of it when you got closer, and you could hear Undyne explaining her case.

“..when it didn’t do anything I hit it. I thought it would like, jog it into working but it’s just sitting here doing nothing???”

“it wasn’t here when I was here before.” Frisk piped up, poking at it. “Snowdrake’s mom was here last time.”

Aphys circled it, investigating up and down. “w-well...i don’t remember, using anything like this. And...and it looks c-completely broken..”

You moved to stand in front of the machine as Undyne spoke.

“Yeah well...if it wasn’t here before then why’s it here now?!”

“I don’t know…” She said turning to you. You immediately put on your best confused face at her and shrugged, making an indistinct ‘iunno’.

“Whatever it is, it’s jacked now.” You said, walking up to run your hand along the fist-dent. It was insane how strong Undyne was. This was solid steel and she bent it in like it was nothing. A yawn from your left pulled your eyes away from the dent, towards Frisk. They were rubbing their eyes, exhausted. You smiled softly and put a hand on Frisk’s head, ruffling their hair. “We can figure it out tomorrow though, when it’s not butts-ass late and when this little monster-saver doesn’t have school.”

Undyne scoffed. “Yeah, I guess. Man, we waited so long to scare you guys and you never even came back here. What were you even doing?!!?!”

You and Alphys looked at each other. “Just uh, talking.” You tell her. “She was telling me about the lab, and showing me around. It’s really...overwhelming.”

“Y-yeah…” Alphys agreed. “Um...Undyne uh, why d-don’t you take Frisk back upstairs, and put them to bed while I um...I-look at the machine more.”

“I’ll stay with her. I still wanna look around.” You offer. She squints at you suspiciously, but seems to take the idea.

“Alright, but if ANYTHING happens to her, human, i know where you live! Come on twerp.” She
said, ushering a sleepy Friskula out behind her. You returned your attention to the machine the second they were out of sight. What was it doing here. It didn’t belong down here.

You felt a tug on your shirt and looked at Alphys, who quickly moved her hand away.

“...I s-saw your face...when you looked at it.” She said. “You know w-what this is, don’t you?”

You took a deep breath and sighed heavily, looking between her and the machine.

“Yeah.” You told her. “I do.”

That seemed to worry her, and she furrowed her brows and fidgeted with her hands. “Is it...is it dangerous?” She asked you. You knew she wanted to ask what it was but she was respecting your boundaries, and you secrecy. You were grateful for that.

You took one look at the dent in the side of the machine. The machine you used to reset the whole world. The machine that belonged in the back of Sans’ house, but wasn’t there anymore.

“Nah.” You told her, putting your hands in your pockets and heading towards the door.

“Not anymore.”
Manipulated Vacillation

Chapter Summary

Sometimes memories fade and sometimes memories change, and then sometimes they're not really memories at all.

Chapter Notes

I was at a convention for a weekend and then I blasted this out. Just a few more chapters to go until the end guys. I’m going to once again ask anyone who comments to keep their speculations and questions out of the comments section, thanks!!

The warmth of Hotland was something that you enjoyed in bursts. Too much was too much, no matter what you were wearing. You could have been wearing a tank top and shorts and you still would have been sweating bullets. The fact that you were wearing a long sleeved shirt and jeans just made the heat worse. Of course, the heat radiating off of Alphys’s metal coated lab wasn’t helping. You looked up at the stainless steel building and tried to remember why you stepped outside in the first place. You were going to grab something from the MTT resort, right? in whatever case, you should have dressed better. You kept telling yourself to dress down whenever you went to go visit Hotland, but your visits were scarce there. The anxiety and paranoia of coming off too friendly with any of the monsters kept you pretty isolated. You still didn’t feel like you really deserved to be their friend, and it ate at you inside.

You couldn’t let your past go, no matter how hard you tried. No matter how hard you wanted to the information gnawing away at your soul just made you feel guilt half the time. Guilt and regret and a horrible third feeling when you knew you couldn’t tell anyone. You really wanted to tell everyone, though. You wanted to tell them what you did and then deal with their consequences after, instead of hiding behind a veil of lies and a mask that belonged to the person you wanted them to see you as. The fact that you had to lie to them hurt you more than you let on.

Confiding in Alphys was a start. You weren’t sure she really trusted you, but she knew enough for the distrust to settle. She was a nice person, you knew that, but the back of your mind told you that she was never really going to 100% trust you unless you came completely clean. The information you gave her was just enough to set a seed of doubt and the thought that it could grow into something worse terrified you.

The thought that you could also completely lose her if you told her what you did terrified you more.

You couldn’t risk the damage, not when you finally got everyone back.

You were pulled out of your languishing thoughts as a grey blob appeared in your field of vision, causing you to flinch backwards a bit. You looked up to see a grey colored monster, holding another smaller monster and just...standing there. You survey the area around you and notice that you’d walked down towards the R1 elevator. You didn’t remember when you started walking. You
didn’t remember leaving the lab at all.

You turn your attention back to the grey monster and shuffle your feet awkwardly.

“Uh...hi?” You offer, taking a closer look at the guy. He looked like the same monster that bought a spider donut from Muffet way back when you first started running around the Underground. You would have mistaken him for him if he wasn’t different shades of grey, or holding a small blob with a face on it. You look behind you towards Alphys’s lab, and then back to the immovable monster. “Um...If you’re looking for Alphys I think she’s busy right now.”

The blob wiggled, bouncing up and down slightly. “Alphys...” It said. The man who was holding it, now that you looked, had no eyes. You took a step back, the monotone of the voice sending a chill down your spine. “Alphys,” the blob repeated. “might work faster. But the old royal scientist, W.D Gaster?”

You blinked at it as it paused, retaking your step as you tried to comprehend what you’d just heard. “You...you know about Gaster?” You asked it. It wiggled again, giving no indication that it actually heard you.

“One day, he vanished without a trace.” It told you. “They say he shattered across time and space.”

You were stunned, literally paralyzed in place. You wanted to move but you couldn’t. The grey monster had your full attention and you couldn’t tell if you were stuck because you didn’t want to leave, or if you were stuck because it didn’t want you to go. You watched the blob continue to bounce, mesmerized.

“Ha ha...” the blob turned itself to look at you head-on. “How can I say so without fear?”

The smile on it’s face twisted slightly and it seemed to look up at you from its place.

“I’m holding a piece of him right here.”

You didn’t get a chance to ask him what he meant. You blinked once and he was gone, along with the weight preventing you from moving. You took a step back, whipping your head in every direction to see where he could have possibly gone, but he was nowhere to be found. Panicked, you backtracked, heading straight for Alphys’s lab doors and running smack into them when they didn’t automatically open.

“Alphys!!” You banged on the door with your fist. “Alphys, let me in!! Something really weird just happened and I’m not okay!!”

There was no sound from the other side and it made you panic more. What was Alphys doing? The doors were always unlocked, almost every time you tried them. She couldn’t have been away, she normally had them unlocked too.

Was it retribution for what you didn’t tell her? and what the hell was up with that guy? You turned back around, taking a deep breath as you stared at the spot the grey monster disappeared from. Did you hallucinate it? Was he really even there? You walked back over and stared at the elevator and it’s orange-toned blinking lights and took a breath. You weren’t going crazy, you were just having a bad time.

Wait a second...

You pulled out your phone and immediately quick-dialed Sans, your hand shaking a bit as you put the receiver to your mouth. You started rambling as soon as you heard him pick up.
“Sans? Ohmygod, the weirdest thing just happened to me and i’m sort of having a panic attack over it.” You told him, not giving him a chance to speak “Is there any way you could find a shortcut to Hotland, behind Alphys’s lab, because i’m...I think i’m going nuts and I just, need a quick way out of here before i lose it completely.”

You wait for an answer on the other end but it doesn’t come. The speaker fizzes and pops with static for several seconds and then dies. You stare at the five bar reception on your phone as it buzzed. There’s no way you could have a faulty connection. Alphys’s lab always had perfect signal. She made your phone, she had her own tower. This had never happened to you before.

You angrily pocketed your phone and looked up the metal elevator tower, which seemed your only way out.

You pressed the button and waited. The third floor had the most options to leave Hotland. You’d go there.

Your panic hit you again as you stared at the second grey figure, right outside the doors to the L3 elevator. He looked like the guy from MTT resort who was drinking water off of the ficus in the back, but you knew he wasn’t the same guy. That monster wasn’t grey, and it didn’t have a thousand-yard stare off into the distance. You remember him looking at you at least once.

You went to walk around him but you stopped yourself when you looked him in the eyes. You could feel your heart beating quickly as you stopped, looking him in the eye as you were once again rooted into place. You wanted to move, to speak, to ask him what was going on and whether or not he was related to the other monster.

But most importantly, you wanted to ask him about Gaster. Some part of you knew that he would tell you.

Your suspicions proved true when he opened his mouth.

“It makes sense why Asgore took so long to hire a royal scientist.” He said, his mouth the only thing moving. You were pretty sure he wasn’t even breathing. “After all, the old one...Dr. Gaster. What an act to follow!”

You could hear the feigned enthusiasm in his voice as he kept his eyes forward, face and body an unmoving blank slate minus the vent on his face.

“They say he created the CORE.” He said. “However, his life...was cut short.”

‘Why’, was the only question on your mind. You willed it at the monster as hard as you could and hoped for an answer when he went to speak again.

“One day, he fell into his creation, and…” He trailed off and looked at the ground. You waited for him to speak again, silently asking him to finish his sentence when he raised his eyes to look at you again. To your dismay, he didn’t, instead speaking quietly, as if someone was listening.

“Will Alphys end up the same way?”

Your paralysis left you like a gust of wind. You took several steps back, far enough to distance
yourself from the monster but still keeping a foot or so away from the edge of the walkway.

“What do you mean, ‘will she end up the same way?’” You asked him, keeping your hands balled against your chest. “Why are you telling me this? What does any of that have to do with me?”

His eyes seemed distant as he gazed right through you, sending a chill down your spine as he whispered again.

“Will Alphys end up the same way?”

You couldn’t take it. You ran off to your right, passing Muffet’s abandoned pastry bench and stopping when you saw the same monster, holding the donut before him in shock. You took a step back and chanced a glance at the elevator, just in case, and gasped sharply when you saw the second grey monster had disappeared.

Monsters don’t just disappear. Not monsters like that. They weren’t Sans, they couldn’t teleport. Or could they? And why were they even there in the first place? Why were you even in hotland in the first place? Nothing was making any sense to you. Grey monsters popping in and telling you information about someone who supposedly didn’t exist was just a bit too much for you. It was slowly starting to become a nightmare.

But you didn’t have nightmares like these. This was new, uncharted territory of memories of encounters you never had. The unfamiliarity of the scene terrified you. You were so accustomed to running through scenarios you’d remembered over and over again, but this was nothing like that. You felt dreamy, sure, maybe even lucid, but you didn’t feel like it was your dream at all. You didn’t feel like it was your nightmare.

You felt like you were dealing with something else entirely, and that thought scared you the most.

You stood at the entrance to the elevator once more, thinking as your eyes studied the metal horned top. If this wasn’t a dream and if someone else was in play here, then it made sense that they were trying to tell you something. It was pretty obvious that that something was about Gaster, but the question was why.

You didn’t question it when your hand moved to the elevator button.

You were determined to get an answer.

“I understand why Asgore waited so long to hire a new Royal Scientist.” The grey blob said. You didn’t recognize him when you first saw him. He was new, very new.

You planted your feet, not afraid of turning to stone this time. “Why did he wait so long?”

The grey monster wiggled, just like the first one. “The previous one...Dr. Gaster. His brilliance was irreplaceable.” it told you. “However, his life...was cut short.”

“So I’ve been told.” You addressed him. You couldn’t tell whether or not he was actually paying attention to you. He seemed to be...missing something. His words sounded prerecorded,
predetermined.

“One day, his experiments went wrong, and…”

It trailed off just like the last grey monster, voice dropping at the end. You took in a breath.

“And what?” You asked him, becoming irate. “What happened to him? Why did he disappear?!”

It wiggled again, it’s eyes focused on something off in the distance. “Well, I needn’t gossip.” It said, voice close to a whisper.

“After all, it’s rude to talk about someone who’s listening.”

You woke with a jolt, panting and sweating. It was dark, your clock said two in the morning and you were in a bedroom, in a bed next to a half-dressed Sans who was staring at you with obvious worry on his face. You looked him up and down, eyes lingering on his ribcage for a second.

It was a dream. It was actually a dream. Or a nightmare. Or something, but it wasn’t real.

You didn’t know if you were relieved or terrified at the fact that it was all in your head.

“you alright?” he asked you, calmly holding out his hand for you. You pushed it away. Naming the bones in his hand wouldn’t help you here. You’d already memorized them and it wouldn’t stop you from thinking about it. He looked between you and his hand, putting it down. “that bad huh...was it the fight with me?”

“No it...it wasn’t…” You start, taking a breath. You wanted to tell him about it, you really did, but you didn’t feel like you could. You didn’t want to lie to him either. You were so sick of lying to everyone. You bunch your hands into the blanket, looking down.

“I can’t...do this anymore.”

“what.” His voice was low and quiet. A question afraid of the answer. You gave it anyway.

“I’m just so tired, of everything. I can’t...i can’t get rid of my memories and my guilt from them. I can’t move on from it. I don’t know why it’s still holding me down but I just can’t do it anymore.”

You tell him, fists balled so hard you could feel your knuckles tensing. “I don’t want to keep hiding who I am from everyone, I don’t want to pretend like i don’t know them as well as I do. I don’t want to keep having these nightmares and I...I don’t even know what’s going to happen to me in the future.”

Your cheeks feel wet and it registers in your head that you’re crying, and that just makes you feel worse.

“I c-can’t….do this. I’m not.....i’m not s-strong enough. I’m n-not determined enough. Everything’s just...none of this feels l-like it’s...going to s-stay. I feel l-like...like i’m in a hell that I m-made for myself, and this is m-my punishment. I can’t d-do this anymore! I’m n-never going t-to...i’m never gonna be free...”

You sniffled and sobbed into your arms as Sans watched you have another breakdown. You had them before, occasionally with nightmares, but this one was the worst. He looked like he wanted to
hug you, but if he did he’d break you.

You were pretty sure you were already broken and that he’d just be hugging an empty shell.

He gently put his hand over one of yours, curling his fingers around it to hold it. You released your death grip on the blanket to let it be held and you stayed like that for a while, sobbing at your situation while the phalanges of his thumb massaged the back of your hand. When you’d finally stopped crying you leaned on him, hugging him tightly, and he let you.

“i’m sorry.” He said after a while “believe me, kid. i know how much it hurts just as much as you.” he told you, stroking your hair as you buried your forehead into his clavicle with a sniffle. “it sucks, not being able to tell your friends stuff they don’t remember. you can’t bring it up because you’re not sure if they’ll believe you or if they’ll start acting different because of it. and it eats at you, just like it’s doing now. I’m sorry you’re still suffering.”

“I hate that you know exactly how i’m feeling.” you tell him. “You knowing as much as I do just makes me feel worse.”

“why?”

You lift your head off of his shoulder. “Because...I wrote this world with a happy ending for everybody. It’s the one way I could make up for what I did. But with you...you knowing all the stuff I do, all the timelines I killed you and your brother and having to tote that around too? Knowing that you can still feel like i’m feeling right now just makes me feel horrible.” You look him in the eyes. “You’re supposed to be happy too. I want you to be happy more than anyone.”

The look he gave you was one of confusion, and then understanding. You hoped it was understanding. You wanted him to understand.

“i already told you, we’re not gonna be completely happy. you and i have gone through some shit. it’s hard to get over that, but as long as i’m here you won’t have to go through it alone.”

“But what about you?” You ask him. “You keep worrying about me but you never show any signs of relapsing like this. You don’t ever look like you’re having a problem. How am I supposed to help you when your smile never leaves your face?”

The question seemed to catch him off guard a bit and he brought up a hand to scratch behind his head, sweat beads forming on it. “well...i don’t have a lower jaw...so the smile really can’t go anywhere.”

You hit him halfheartedly on the shoulder and he chuckles, but keeps talking.

“i don’t sleep anymore, so as far as nightmares go, you can’t do much else there either.” He shrugged and took one of your hands, carefully. Everything he did with you was so gentle and careful. “all i need you to do is stay here with me. you’re my reminder that we’re still moving forward. you’re the only evidence i have that everything’s not gonna end up resetting itself all over again. you being here is enough.”

There’s a slow heat that creeps up onto your face as he looks into your eyes. He means every word, you can feel it. You lean your forehead against his. “That’s a lot of pressure to put on one person.”

“you can handle it.”

You closed your eyes as he ran a hand through your hair. You both were really in this together. Even still, you had a lot to think about. Your conversation with Alphys, the nightmare you just had
involving the grey monsters and their weird words of Gaster based wisdom, the machine suddenly appearing in a place you’d never been before.

You needed a long while to breathe and think.

“Hey.” You say, opening your eyes. “I think I wanna take a walk.”

He looks at you, and then the clock. “at two thirty in the morning?”

“I’ve done weirder.” you argue, unwrapping yourself from him as you kicked your legs over the side of the bed. “I just...wanna take some time to think by myself. I’ve got a lot to handle and I wanna think of what I’m gonna do next.” You tell him, walking over to your dresser to put on socks and shoes. You’ll walk around in your pajama shirt and pants, no big deal. You would not walk around barefoot.

“you sure you wanna go out this late, after all that?” he says, also kicking his legs over the edge. “i could come and keep you company, y’know.”

You shake your head, smiling at his concern. “I’m with you every night, i’ve got more of your company than I know what to deal with. But I am gonna need your help getting where I want to go...” You tell him, turning around.

“Think you can make a shortcut to Waterfall?”
This chapter’s going to be short in anticipation of the next one. Sorry for the quick read, there’s just so much stuff to get out and timing how it gets out is a big part of the story right now.

You expected it to be busier. Considering the fact that humans were open to wandering the Underground now, you thought that you would have at least seen a few when you entered the dark watery land. The fact that the monsters had all but deserted the Underground once the surface was available probably added to the desolation. Part of you regretted telling Sans to stay home, but the other part of you was grateful for the chance to really be alone for once.

Back when you had first entered Waterfall, you remembered feeling nervous. The dark walls engraved with the history of monsters and the bright radioactive looking waters were spooky and mildly unwelcoming. You’d fought Undyne countless times here, it was only natural you would have felt apprehensive. But now, looking at the bioluminescent bubbles floating up from the bright waters, it didn’t fill you with any negative thoughts. The echoes of the water bouncing off of the narrow walls pulled at your mind instead.

It filled you with...nothing.

The black pathways and brightly lit fungi that dotted the walls didn’t give you any determination. They served as a passageway into the curling corridors of the marsh, and that was it. You wished that you could feel the wonder that you’d felt the first time you looked at them, with wide eyed curiosity and the feeling that everything was new. Brushing your hand on one of the mushrooms lining the walls, you felt a sad nostalgia for Waterfall instead. A sad nostalgia that lulled you into serious contemplation.

What was happening to you? That was the first of many questions to pop in your mind. It seemed like everything in your life was moving too fast. Your life was turned completely upside-down in the course of a week, and in the course of two months you’d had more anxiety ridden breakdowns than you ever remember having.

Truthfully, you just wanted to forget everything completely. That was the whole reason you reset the timeline in the first place. You wanted to live a normal life, a busy life, one that kept you as far away from monsters as possible. A life that kept everybody happy and away from you so you wouldn’t have to suffer for what you’d done, but that got fucked right the hell up.

You triapsed along the dark pathways, the glowing of the crystals in the walls bouncing off of your pajamas and gave a pale glow to your skin. Listening to the sounds of the streams calmed you as you looked up at the crystals that speckled the ceiling. They were a poor substitute for stars. They were beautiful though, even if they weren’t an actual sky, and it had been a long time since you’d seen them. The purple and blue glittering geodes sent you back into your thoughts.

And what of your memories, you wondered. Was the burden of knowing everything your real punishment? Was the pain of knowing you couldn’t really be who you used to something that you were just meant to bear? And what of the new Gaster mystery? Why had everything about it
happened so suddenly as soon as you heard his name? Did you somehow have a connection to whoever he was? There were so many questions spinning through your head that you couldn’t wrap your mind around. And the fact that everything seemed to revolve around you made you feel dizzy and sick. Then again, you were the one who looked for the answers, so really you did this to yourself.

Your brooding stopped when you came to a field of echo flowers, the whispers that bounced off of the walls of the room overpowering your own thoughts. They still spoke of wishes, promises and dreams of the future. The room hadn’t been touched since the monsters left the underground, so it seemed. You touched one of the petals on the flowers, mesmerized by it’s glow and the soft voice that echoed out of it, talking of hopes and dreams and wishes, and you were struck with an idea.

If you couldn’t tell your friends about your worries and your past, maybe you could tell somebody else.
Once upon a time

Chapter Notes

It has been advised to listen to Track 71 of the Undertale OST while reading this.

"Long ago, two races ruled over Earth: Humans and Monsters."

"One day, war broke out between the two races."

"After a long battle, the humans were victorious, and they sealed the monsters underground with a magic spell."

"Many years later, a human fell into the ruins of the underground."

"The fallen human woke in the dark, and was met by a yellow flower with a friendly face."

"The flower revealed that the human had an ability that no one else had."

"They had the ability to Save."

"The human, with the information of their ability, traversed the Underground, guided by their Determination."

"In their quest they met monsters who would soon become their friends."

"However, in their travels they had learned of another ability they possessed."

"The ability to Reset."

"The human realized, as they approached their goal, that if they’d completed their mission, they would no longer be able to spend time with the friends they had made."

"Stricken with the realization, the human called upon their power to reset, and sent the timeline back to the beginning."

"They kept doing this, each time running through differently, discovering new encounters and conversations with each run."

"They had become enamored with the idea of never ending their adventure, and continued to reset and save wherever and whenever they wanted."

"The power that whatever they did wouldn’t matter and could eventually be sent back to the beginning ended up going to the human’s head, until one day they had an idea."

"If things weren’t going to matter anyway, why not go through the Underground with a different mindset?"
"Instead of going through and making friends, what if they went through with the intent to kill?"

"Since they would inevitably reset, what would it matter anyway?"

"This was the thought process that would start the human’s downfall."

"They began to spiral, making it a point not to kill everything they saw, but everything that existed."

"Their omnicide would see them sparing no one, not even the one who claimed to be their best friend."

"In the end, all was lost, and the human had succeeded in killing everyone they had once come to care about."

"With the thought on their mind that they could simply reset, they went to go back one last time."

"The human wasn’t prepared for what would await them at the end of their killing spree."

"At the end of their journey the human had come to realize the gravity of what they’d done."

"Their timeline did not belong to them anymore, but the monster they had created."

"Filled with grief, the human tried to correct their mistakes and purge the demon that had taken control of them, but even resetting couldn’t save them."

"The sins of what they’d done had set deep in their Soul, and no matter what they did, nothing could get rid of the feeling of knowing what they had done."

"Upon further examination of the underground, the human came to discover a machine, locked away in a place nobody was supposed to find."

"The machine, once requirements had been met, gave the human the ability to not only reset the timeline, but to indefinitely change it."

"Once requirements had been met, It gave them the opportunity to erase what they had done, and give the monsters they’d come to love a new hope at becoming free."

"With a heavy heart full of regret, knowing that they would never be able to return, the human set about to change the world, one last time."

"They pulled themselves out of the equation, and put someone else in their place."

"Someone with the ability to help the monsters they loved, and who could bring them new memories."

"With the help of the new human, the barrier preventing the monsters from escaping the Underground was broken."

"They were free to pursue their lives above the surface with nothing but goodness in their
hearts."

"The wreckage the old human had caused were erased. The monsters were given their bright future."

"They had finally been saved."

"The old human had been forgotten in the new world, their memories erased and their life brand new."

"It was as if nothing had ever happened, and that's exactly how it should have been."

“One day, a year in the future, the human came upon two monsters, who had once been their friend.”

“Memories of them lost, they welcomed them into their lives anew.”

“But soon after their contact, the human’s memories came flooding back to them, sending them into an endless spin of nightmares as retribution for what they had done.”

"The nightmares plagued the human, and the shock of remembering who they were set deeply into their Soul."

"But they were determined to not let it overcome them."

“Months passed and the human had once again become friends with the monsters. The only tradeoff for their friendship was the knowledge that they did not remember them.”

“Except one.”

“One monster had remembered, and had made it their job to watch over the human, to prevent anything happening to anybody.”

“With the monster's help, the human was no longer alone in their suffering, and the promise for a better tomorrow was made between them.”

“Mind set on restitution, the human made a vow to make up for their sins, and to keep their friends happy in their new and shining world.”
Budding conflict

Chapter Notes

I regret absolutely nothing and revel in your reactions to this chapter. btw, I'm gunning for 20k hits before this story ends. Help me get there dudes!!!!

You released the last echo flower, running your hand down its stem before walking away from your story. It had taken you a while to think of exactly how you were going to word it, but you figured if anyone was going to come down here, they'd appreciate the effort. Taking a breath and looking down at the lines of flowers you poured out your heart to, you felt calmer. Somehow, telling flowers that couldn't talk back made you feel infinitely better, like the weight had been lifted off of your shoulders.

You got it all off of your chest, and it felt good. It wasn’t telling your friends, but it was something. Letting out your worries to the blue glowing flowers had put you at ease and, for the first time in a very long time, filled you with Determination.

You sighed contentedly as you pulled your phone out of the waistband of your pajama pants, shooting off a text to Sans to tell him you felt better, and were thinking about heading back soon.

“I think...i’m gonna be okay…” You muse out loud, running a hand through your hair. The platinum blonde colour was starting to fade out and your natural roots were growing in. You’d fix that later, eventually. Maybe you’d do something different to it too. Maybe you’d dye it pink, or blue. Or both. Whatever you chose, you were sure you’d be okay with it.

You were about to tell Sans to come and pick you up, but the sound of someone giggling interrupted you. It was a soft sound, but it stopped you in your tracks.

“That was a pretty neat story!”

You whip your head around to find the echo flower behind you gone, replaced by a yellow flower, smiling up at you. You recoil, taking several steps back.

“Flowey!”

He winked at you, swaying in his spot. “I thought for sure that you were gonna end with ‘and they lived happily ever after’, but you don’t deserve that kind of an ending do you?” he told you, grinning a sadistic grin.

“What are you doing here?” You ask him. “What do you want?”

“Awww, that’s no way to talk to someone you haven’t seen in a while.” He tells you, tilting himself sideways. “After all, we’ve got a lot of catching up to do, don’t we?”

You go to send the text to Sans but your phone is knocked out of your hands by a vine. You dive for it but another vine stops you, knocking you back into the wall of the cavern and holding you there. You glare at Flowey from his spot on the ground, dark green vines now sprouting around him. Was he always able to do that? He popped into the ground and popped back up much closer to
you, stretching himself up to look you in the eye.

“You’re probably wondering why I’m here.” He told you, vines curling around your legs and arms to pull them back against the wall. Struggling was useless here. “And y’know, there’s so much you have to learn first. I guess little old me will have to tell you!”

You try to pull your arms off of the wall but nothing happens. You can feel panic rising in your chest as he starts his monologue.

“You don’t know what happened down here, with Frisk, do you?”

You shake your head and he laughs.

“Of course you don’t.” He says, leaning away from your face. “You see, little Frisk ended up sparing all of the monsters in the kingdom, including me! And for a while, I wondered why they would possibly spare someone who tried so hard to kill them. But really, I only tried so hard to kill them because I thought they were you.” He emphasized his last word by pulling you harder against the wall, pressing against your lungs with his vines and causing you to gasp for air. He snickered at your pain and kept going. “But when I realized that they weren’t, I got upset. I wondered, what had happened to the human who had made it their goal to destroy everything, hm? What happened to the Chara that killed me.”

He released you from the wall, only to throw you against the opposite one. Your head hit it hard and you hissed in pain.

“So I got curious, was this really all there is? A world where monsters and humans could live together on the surface? And most importantly, were you really gone?”

You could see your phone from your place against the wall and watched the screen go from blue to black. You weren’t going to get any help here. Flowey saw where your gaze was and picked up the phone, wrapping it in a green tendril and throwing it down the corridor. He redirected his gaze to you.

“And y’know, being spared by Frisk was pretty boring. What was I going to do, now that the surface world was available? It got me thinking, about a lot of things, but mostly about you. And I wondered, what if you still existed? What if, somewhere in this brand new world, you were still alive? So I set a new goal. To find you, and make you suffer for what you did to me.”

Vines wrapped around your neck and kept themselves there, the threat of cutting off your oxygen sending panic through your entire body.

“And guess what, I did!” He said, smiling right in your face “I mean, I didn’t know it was you for sure. Took me a long time of surveillance to see whether or not it was you, but I could tell. I knew it by the look in your eyes. That look you’re giving me right now’s pretty great too!”

His face contorted into something evil, but you’ve seen it before. It didn’t terrify you as much as you thought it should have. The ringing of your phone down the corridor took your attention away from him, but he put himself right back in your line of sight and held your attention.

“I mean, did you really think all of this was a coincidence?” He said, lifting you from the wall to hover over the ground. You struggled harder to break free, but more vines wrapped around you, cocooning your body below your waist. “You getting your memories back, finding those files, finding the skeleton brothers. It was all predetermined!”

“What?!” You question him, incredulously.
He laughed at you. “Oh yeah. All of it was a plot, a ploy! To make you suffer for what you did. And guess what, it worked!”

You glare at him and struggle again. “And how the hell do you know that?!”

He giggled and got right in your face, close enough that you could smell the petals of the flower he was attached to.

“Because i’m the one who made it all happen.”

The words cut through you and your mind stopped working, the realization slicing through you with a pain as sharp as the knife you had killed him with. His grin widened.

“Oh yes. I was the one who sent Papyrus down the same street you were shopping on. I was the one who put the files and the knife in your file cabinet. I was the one who moved the machine from Sans’ garage to the abandoned lab. All so I could sit back and watch you fall into a suffering depression that you’d hate so much you’d want to kill yourself over.”

“Why…”

The question left your mouth weakly and his face changed back to his happy smile.

“Why?” He parroted. “Well, that’s easy. Because I wanted revenge!”

The vines squeezed you hard and you yelled in pain.

“In this world, it’s kill or be killed!! I was already killed once, so now it’s time to return the favor!!” He said, thorns appearing on the vines to dig into your skin. It burned and you hissed at the searing pain. “And wow, would you look at that. Killing you with all of your memories back is way more satisfying than killing you when you didn’t know anything. And the best part is, nobody’s going to save you this time!”

You were crying again, out of fear and remorse. This was it this time. This was how you were going to die. Right after you’d made amends with yourself you were going to be wiped off the face of the earth by Flowey.

Then again, you figured, there were worse ways to die. He laughed demonically and summoned white pellets around you one last time.

“Now, die, once and for all.”

You braced yourself for impact, squeezing your eyes shut and tensing your body, hissing more as the thorns cut deeper.

You waited, but nothing came.

Opening your eyes you saw Flowey enveloped in a deep blue light, the white pellets around him stuck to the floor. You looked to your left and saw Sans emerge from down the hallway, holding your now cracked phone. Flowey tried to turn his head to look at him, but failed as he was pulled to the ground, along with the vines that held you. You fell with them, landing on them in a heap and cursing. Sans walked up to you, helping you up. His left eye was coated in blue flames and his smile was grim when he spoke to you.

“it’s not very nice to ignore a phone call, buddy.”

“Yeah, sorry.” You leaned on him with most of your weight, looking down at your bloodspattered
pajamas as you tried to catch your breath. He handed you back your phone. “I was kinda...tied up. What took you so long?”

“i was listening to a story. it was a pretty good one.” He told you before turning to Flowey, glaring at him. “and you, gimme one good reason why i shouldn’t blast you to kingdom come.”

Flowey looked terrified, and you had no sympathy for him. He was the one who ruined your life. He was the one who started this crazy story. You wanted Sans to blast him right there right now, but he spoke up quickly.

“Because, I can tell you how to get Gaster back.”

Both of you stepped back in shock. You saw Sans twitch and take a step forward.

“explain.”

Flowey laughed nervously, his pellets and thorns disappearing as his eyes shifted to you. “I know, she’s been looking. Asking around, asking Alphys. She’s been trying to find him too.”

Sans looked at you with a facial expression you couldn’t place. Seeing it with his eye ablaze made you nervous. “I...I was just curious! I wanted to ask you about it but...you just looked so sad when you said his name. I didn’t want to make you feel worse.”

He raised an eye-bone at you, questioningly. “you asked Alphys?”

“Yes!” you told him. “And there’s a lot of things i need to talk to you about but right now can we focus on him first?”

He looked at you for a second and nodded, both of you turning your attention back to the gravitized flower on the floor. He’d sunk back into his original flower form while you were talking.

“Yeah, and uh...that machine, in Alphys’s lab?” He said, hesitantly. “It’s not broken. Not really.”

“machine?” Sans questioned.

“He moved Gaster’s machine to the true lab.” You answered him, not looking away from Flowey.

“Yeah, that’s right.” He said, sweat forming on his petals. “And you can still use it. You still have the power to erase everything and build a world where he exists. I mean, everyone will be ripped from this timeline. Nobody will remember anything, and you’ll be able to do whatever you want. But!” He added, crumpling under an increased weight. Sans was getting mad. “But, you’ll be able to find him! Rewrite him into a new story! Since, you know, this one’s coming to an end soon.”

You put your hand on Sans’ arm, urging him to let up on his gravity control as you stepped forward. “What do you mean, since this story’s going to end?”

“Oh, well, isn’t it obvious?” Flowey said, straightening his stem. “This is just a story too. Another addition to the countless stories you’re being put through. And you? You’re just another fictional Character being thrown through the ropes.” He said, his smile genuine but his words were cold. “And you know, technically it can end at any time! And when it does, you’re going to be forgotten again. Sent down the pages of history and brushed over. Nobody’s going to remember you, or linger on you. You’re going to be lost in the sea of constant resets, countless stories burying you in the archive. And in the end, nothing you do will matter because it’s not even real!!!”

An anger shoots through you and you go to grab for him, to pull him out of the ground, but with
Sans power weakened on him he slips under the ground, right out of your grasp, laughing. Your fist hits the ground and you curse loudly. Sans leans down next to you and puts a hand on your back.

“don’t listen to him. he’s just trying to get into your head.” He told you, trying to comfort you. “don’t let him get to you.”

You nodded, solemnly, but his words didn't really register.

“He said this isn’t real.” You told him. “He was lying, right?”

He pulled you into his arms and hugged you, gently. The thought that you would get blood on his jacket popped into your head, but if he was hugging you then you realized he didn’t care. “this is real.” he told you. “you’re here, right now. no matter how much you think it doesn’t matter, it does. you made it this far, and the experience you went through was real to you. don’t ever think it’s not.”

“Yeah…” You said, nodding into his shoulder. You were absolutely exhausted. “I’m in a lot of pain, can we go home?”

“sure.” he said, picking you up bridal style “let’s get you cleaned up.”
You didn’t remember passing out. It made sense, considering how banged up you were when Sans carried you home, but you didn’t actually remember at what point you’d slipped into a comatose state. You woke up in pain though, so at least you knew you weren’t dreaming. You went to shift yourself into a sitting position and stopped when you felt something heavy on your legs. Opening your eyes you saw Sans sitting next to the bed, fast asleep with his upper body on the blanket. You moved your leg to nudge him and startle him awake.

“mnnnn…” he groaned as he stirred, rubbing his eyes as as it registered that you were awake. He smiled at you, a tired, sleepy smile. “...mornin’”

“You didn’t remember passing out. It made sense, considering how banged up you were when Sans carried you home, but you didn’t actually remember at what point you’d slipped into a comatose state. You woke up in pain though, so at least you knew you weren’t dreaming. You went to shift yourself into a sitting position and stopped when you felt something heavy on your legs. Opening your eyes you saw Sans sitting next to the bed, fast asleep with his upper body on the blanket. You moved your leg to nudge him and startle him awake.

“mnnnn…” he groaned as he stirred, rubbing his eyes as as it registered that you were awake. He smiled at you, a tired, sleepy smile. “...mornin’”

“Mornin’.” you smiled back, shifting yourself up once his weight left your legs. You reached your hand up to rub at your head and your eyes were met with bandages. Lifting up your covers you saw ace bandages covering your entire lower half. You’d also been changed out of your pajamas into a tank top and shorts. “How long was I out?”

He checked the clock on the nightstand, a bright 4:15 glowing at you from its surface. “thirteen hours.”

“Holy shit.” you lowered the blankets and poked at your bandaged arm. “ow.”

“yeah. kinda expected you to sleep more, to be honest.” He said, leaning back in his chair.

You frowned. “I’m gonna be late to work today.”

“pap called you off. you’re not going in for at least a week. besides.” he shoved his hands in his jacket pockets, closing his right eye to look at you “you and i’ve got a lot to talk about.”

You looked down at the blankets. “Yeah…”

You were both silent for a couple seconds. Neither of you wanted to start, but you knew things weren’t going to get really resolved unless one of you did.

“I’m sorry…” you tell him. “for going behind your back. About Gaster. I shouldn’t have done it, and I should have asked you but…” you trail off, clenching your hands into the blanket.

“why didn’t you?”

You couldn’t bring yourself to look at him as you mumbled your answer. “...i didn’t want to make you feel worse.”

You were both silent for a couple seconds. Neither of you wanted to start, but you knew things weren’t going to get really resolved unless one of you did.

“I’m sorry…” you tell him. “for going behind your back. About Gaster. I shouldn’t have done it, and I should have asked you but…” you trail off, clenching your hands into the blanket.

“why didn’t you?”

You couldn’t bring yourself to look at him as you mumbled your answer. “...i didn’t want to make you feel worse.”

The second silence wasn’t as long as the first one, and you interrupted it again.

“I just...when you said the name ‘Gaster’...even though it was only once I could feel it in your voice. He was somebody important to you and it hurt you to think about it.” you explained. “I wanted to find out who he was so I could...i dunno...help. I wanted to find him for you, or something. I just thought that if I did maybe you’d finally be happy.”

“i already told you, we’re never gonna r-”

“Don’t give me that bullshit, Sans.” You cut him off, knowing exactly how he was going to finish the sentence, and finally look him in his shocked face. “I found my happiness when I let everything
out to those echo flowers. I was okay, content. I let it all out and I was ready to go back, and I killed everyone for fuck’s sake. If I can finally be happy after all the sins I committed, you can be happy after all the nothing you’ve done.”

He looked at you in half-shock, like he didn’t expect you to say any of that. The shock soon fell into a muted depressed stare as he leaned forward to rest his arms and head on the bed again.

“yeah...see...the thing is...is that i’m not sure if i did anything at all.” he said, looking off to the side. “i can’t remember anything about gaster.”

This time it was your turn to raise your eyebrows. “Wait….really?”

He didn’t answer for a few seconds. The entire conversation since you woke up seemed to drag on with the empty spaces inbetween the words.

“i have pictures. “ he continued. “pictures of me with people i don’t recognize and faces i don’t remember. the only thing i can remember is the name of the man i worked with, and the only reason i know that is because my weapons are named after him. and i’m not even sure how i know that.”

The look in his eyes as he’s talking makes your heart drop. You move your hand to put it over one of his but hesitate inches above it. It’s not until he moves his arm out to give you permission that you take his hand in your own to give a squeeze of comfort.

He starts again. “i remember everything. everything that’s ever happened in the underground since you showed up the first time, but i can’t remember anything before that. i don’t even know when i got to the underground, when my brother came with me, what i was before all of this...” he paused, sinking his face deeper into his arm. “i don’t even know who i really am half the time.”

“I know who you are.”

He pulls his face out of his arm to look up at you, eyes a bit wide. “really?”

“Yeah.” you say, rapping him on the head hard enough to earn a grunt. “You’re a bonehead.”

The stunned and confused look he gives you after you make the joke is almost enough to make you giggle. Almost.

“A real numbskull.” you continue. “You’re out here telling me this whole time to get rid of my past and burn it behind me, and you’re still clinging onto yours like a baby sloth.”

He was smiling now, probably at your pun. It was small, but it was something. “y’know, you’re not too far off with that. just drop the ‘baby’ part.”

“I’m serious.” you rap on his skull again. “I can’t remember who I was before the fall either, but the thing that bothered me more was what I did after. I’m not looking to go back to what I was, because I don’t even remember what I was in the first place! I just know that i’m here now, I got everything off my chest, and I’m gonna look forward to the future. Because y’know what, whatever I was before I met you isn’t the person I want to be.” You tell him. “I want to be the person that’s right here, right now, holding your hand, covered in ace bandages.”

The face he gave you could only be described as stunned, before it shifted into humor. Within seconds he was chuckling.

“jeez kid, you really know how to motivate a guy.” He said, grinning at you.
“Yeah well, sometimes you need someone to call you out on things.” You tell him.

“even if it’s the complete opposite of the truth…” he finishes, sighing a bit. He still wasn’t satisfied.

“Do you hate it?” You pried. “Not knowing who you used to be?”

He nodded. “little bit, yeah.”

More like a lot. “...Do you wish you could go back?”

“...i don’t know.”

The answer wasn’t what you were expecting, but you waited for him to continue.

“i want to know why i don’t remember, and who those people are and why they’re important to me.”

His face was sullen and his grip on your hand was virtually nonexistant. It was eating him up inside more than he let on. You took a breath before you spoke next.

“You can always go back.”

You could see him turning his head to look at you out your peripheral, but you turned your head to look at the wall to avoid his eyes.

“Flowey said...that the machine I used to reset this timeline isn’t broken. I don’t know if he was telling the truth, but if he was...and it does work...you can rewrite things. Get your memories back, get the life you once had back. Find Gaster.” you tell him. “You’d have to save over this world...and reset the timeline so none of this ever happened, but you’d have your solution. You could erase your memories too and...be happy.”

You didn’t realize you were squeezing his hand so hard until he moved, grabbing yours with both of his. It made you look at him, and see the determination in his face. You felt your face flush as his eyes bored into your Soul.

“never.”

You blinked. “Why.”

“because I don’t want to lose this.”

His answer was straightforward and all encompassing. He didn’t want to lose this timeline. He didn’t want to lose his brother. He didn’t want to lose you and what you had. He cared about it all too much, tried so hard to defend it to see it happen, and was determined to keep it that way. You brought your free hand up to cup his cheek and run your thumb over his cheekbone.

“You must really want to go home.” you tell him. His eyes flash briefly, white lights blinking as they remember a conversation you two had long ago. “Trust me, I know the feeling buddo. Though...maybe sometimes it’s better to take what’s given to you.” you continue, pulling your other hand out of his grasp to place on his other cheekbone. “I mean...here you’ve got food, drinks, friends...me. Is bearing that forgotten burden really worth it?”

“this is the worst dejavu i’ve ever had.” he tells you, smiling tiredly and nuzzling his head into your hands.
“Well, let me tell you a story then.” You say, releasing his head. He leans back on his chair and you lean back into your pillows. “So I’ve just fallen into the Underground, right? I went through the ruins, met this weird goat lady, came out of the ruins, and came to this massive forest clearing. Trees on every side of me, taller than I could see. It was kind of terrifying.”

He gets a weird smile on his face and you can tell he knows where this story is going. You smile back.

“So I start walking down the road and I jump over this branch right? Five seconds later I hear it snap and it freaks me the hell out, so what do I do? I keep walking down the terrifying forest tree road, like it’s no big deal. I get this weird feeling that somewhere, someone’s watching me, and it freaks me out more. Finally I get to this big wooden thing that looks like it was almost a gate, and I stop. Why did I stop? I have no idea. But I stopped, and I heard footsteps behind me and suddenly I couldn’t move at all. I was scared shitless. And then I heard a voice behind me. telling me to turn around and shake his hand.”

The shit eating grin on his face made you smile wider. You might have been blushing a bit.

“So I did, and what was I met with? A whoopee cushion. A fucking whoopee cushion from a skeleton! It took me so off guard I didn’t even have time to laugh before the jerk started talking again. He told me that he was supposed to be hunting humans, but he didn’t really want to. And then he hid me behind a lamp to fool his brother while telling horrible skeleton puns.”

He leaned forward to rest his head in his hand, very interested in the story now.

“Needless to say, this skeleton was very good. So I kept seeing him, again and again as I went through the Underground. He apparently had six jobs or something that he kept slacking off at, but he always found time to hang out with me. It became a thing, seeing him on my journey and skipping out to eat together and listen to his jokes and puns. It ruled.”

“i bet it did.” he interrupted. “he sounds like a really stand up guy”

“I swear to god.” You mumble, snorting once. “Anyway, I ended up liking this guy a lot, and then I realized when I was finally approaching the end that if I left the underground, I wouldn’t be able to see him anymore, and that made me really sad. I wasn’t going to be able to see him or any of the people that I met anymore, because when I left I had to go back to my old life. And...after thinking about it I realized that I didn’t want to leave...so I reset the timeline, just because I could.”

His smile faded a bit, and he was watching you with questioning eyes. The same eyes he watched you with before you got all of your memories back. Waiting eyes, expecting eyes. You didn’t leave him hanging.

“So I went back to the beginning, to experience it all again. But I had already remembered everything from the first time, so I didn’t have that wonder of experiencing everything again. It made me really sad, knowing that I’d be able to have these experiences but not the feelings that came with them. After a while I forgot what the upper world was like, and devoted my entire time to being in the Underground, with all the monsters I’d come to love. But I got mad eventually. Why couldn’t I feel the same way I felt the first time I went through, and I came to the conclusion that it was because nothing new happened. So...I made a decision, out of dumb curiosity, and I ended up paying for it by coming to this world and going through all that hell a second time over, but you know what?” You smile at him, a longing kind of smile. “I don’t regret any of it at all. I’d do it again if I could, but I won’t. I know that this is it, and that I’m here with my friends now, and that’s good enough for me. And yeah, I’d love to know the person I used to be, but that isn’t who I am anymore, so it doesn’t matter.”
He stared at you as you finished your story, awestruck. You could see the gears working in his mind and it took him a few minutes until he came to his own conclusion. Taking your hand in his, he smiled, and you could see that it was a real smile. A really happy smile. It was the first time you’d seen him smile like that and it warmed your heart.

“yeah.” He said, lacing his fingers with yours. “it's good enough for me too.”
Goodbye To A World

Chapter Summary

Thank you. I'll say goodbye soon. Though it's the end of the world, don't blame yourself, now. And if it's true, I will surround you, and give life to a world, of our own.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It took a week for you to recover from Flowey's attack. Toriel insisted on using her magic to heal you, but you wouldn't have it. It was partially because you wanted a week off from work, and partially because in that week Sans was waiting on you hand and foot, and you liked the extra attention. Though, now you had almost all of his attention, and all of it was positive. His brother even commented on his improved mood and commended him for it. Of course, the occasional ‘lazybone’ jab was thrown around, but that just started a joke war and Papyrus always lost.

During your recovery period, Sans took it upon himself to lead all of your friends down into the caverns to hear the story you whispered into the echo flowers. When they came back they all had different feelings about it, but all of the fear inside you that prevented you from telling them evaporated as soon as Undyne said she didn’t care about it. None of that was important anymore, and it wasn’t the person they became friends with, she said. Everybody else seemed to agree with her and you forgot why you were so afraid in the first place. Alphys even seemed content with the information, and was eager to talk to you and Sans about the sciences behind resetting and saving, but you both shot her down, telling her that that didn’t matter anymore either.

Undyne herself had made it a point to train you as hard as she could when you recovered, as retribution for hiding all of your secrets from them. You expected it to happen really, it was Undyne after all. You agreed on the condition that she trash the machine in the true lab, so that it could never work ever again, even if anyone wanted it to. She took pictures as she did it and you laughed at every single one of them.

Frisk, after finding out that you made them, had repeatedly asked if you were now their mom, to which you replied with stutters and mumbles of ‘i’m too young to have a kid’ as Toriel reminded frisk that she was the one taking care of them now. Sans thought it was hilarious and occasionally called you ‘mommy’ as a jab. You called him ‘daddy’ back once, jokingly, and ended up in a fight beneath the sheets that he ended up winning. Only because you let him, though.

As for you, you’d come to the end of your arduous story. Your perils and rough times with your monster friends were behind you, and your future was bright and opportunistic. You felt satisfied and relieved that your troubles were finally over. But you also felt a sad ache in your chest. You didn’t want it to end, but you were so happy with the outcome that you didn’t mind.

Of course, you would have other stories to tell now. Stories of your new life and your relationship, but those would come later. Right now, you were content.

Twilight is shining beyond the horizon. It seems this story is finally over.
Thoughts of a future where anything can happen overwhelms you, and you smile.

And deep down in your heart, you can feel a resonance that tells you it’s not really over, and you suddenly can’t wait for the future to happen.

The prospect of what will happen to you next fills you with Determination.

Chapter End Notes

On to the next plot
“Nnnnnrgggghhh.” You clutched your stomach, doubled over on the couch. The blanket you were once so carefully wrapped in had become a cozy cocoon and you grunted again in annoyance as the fabric kept hitting your face. The TV had been running for the past fifteen minutes but you weren’t paying attention to it. You were too busy being in a shitton of pain.

Try as you might, you were 100% sure that period cramps were your absolute retribution. Your name is Chara and you didn’t have sins crawling on your back anymore, now you had bombs blowing up in your ovaries.

You didn’t hear the click of the front door as it closed, too encased in your woolen death trap. You did notice a heaviness on the couch next to you and had to crane your neck to see the cause of it. You weren’t surprised to find that it was Sans, grinning down at you.

“out of the frying pan, into the fire, huh?” he asked you, grinning with his right arm slung over the back of the couch "how’re you holdin’ up?"

“I feel like i’m dying.” You tell him, groaning for emphasis. The bleeding wasn’t the worst part, you told yourself. The feeling that your insides were starting a war was.

“i can’t believe you have to go through this every month.” he tells you, tugging on your blanket as a signal to sit up.

You groan and push yourself into a sitting position, fighting with the blanket some before kicking it off. You had on a sweater under it so you didn’t really need it anyway. “Yeah, having ovaries kinda sucks a lot.” you sigh. “I don’t even want kids, why do I have to suffer like this.”

He chuckled at your misery “i’ve watched you go through this twice already, but the last two times weren’t this bad. what gives?”

“The last times I had painkillers.” You tell him.
“you don’t have them this time?”

“I ran out.”

“bummer.” he said, smirking. “even without them, the pain looks like it’s killing you.”

You glare at him halfheartedly. “I would hit you if I didn’t feel like I was actually dying.”

He laughed again and pulled you closer to him. You leaned into his shoulder but quickly ended up with your head on his lap, staring up at the ceiling with both of your hands rubbing your stomach through your shirt. He placed one of his hands on yours, playing with your hair with the other one. You dyed it blonde again, in an attempt to distance yourself from your past permanently. You decided to make it a trend, something else that proved you were putting in the effort. You closed your eyes and hummed at his touch.

It had been a week since Flowey attacked you at Waterfall. Your injuries had gotten better and the remnants of the fight peppered your skin like tiny healed papercuts. The back of your mind said that the next time he saw you would be worse, but you were ready for him. You weren’t afraid to face him down again, even if he tried to kill you.

Even so, the fight left you pretty haggard and had concerned everyone around you enough to spur Frisk into action. The kid made it a point to find Flowey and confront him, but you told them they didn’t have to. You were sure you’d be fine. And if anything, you had your friends to protect you. Sans and Papyrus had put you on a permanent watch and had been taking turns to make sure you left neither of their eyesockets for too long. You wanted to tell them that they were being ridiculous and that you didn’t need to be babysat, but the extra attention made you feel special, so you let it go. Undyne had also offered her services to train you to be stronger, but seeing as though she had the capacity to accidentally injure you just as much as Flowey could purposely, you politely declined.

You did want to see Flowey again, though. You wanted to talk to him and apologize for what you did. You wouldn’t confront him alone, hell no, but you’d at least try to come to some sort of state of reconciliation with him. You didn’t want to have to live in fear of him. You didn’t have to. You just wanted everything to be okay. Or, well...better, anyway.

You opened your eyes to see Sans looking at you strangely. You raise an eyebrow at him.

“What?”

“nothing.” he said, closing his eyes and leaning back. “just thinking.”

You started to play with his hand on your stomach. “About what?”

“stuff.” he offered, helpfully. You narrowed your eyes at him.

“Must be some pretty interesting stuff.” you mumble, rubbing one of your hands right below your stomach to try to ease your cramps. “Man, I need a heat pack or something. I can’t take this.”

“here, lemme try.” He said, moving your hand out of the way to replace it with his own. You watch as it glowed blue, a haze of magic surrounding it as it started to grow warm. You sigh contentedly and melt a little, completely immobilized by the comfortable feeling. Magic, is there anything it can’t do?

“You’re like my own personal space heater.” you tell him, slowly closing your eyes. “I’m keeping you for the rest of my life.”
“is it really helping that much?” he asks you

You close your eyes all the way “You have noooooo idea.”

“want me to make it warmer?”

“mmmmmmmmm.” you reply, somewhat gone. He takes your noncommittal hum as a yes and you smile as his hand gets warmer, the heat pleasant through the layers of your clothes.

Your tranquility is short lived when you hear him curse loudly. Your eyes shoot open to see his own eye sparking, the magic aura around his hand expanding and suddenly the heat isn’t pleasant anymore. Your bliss turns to burning as your sweater catches fire.

“Shit!” You sit up immediately and rip it off, throwing it on the floor. You stare at it before grabbing the blanket off the couch to smother it out. Breathing a heavy sigh of relief, you turn to look at him, half-glaring. “Sans what the hell?!”

“i don’t know.” he said. He had backed himself into the couch and seemed just as surprised as you were. “i didn’t mean to do that.”

“Well, it happ-ow!” You’re cut short by a sharp pain in your abdomen and go to clutch it, but hiss at the contact. Lifting up your shirt you see a large burn mark from where the magic spiked stretching across your stomach. “God dammit.”

“i’m sorry, i’m so sorry.” He gets up off of the couch in a haste and reaches for you, but you step back reflexively. “are you okay?”

“No, i’m not okay! You lit my sweater on fire and burned me!” you said, looking down at the bright red mark on your skin.

He took a step forward. “shit, i’m so sorry, let me just-”

“No!” you blurt, holding one arm out between you two. “No...just...i’m fine. It’s fine, just...call Toriel...or something. She can heal me.”

“yeah...right.” he said, backing up a step “i’ll...be right back.”

He was gone before you could blink.

“SANS, YOU HAD ONE JOB.”

You sat on the couch as Toriel hovered over you, hands emitting a soft green glow to ease the burning on your skin. Frisk had tagged along with her after finding out that you were injured and was sitting next to you, holding your hand for support. In the time he was gone you’d changed into a sports bra to avoid any irritation to the burn with your shirt. It also made it much easier for Toriel to heal you.

Papyrus, who had come back from Undyne’s house shortly after Sans left to get the other two, was chastising the smaller skeleton out your peripheral.

“I LEAVE FOR FIVE HOURS AND THEN THIS HAPPENS. UNBELIEVABLE.” Papyrus had his arms crossed and huffed, turning away from Sans, who was visibly upset over the ordeal. “YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT YOUR HUMAN, NOT SET HER ON FIRE.”

“I really liked that sweater…” you mumbled absentmindedly. Frisk pets your hand as Toriel starts
to get rid of the burns.

“He didn’t mean it,” they said. You ruffled their hair and smiled reassuringly.

“I know, kiddo. It was just an accident.” You told them looking up at Sans. “Right?”

He wasn’t looking at you and was very focused on the ground. His hands were even deeper in his pockets than usual and his shoulders were hunched. He was the spitting image of guilt. “yeah...an accident...” he said, distantly. He seemed to be staring through the floor instead of staring at it. After a couple of seconds he lifted his head, glancing briefly at everyone before shuffling quickly up the stairs, into his room. It was just quiet enough to hear the door lock. The remaining four of you waited, but when it was obvious he wasn’t going to come back out, Papyrus was the first to speak up.

“THERE HE GOES, AVOIDING RESPONSIBILITY, AS ALWAYS.” He said, walking over to the couch to sit down in the last unoccupied spot. “I AM DEEPLY SORRY FOR MY BROTHER’S BEHAVIOR. HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER.”

“It’s fine Papyrus, really.” You say as Toriel finishes up. You looked down to inspect her work and nodded at it. The burn was completely gone. “He apologized immediately after it happened.”

“Well, it is a good thing you were not terribly harmed.” Toriel said, resting a paw over her heart and looking at Frisk. “He was very distraught when he showed up at our house.”

“I can imagine.” you tell her, standing up.

Frisk frowned “He looked really upset....”

“WELL, HE SHOULD BE UPSET. HE FAILED HIS JOB.”

“He didn’t fail his job.” You scold Papyrus, before heading up the stairs after Sans. “I’ll go talk to him.”

The other three watched you approach his door. You all heard it lock, so knocking on it was your only option. You rapped your knuckles on it three times and waited.

“............Sans?”

Nothing. You tapped again.

“Sans, unlock the door. I’m not mad at you.”

Still nothing. You cross your arms and exhale sharply.

“Sans, this is my room too. You can’t lock me out of my own room.”

You hear a muffled ‘i can try’ from the other side and you give a small sigh of relief. At least he was there.

“Sans, don’t make me get my skeleton key.” You tell him, grinning. You know he can hear you. It takes all of five seconds for the lock to click, and you’re through the door in another three. The door locks again and you lean against it, looking down at him. He’s directly in front of you and refuses to look you in the eye. “....Hey.”

“....hey.” He says, looking up at you once before returning his eyes to the ground. You bring your right hand up to cup his cheek and gently force his head up to look you in the eye.
“Hey.” you say again. “You’re taking this a lot worse than I am. It’s fine, the burn is gone, see?”

You move your other hand across your abdomen to show him. He pulled one of his own hands out of his pocket and went to touch your stomach, but flinched back, as if he was afraid he was going to burn you again. You take his hand and move it to your hip instead, stroking it with your thumb.

“i’m sorry…” he says for the fourth time since it happened. “it was an accident. I didn’t mean to hurt you.”

“I know. Everyone knows it was an accident.” You reassure him hand still on his cheek.

“it wasn’t supposed to happen.” He says, a bit angrily. You move your hand from his cheek to his shoulder.

“You’re fine.” You tell him. “It’s over and done with. Let it go.”

“...yeah” he said, absentmindedly. It was clear that he was going to do the opposite of that, so you sighed.

“Do you want to lie down for a while?” You ask him.

“...yeah.”

You brought him over to the bed and rolled onto it, giving him room to crawl next to you and wrap his arms around your torso. You did this occasionally, whenever you woke up from a particularly bad nightmare. Sometimes you talked, sometimes you didn’t, but this seemed to be one of those times where you were going to end up wrapped around each other like a safety blanket. Only this time, he was wrapped around you. You put your arm around him and try to reassure him again.

“It’s gonna be okay Sans.”

“....I know.” He said.

You could hear the doubt in his voice, though, and somewhere in the back of your mind you wondered it if was really going to be.
“No, the turkey doesn’t go in the microwave. It doesn’t fit.” You tell Papyrus for the third time. He had been trying to nuke the uncooked bird for the past hour and you and Frisk had to stop him at least three times.

“IT’S THE FASTEST WAY TO COOK IT THOUGH.” he argues as Toriel takes it out of his hands. “CAN’T WE JUST USE FIRE MAGIC?”

“Papyrus, this is a human holiday.” Toriel said, putting the turkey down on the kitchen counter. “And we are going to do our best to celebrate it the human way, for Chara and Frisk. Even if cooking a turkey takes two hours.”

You smiled at her. Out of all the monsters that had listened to your story, Toriel was the most forgiving out of all of them and was working harder than ever to help you become a part of the group again, even if she didn’t remember who you were before. All she cared about was who you were now. You appreciated it a lot more than you let on. You were also a little shocked by it, considering how long she kept a grudge against Asgore for resorting to killing humans. Out of all of the monsters, you feared that she’d be the least inclined to want to befriend you again, but that wasn’t the case. She was still just as motherly as you’d remembered, if maybe a bit more doting. Once you’d offhandedly mentioned that Thanksgiving was coming up she’d made it a point to ask you about the holiday, and then had done everything in her power to celebrate it.

Papyrus, too, had become enamored with the idea of having a large dinner with friends and had been quickly recruited by Toriel to help prepare the food. You were a little bit nervous, considering his culinary expertise wasn’t really on-par with the kind of knowledge that something like Thanksgiving demanded, but you knew his food was edible now and it put you a little at ease. Knowing Toriel was there put you at much more ease.

“CAN WE USE EVEN A LITTLE FIRE MAGIC?” Papyrus was insistent. “TWO HOURS IS A VERY LONG TIME.”

Toriel gave him a look, the same look you remember her giving a Froggit the very first time you saw one, and he backed down. You giggled.

“It’s fine, you can use fire magic, I don’t care.” You tell them both. “I mean, two hours is a long time. You can knock it down to one hour probably.”

“You sure?” Toriel asked you, very sincerely.

You shrugged. “Yeah, I mean...it’s not like this is going to be a really traditional kind of Thanksgiving. It’s fine to take a few shortcuts.”

Toriel gave it some thought, and then smiled. “Well, alright. If you say so.”

You smiled back at her. Cooking magic was her specialty, and the turkey would taste just the same anyway, even if Human food was different than monster food. This food was real and had a substance to it, unlike monster food which just converted into energy once they ate it. You vaguely remembered a monster somewhere that had asked you about humans eating and how weird it was to have the food pass through their bodies and a concern for the turkey flashed through your mind,
but it was gone when Papyrus’ chestplate commandeered your vision.

“So.” He started. “As much as I love the idea of making lots of food to eat with many of my friends, I’m confused as to why this is a human tradition for once a year, and not something that is done all the time.”

You pulled out one of Toriel’s kitchen chairs for him to sit down on. “Well, it’s a long story about friendship, lies, massacre, and lots of the color brown, so you might wanna take a seat.”

“You don’t look good.”

The kid was observant, he’d give ‘em that. Sans raised an eyebone at Frisk, who had pulled him aside from the others to show him a new joke book they’d bought for Toriel. After going through which ones were actually good, they had put the book down and sat on their bed, staring at Sans for a while before blurring that out.

He shrugged. “Don’t know what you’re talkin’ about buddo. I think I look pretty great. A face like mine knocks ‘em dead. Y’know?” He said, winking and rubbing his chin for emphasis.

Frisk didn’t budge at the joke. Odd, he thought. Normally the kid always laughed at his jokes, or at least chuckled. Instead the little one’s eyes narrowed at him and he could feel sweat beading on his forehead.

“C’mon kid, humer me a little.” He pulled on the collar of his shirt.

“You look worried and sad.” They said, huffing. San’s felt his smile falter, and then remembered himself.

He took a step back and leaned against the wall of Frisk’s room, shoving his hands deeper into his pockets and closing his eyes. “Nah, you’re seein’ things. I think it’s time we get you glasses.”

They didn’t stop there. “You look like you used to look in the Underground.”

That got to him. He opened his eyes to look at Frisk seriously. He remembered how he looked back then. Tired, worn out, expecting things to go wrong or change at any moment. Waiting. Expecting. He remembered the feeling vividly. Was that what Frisk was seeing now?

“You set Chara’s sweater on fire.” Frisk continued “She said it was an accident.”

He felt his eyes droop, the memory clear in his mind. Oh yeah, they were there for that. Great. “...Yeah. It was.”

“You don’t have accidents.” They said clearly, concerned and questioningly. Sans looked away. The kid really knew how to cut into a guy’s defense. No amount of puffy blue jackets would keep Frisk from hitting his heart. Then again, the kid always had a way of getting to people. It’s why they were all up here in the first place.

He wasn’t going to be able to be vague around Frisk like he was with everyone else. They were too
“you caught me. i totally wanted to set my girlfriend’s clothes on fire. then again, she was already pretty hot to begin with.” He said, winking at Frisk. The look on their face told him that they still weren’t buying it. He sighed “it was only one time, kid. it won’t happen again.”

Frisk got off the bed and walked over to him, about to ask him something he anticipated was going to have him uncomfortable, but they both jumped at the sound of a loud ‘BANG’ followed by Undyne’s deep voice. He sighed a breath of relief and opened the door to Frisk’s room in an attempt to duck out.

“welp, cavalry’s here.” He grinned. “you might wanna come out and join everyone too. kids shouldn’t sit in their room and interrogate skeletons all night. it’s just weird.”

Frisk huffed again, unsatisfied with their talk but now obviously aware of Sans’ discomfort. They followed him out of the room anyway and he pushed the thought to the front of his mind that he’d need to keep his smile a bit wider around them now.

You were brought out of the kitchen by the bang, startled out of your story with Papyrus. You outwardly sighed a breath of relief when you saw the loud noise was just Undyne being Undyne. You saw Sans and Frisk come out of the hallway, probably just as jarred from the loud noise as you were.

“Hey nerds!!” She said, jabbing her thumb behind her enthusiastically “Guess who I brought!!”

You peeked around her, fully expecting Alphys to waddle in behind her, but was surprised when the white lab coat you were so used to seeing was instead a pink hawaiian shirt. You were even more surprised to see the eight foot tall monster king that it was attached to. You weren’t wrong in your Alphys assumption, though, because as soon as Asgore had stepped through the threshold she scurried out from behind him, fidgeting nervously.

“S-surprise!” She said, gesturing to him. “we...uh...we thought that...uh...m-maybe....”

“We brought Asgore to Waterfall to the flowers.” Undyne interrupted her in her nervous break. “To listen to them and everything. We figured since you hadn’t met him yet, and since it was, like, a holiday where people come together, that we could bring him?”

You tilted your head, stuck in place. It was...kind of sweet, that they brought him. You didn’t really know what to say, opting to just look him over. Seeing him in a hawaiian shirt and jeans was so much different than seeing him in a full set of battle armor. He looked a lot more jovial and less threatening. It put you at ease, but also made you nervous. This was the first time meeting him outside of any of your runs.

You were put a little more at ease when you watched Frisk run to him, grabbing him around his waist.

“Asgore!” The little one said, a bit muffled. “Happy Thanksgiving!”

“Happy Thanksgiving!” He said, patting Frisk on the head. “Even though I do not know what a Thanksgiving is, i’m sure it will be a happy one.”
Frisk nodded and released him “The most happy one!”

“Yeah!!! That’s the spirit!!!” Undyne said, grabbing Frisk and lifting them up onto her shoulders. “We’re gonna make this Thanksgiving the most rad one ever!!!”

“With lots of turkey!” Frisk beamed, throwing their little fists into the air.

careful you don’t overdo it with that, kid.” Sans said, watching Frisk’s excited jubilee as he moved to stand next to you. “you wouldn’t wanna have a fowl time.”

You nudged him as he chuckled, satisfied with his shitty joke as the other four either rolled their eyes or groaned.

“That was awful.” Undyne stated bluntly, grinning. “Papyrus needs to hear it. Where is he??”

“In the kitchen with Toriel.” You tell her, nodding your head in that direction.

“AWESOME! C’mon twerp, let’s see how loud we can get him to scream!!!”

You watched her bound off into the kitchen with Frisk on her shoulders, Alphys quickly trailing behind them to more than likely prevent Papyrus from screaming at all. You smiled after them and shook your head. Her need to bother Papyrus was almost as bad as her brother’s. You turn back to Asgore and the magnitude of the situation hits you.

You’re standing in front of the king of monsters, one who has never met you before and who knows that you killed him and every other monster in the underground at least once. He didn’t get to meet you beforehand, or make friends with you. The only times you’ve seen him have been times where you’ve killed him, and he didn’t even remember. This confrontation could go in any direction and you felt yourself shrink.

Sans, as if sensing your nervous tension, was the first one to speak.

“‘sup, your majesty.”

“...Sans” He looked down at him with a sort of judgemental expression, you noted, before shifting to you with a much more neutral one. “And you must be the Chara human. I have heard much about you.”

You brought up your right hand to nervously grab your left elbow. “Yeah...that’s me. Hi.”

You felt like you were being judged too. He wasn’t wearing the armor you were used to, but he was still bigger than you, and the authority in his deep voice made you uneasy. You knew firsthand how ruthless he could be when he had to. You hoped he didn’t have to be.

“So...” You started, trying to look up at him but not making it quite all the way to his eyes. “Undyne took you to Waterfall...”

“Yes...” He said, putting his arms behind his back. You couldn’t read his face at all and it unnerved you. “ Listening to the story you left behind there, it was certainly a learning experience.”

You gripped your elbow harder, looking down and to the side. You didn’t like where this was going. He kept going, turning to Sans.

“Sans, if I could have a moment alone with your friend.”

Shit. You definitely didn’t like where this was going. You looked at Sans and he looked back at
you, very aware of the tension of the moment and the anxiety that wracked your body. You could see in his eyes that he didn’t want to leave you two alone, for whatever reason, but ultimately backed down, taking a step back.

“Sure. a moment.” He said, giving a side-eyed glower in Asgore’s direction. “But nothing longer.”

Asgore, not anticipating the disguised threatening tone, had raised his eyebrows at the response and had taken a moment to connect some dots in his head. Finally, he smiled and held the front door open, inviting you outside with him. “It will be brief.”

You swallowed, overwrought with dread, and walked outside. You chanced a glance over your shoulder at Sans before Asgore pulled the door closed. The cold autumn air stung your face and made the hair on your arms prickle as you shuffled nervously next to him.

“So…” You say after a long, uncomfortable pause. “I guess...you want to ask me about everything i’ve done? Or...you want to give me your kingly judgement or something?”

He let a few seconds of silence hang in the air before he answered you.

“To be honest, i’m not entirely sure what to do.” He said, sitting down on the stoop. He was almost as tall as you sitting down. “The story you left behind in the echo flowers was certainly one that was heartfelt, and I am not ultimately going to be the one to decide what should be done with you about it. That is a decision you have to make for yourself.” He said, talking to you like he already knew about you. He kind of did though, in a way. Even if he didn’t remember it. “The choice that you made when you slaughtered my people, that choice was a poor one. It was a choice made in another time and space that I have no recollection of. From what I had heard, I imagined you to be as much a monster as I am. But, then again, there are humans who can be more than monsters.” He continued, a bit forlornly. You could hear a wistfulness in his voice that you wanted to place as nostalgia.

“If it’s any consolation, i’m trying to make up for it.” You tell him, sitting down with him and wrapping your arms around your knees. “I want to redeem myself.”

“No.” You confess, thinking back to the first time you and Sans had talked about forgiveness. “What I did was inexcusable. I don’t deserve their friendship...but they still want me around. They’ve forgiven me, even if I haven’t, and they want to help me just as much as I want to help them.” You glance at him, finally looking him in the eye. “I’m not gonna ask for your forgiveness, considering you don’t even know who I am. But I am going to be the best version of myself that I can be, for their sake as well as mine.”

He gave you some thought, looking deep into your eyes as if the answer you gave him wasn’t what he was looking for. You looked at each other for a very long time, long enough to make you severely second guess your reply, but you were reassured when he smiled at you, laughing a deep, hearty laugh that reminded you vaguely of Santa Claus.
“Well...you seem to be a very determined human.” He said, standing back up. Looking up at him from your sitting position made him seem so much bigger. You stood up with him as he kept talking. “Though it’s true, I do not know who you are, and I did not have the privilege to meet you when everybody inside did, I can see that your intentions are very pure. Much more pure than I had initially thought. You really do care deeply for them, that much is obvious.” He said, glancing at the door. “You’re a very special human, to be able to shoulder all of this on your own.”

“I’m not on my own.” You blurt, the words out your mouth before you could stop them. He blinked at you and smiled again, catching the implication easily.

“He is helping you, isn’t he?” He asked you. Your face felt the wind a little harder and you knew it was because your face was hot.

“Yeah.” You answer. “And I’m helping him too.”

His expression softened significantly and all of the anxiety in your body disappeared. You felt fine under his gaze now. You weren’t being judged anymore. “That is very good to hear. Though, I think I have kept you for a bit longer than a moment.”

“Yeah, we should go inside.” You smile. “After all, i’ve got a lot of thanks to be giving today, don’t I?”

He grabbed the doorknob, opening it for you as you stepped inside. The aroma of food hit your nose and the warmth of the house calmed you. You felt your shoulders drop and you grinned when you saw Sans leaning against the wall, waiting for you. You leaned against it next to him as Asgore walked into the dining room to join the rest of your party. Sans nudged you and you shoved your hand into one of his pockets, grabbing his. It was so much warmer than yours.

“you’re still in one piece.” he said, smiling up at you and grabbing your hand back. He looked tired, you noted. The bright white flecks of his eyes seemed a bit less white and his grin felt strained. You knew his face well enough to know when he was putting on a mask.

“Miraculously.” You answered him, choosing to ignore your internal monologue. “I don’t know what I expected, really. I guess I thought it was going to go worse?”

He shrugged “you never really know with that guy. he’s kind of a big fluffy enigma.”

“Kind of like how you’re a tiny bony mystery?” You tell him.

“eh, not really. you see right through me just fine.” he joked, grinning at you.

“You’re right, I do.” You say, pulling him into a hug and putting your arms around his shoulders. You rested your forehead against his “And right now I can see that you look exhausted.”

He wrapped his arms around your waist. “the kid’s a pretty frisky one. it’s hard to keep up with ‘em.”

You roll your eyes at him. You’ll let him have that one. “Listen, numbskull, you don’t have to tell me what’s wrong if you don’t want to, but i’m here for you alright? I care about you Sans. You’ve been more tired than usual since you set me on fire. I want to help you if you’re struggling with anything.”

The mention of the fire made his grin falter. It was slight, but it was there. He hugged you tighter to him and grinned wider. “the only thing i’m struggling with is not teleporting out of here with you.”
You chuckle. “You’re serious about that too, aren’t you?”

“deadly.” He winked at you and you planted a kiss between his eyes. He would tell you what was bothering him in time. You knew he would.

“Too bad.” you tell him, releasing your hold around his neck and moving your hands to his shoulders. “We’re here to eat, and i’m pretty sure everybody’s waiting for us so we can all say what we’re thankful for over the buffet.”

“that sounds like such a hassle.” He said, releasing your hips to reclaim his jacket pockets. “can’t i just say it now without everyone staring at me?”

“If it’s a shitty joke, you’re going to end up saying it in front of them anyway.” You say, releasing his shoulders to rub the last remaining cold off of your arms. “But hey, i’ll be your tester.”

“good.” He said, winking at you. “since, y’know, you’re the one i’m thankful for.”

It catches you off guard, how blunt he is. He walks past you, brushing your shoulder. You’re not even embarrassed about the blush that creeps across your face.

“i’m not sayin that in front of them though.” he says, turning back to you. “i’ll never hear the end of it.”

You watch him walk out of your sight and you follow him, a dopey grin on your face as his words warmed your heart. As you walked into the dining room to see everyone waiting for you, table covered in food in the most picture perfect Thanksgiving display you’d ever seen in your life, you immediately felt like everything you’d done up to that point was well worth it.

You felt like you were going to be giving thanks for a very long time.

Chapter End Notes

Comments and Kudos are always appreciated.
You were exhausted.

The dinner went better than you thought it would. You thought it was going to go strangely, since human food and monster food are made by different means. You were pleasantly surprised to find that Toriel was just as adept at making physical food as she was ones made from magic means. You supposed her year of existing in the human world and cooking for Frisk would have helped. The warm atmosphere of the food and good company made you really, truly thankful, and you weren’t the only one. Even though the three of you had already left Toriel’s house, you could feel the good vibes radiating off of both Sans and Papyrus as you walked sandwiched between them. Normally you would have driven to Toriel’s in Papyrus’s convertible, but it was just close enough to your house for a comfortable walk.

“WOWIE, THAT WAS GREAT.” Papyrus said happily as soon as you had left. It was dark by the time the party ended and you were the last three to leave. “I’VE NEVER HAD A THANKSGIVING BEFORE. IS EVERY HUMAN HOLIDAY LIKE THAT?”

His enthusiasm made you smile. “No, just some holidays. Didn’t you celebrate any human holidays with Frisk this past year?”

“not really.” Sans answered. “we mostly just dealt with the relocation of all of the monsters in the past year.”

“Oh, yeah.” You looked down at the edges of the sidewalk and note that they were starting to frost over. The wind blew and you realized that you hadn’t prepared for the drastic drop in temperature. Your t-shirt and jeans were accomplices to the cold and served you no protection. You shivered. “Well, I can’t remember a time when I had a big Thanksgiving dinner like that either. Or any holiday really.”

“DID YOU NOT HAVE ANYONE TO SPEND IT WITH BEFORE?” Papyrus asked. You didn’t remember much of anything before you first fell into the underground. You huddle into yourself and stare harder at the ground.

“I don’t know.” You say, honestly. “maybe...i’m not sure.”

“DID YOU HAVE ANY PARENTS?” He asked again.

You grimace “Yeah, probably.”

Papyrus wasn’t taking your uncomfortable hints. “YOU SOUND LIKE YOU DIDN’T LIKE THEM.”

“I don’t think I did. I don’t know” You half-snap, irritation obvious in your voice. Sans picked up on your cues and pulled a hand out of his pocket to hold one of yours.

“you don’t have to talk about it if you don’t want to.”

You squeeze his hand. “I just don’t know what there is to talk about.” You tell him before looking at Papyrus. “I don’t think I had a very good life before I found the Underground.”
The taller skeleton looked at you sorrowly. You could tell he didn’t understand what it was like to have no one. As far as you knew, he’d had Sans his whole life. You sort of envied him, in a way. Even through all of your resets, even the one where you killed him, he still had Sans.

“I don’t think I liked living up here.” You continue, turning your gaze skyward. “I have this feeling that like, the way my life is now is sort of like how I used to live. I don’t remember having parents that were supportive of me, or human friends. I’m pretty sure I hated everything…”.

“WELL, YOU DON’T HAVE TO HATE ANYTHING.” Papyrus reassured you, grabbing your other hand tightly. “BECAUSE, YOU HAVE US NOW. AND IN THE SPIRIT OF THIS HUMAN HOLIDAY, I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, AND ALSO SANS PROBABLY, AM THANKFUL THAT YOU ARE HERE NOW.”

With both of your hands occupied all you could do was stare at him. You squeezed both of their hands back.

“Thanks Papyrus.” You smile at him and then Sans, who returns it. He still looks tired and only opens his right eye halfway when he looks at you. You remembered his words from before you sat down to eat and you felt just a bit warmer inside. “I’m thankful that i’m here too, and that you two are here with me. Though, I’d probably be a bit more thankful if I had a jacket.”

Papyrus dropped your hand “WHY DO YOU NEED A JACKET? YOU LOOK FINE.”

“It’s cold out Papyrus.” You tell him, using your now free hand to rub your arm for emphasis. “I know you can’t feel it, but I can.”

Papyrus frowned. “OH. THAT SUCKS. BEING A HUMAN SEEMS REALLY INCONVENIENT. HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT YOUR TEMPERATURE ALL THE TIME. IT’S TOO BAD YOU CAN’T BE A SKELETON.”

“I dunno bro,” Sans piped up, smirking “if she was a skeleton then wouldn’t the cold go right through her?”

The joke made Papyrus frown harder. “I WAS HAVING SUCH A GOOD NIGHT, UNTIL RIGHT NOW.”

Sans shrugged. “sorry, i didn’t mean to stop your fun cold.”

“I TAKE BACK EVERY NICE THING I SAID ABOUT YOU TONIGHT.” Papyrus sulked beside you. You gave him a reassuring pat on the back.

“Why don’t you go on ahead and unlock the house for us.” You suggest to him in an attempt to spare him from Sans’ jokes. “We’ll catch up with you.”

“YES, OF COURSE.” He said, straightening up with renewed vigor. “I WILL LEAVE YOU TO YOUR MEANDERINGS AND HORRIBLE JOKES, THAT I WILL NOT BE HERE TO LISTEN TO. NYEH HEH HEH~”

You and Sans watched him power-walk ahead of you until he turned a corner and vanished from sight.

You snrked at the scenario and turned to Sans. “You’re so mean to him.”

“yeah, i’ve gotten pretty good at rattling his bones.” He shrugs.
You go to respond to him but a gust of chilly wind stops you in your tracks.

“Shhshit!” You rip your hand out of his to grab your arms, rubbing them to keep them warm. “That’s it, I’m going shopping for a new jacket tomorrow.”

“no need.” he said, taking off his jacket and holding it out to you “here, since i killed your other one.”

You accepted it and slung it around your shoulders. He had changed his wardrobe some for the colder seasons, even if he didn’t have to. The jacket was lined with soft wool and the hood had a fur lining. He wore the same regular T-shirt underneath, though. He couldn’t put forth the effort to change that. You pulled the hood up around your face and took a deep breath, reveling in your newfound warmth. The thought that it smelled like him flashed in your mind and you smiled.

“Thanks.” You tell him, shoving your hands in the jacket pockets. They were also wool-lined. “I’ll give it back to you when we get home.”

“it’s no big deal.” he said, reflexively going to shove his hands into pockets that weren’t there anymore. You snarked at him and watched his face turn the slightest tinge of blue in embarrassment. You took one of his hands in your own to act as a substitute.

You walked for a while in calm silence after that. The wind was determined to shake the last remaining leaves off of the trees and the night sky seemed paler than usual. The overcast clouds gave the sky a grey tint and dulled the glow of the yellow lamplights around you. There was barely anybody out on the streets and the world held a murky stillness about it that made you feel uneasy. You huddled yourself deeper in his jacket to avoid that feeling.

“So.” You say after a while, “Do you wanna talk about why you’re so down?”

You look at him and he frowns, turning his head from you. “not really.”

You rub your thumb against his carpus. “Are you still upset about ruining my sweater?”

“little bit.” he said, hunching his shoulders some.

“It’s just a sweater. I can buy a new one.” You tell him. “Actually, you can come with me when I get it. And we’ll get you something too, to cheer you up.”

“i’m not upset about the sweater.” he said. “i’m upset that i accidentally set it on fire.”

You nudge him with your shoulder. “It was just an accident though. You didn’t mean it.”

He glared at the ground and tightened his grip on your hand “i don’t have accidents.”

You wanted to reassure him, tell him that everyone has accidents, but you didn’t. The sight of your house in the distance made you sigh a breath of relief. The sight of Papyrus sitting outside and staring at the door, however, had you raising your eyebrow in confusion.

“What’s your brother still doing outside?”

“don’t know. hey! bro!” Sans yelled. His voice caused the taller skeleton to jump from his sitting position.

“WELL, IT’S ABOUT TIME YOU TWO SHOWED UP.” He said, loudly. “NOW WE CAN SOLVE THIS PREDICAMENT TOGETHER.”
“Predicament?” You tilted your head as you got closer. There didn’t seem to be any predicament.

He glanced over you both. “IT SEEMS AS THOUGH, IN MY HASTE TO RETURN HOME, THAT I FORGOT THAT I DID NOT HAVE MY HOUSE KEYS.”

You looked at Sans, and back to Papyrus. The fact that you were wearing his jacket went unmentioned. “Oh…uh. I don’t think I have mine either.” You say, checking your pockets with your unoccupied hand. All you had was your phone. “Crap, I think I left them on Toriel’s kitchen counter….”

“i don’t carry keys.” sans offered helpfully.

“YES. A MOST DAUNTING CONUNDRUM WE HAVE FOUND OURSELVES IN.” Papyrus observed as the wind blew at his cape. “FOR YOU SEE, EVEN THOUGH I COULD VERY EASILY JUMP THROUGH THE WINDOW TO UNLOCK THE DOOR, IT WOULD BRING MANY MORE PROBLEMS TO SOLVE. LIKE A BROKEN WINDOW, WHICH IS AN UNSIGHTLY THING TO HAVE ON OUR HOUSE. IT WOULD ALSO LET IN ANNOYING UNWANTED WIND AT UNCOMFORTABLE TIMES.”

“I would also have yelled at you if you’d have broken another window.” You let him know.

He plopped back down onto the ground “YES, THAT TOO.”

You return your hand to it’s pocket and turn to Sans. “Hey, can you teleport in and open the door for us? If his keys are in the house then I can just go back to Toriel’s tomorrow.”

A bead of sweat appeared on his forehead and he shifted his eyes to the side. “uh…”

“THAT’S A GREAT IDEA.” Papyrus encouraged, jumping up again to loom over the both of you. “HE CAN DO THAT, OR TELEPORT TO TORIEL’S TO GRAB YOUR KEYS, SO WE CAN HAVE ALL OF THEM.”

“y’know…actually…” He untwined his hand from yours and brought it up to scratch nervously at the back of his head. Two more sweat beads appeared. “i’m not really feelin’ up to it right now… kinda still tired from the party.”

You put your hands together. “C’mon, please? I really don’t want Papyrus breaking another window.”

He looked between you and Papyrus a few times before shrugging his shoulders in defeat, stepping away from the both of you as his blue eye flashed to life. He was gone from your sight in the blink of an eye.

“shit.”

You and Papyrus look at each other, and then whip around to the house where your eyes are immediately drawn to the roof, where Sans was doing his best not to slide down the roof tiles.

“Sans?” You call up to him. “That’s not inside.”

He looked down at the both of you as he tried to keep his balance. The nervousness on his face was apparent. “uh…yeah. i figured i’d, y’know…get to the top of the problem…” He trailed off, joke falling flat. The expression on his face seemed halfway between panic and nervous.

“SANS, THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BE FOOLING AROUND.” Papyrus yelled up at him
“GET DOWN HERE THIS INSTANT.”

“right...yeah.” His blue eye glowed as he concentrated, and then flickered suddenly before he disappeared again. You waited for a few seconds and wondered if he had teleported himself inside this time, or if he went somewhere else.

A loud rustle from a tree behind you and a strained Sans-esque noise confirmed the latter. You and Papyrus turn to see him caught in the branches, one poking through the empty space where his stomach would be. His scared expression and haphazard limbs in the tree made it look like he’d been impaled on the branch.

Concern shot through every fiber of your being.

“What’s going on?!” You yell up to him as he struggled with the branches.

“y-yeah” He stuttered, moving some and ripping his shirt on the branch. “i’m...fine. just...hanging out...heheheh”

He was clearly not fine.

Papyrus, now grasping that this might not be Sans fooling around, approached the tree with furrowed brows. He was just as concerned as you. “SANS, THIS ISN’T FUNNY.”

“Do you think you can get down?” You ask the shorter skeleton from your place. He moves his limbs into a more comfortable position in the tree before frowning. His eye blinks blue one more time and the next time you look, he’s next to you in a heap on the ground. You kneel down to help sit him up as Papyrus looms over you both. The tears in his shirt concern you more than they should.

“Sans…” You start, softly. “What’s going on? What was all that about.”

He moves his left hand up to hold it over his eye. You can see the blue pulsing behind his phalanges and your worry only gets worse. “i...i don’t know.”

Papyrus kneeled down to both of you and had an obvious look of worry on his face. His voice was low when he spoke. Low and nervous. “Brother…”

San’s eye widened and sparked dangerously at the word, fear and blue magic enveloping him until he was no longer in your arms. He was no longer anywhere. You jumped up quickly and checked around you, just in case he’d reappear in some other place, but he didn’t. He wasn’t anywhere that you could see him.

“WHERE DID HE GO?!” Papyrus was starting to panic. He’d clearly never encountered anything like this with Sans before. You hadn’t encountered it either.

You pulled out your phone, an idea popping into your head. “I don’t know. I’ll text him.”

- Hey, are you there? Where are you? -

You didn’t even know if he had his phone on him. Your silent prayers were answered when your phone beeped with a response.

- on a bench in waterfall -

You sighed a breath of relief, turning to Papyrus. “I know where he is.”
“GOOD.” His voice regained it’s natural volume. “THEN WE CAN GO TO HIM IMMEDIATELY.”

You shake your head. “I don’t think that’s a good idea. He’s having some sort of problem and, as great as it would be to have you with me, I think having you there would make things worse.”

He saddened at your words, corners of his mouth moving down. “OH...WELL...WHAT SHOULD I DO?”

“Why don’t you go back to Toriel’s and grab my keys, and then I’ll go get Sans and bring him home.” You suggest. You saw in his face that he didn’t like the idea of not being there for his brother, but his expression shifted as the realization that your plan was probably the best one to follow hit him.

“OKAY...I’LL GO BACK TO TORIEL’S AND GET THE KEYS. CAN I TRUST YOU TO BRING HIM BACK SAFELY?”

You nod at him, seriously. “You can bet my life on it.”

“GOOD. VERY GOOD.” He said. “I WILL KEEP YOU TO THAT.”

“I know you will, big guy.” You say, sending off a text to Sans as Papyrus started down the street.

- I’m coming for you, don’t go anywhere. -
  - wasn’t planning on it. -

You sighed heavily and started heading towards Mt. Ebott.

Chapter End Notes

I'm particularly happy with this chapter.

I live for your comments.
You can tell in the chapter names, when the theme starts to change, and when the atmosphere changes with it. It makes me really happy watching the mood shift via titles.

It took you much longer than you’d hoped to get to Waterfall. The walk to Mt Ebott itself took an hour, even with some running. By the time you’d gotten to the dark caverns you were completely out of breath, clutching Sans’ jacket to you to prevent it from getting wet as you waded through the streams to get to the bridge seed room. It took you all of ten seconds to make the bridge that led off to the hidden room you knew Sans had to be in.

Your heart dropped when you finally laid your eyes on him.

He was hunched over on the bench, head between his hands as his phone sat next to him. His shirt was still torn from the branches and his entire body looked like it was ready to fall to the ground if it was given the slightest push over.

You wanted to run to him and pull him into your arms, but you didn’t know what he would do at the sudden contact. You could blink and he’d be gone again, and then you’d have no way of finding him.

He looked up when he heard your ragged breathing and his eyes widened slightly. You figure you must look a bit messy for him to look at you like that. Your face was probably red and your hair was probably a mess from running. The bottoms of your pants were also soaked. You probably looked as out of it as he did.

You walk over to the bench and sit down next to him, leaving a few inches of space between you just in case.

“Hey…”

“...hey.”

There was a brief silence after the two word exchange. Questions lingered in the air that you knew you weren’t going to get answers to unless you plucked them down and offered them to him.

“So…” You start, nervously fiddling with the hem of the blue jacket around you with one hand and running your other through your messed up blonde hair. “Now do you wanna talk about it?”

Dejavu from earlier hits you and you hoped the conversation would be different this time.

“not really.” He mimics, also from earlier. “but i don’t really have a choice, do i?”

“You always have a choice.” You tell him, moving your hand to his shoulder comfortably. He didn’t flinch at it and you took it as a good sign. “But i’m really worried about you, and I want you to talk to me. Papyrus is worried too.”
He flinched at the mention of his brother, clearly unnerved by the fact that the enthusiastic skeleton was concerned for him. Like he was afraid of Papyrus’s concern. He turned away from you and gripped his shorts. When it became obvious that he wasn’t going to say anything else, you filled the silence.

“Are you having problems with your magic?”

You watched sweat coat the side of his skull, hands gripping his pants harder. You’d hit the nail on the head. Taking advantage of the silence, you scooched closer to him, putting a hand over one of his trembling ones.

“Sans…”

“this wasn’t supposed to happen.”

His sudden words shocked you, but you didn’t move.

“What do you mean, ‘this wasn’t supposed to happen?’” You ask him. He turned to you slightly and you could see the lines on his face had run deeper. He didn’t just look tired, he looked like he was about to drop dead.

“i mean, this wasn’t supposed to happen.” He repeats, sandwiching your hand between his. “none of this was.”

“You’re being cryptic and vague again.” You tell him, furrowing your brow. “Sans, what are you hiding from me?”

He grips your hand hard and stares at it, taking a deep breath. “there wasn’t supposed to be an after.” He starts. You raise an eyebrow as he continues. “it was just supposed to end, quickly and quietly. a human was supposed to come into the underground, run around, do whatever the humans did, and whatever happened at the end of it was just supposed to be it. that’s what i’d planned for. i didn’t plan for...this.” he says, lifting your hand for emphasis. “i didn’t plan for a human to reset all of my hard work.”

“All of your hard…” You blink at him, confused. “Sans you’re really confusing me.”

“You’re not gonna get a straight answer out of him.”

You both flinch at the high pitched voice. You curse loudly and shoot up off the bench. Sans has your hand in a death grip as he looks around too, nervously. Your eyes are immediately drawn to the blue flower next to the bench, and you squint your eyes in anticipation.

You’re disappointed and startled by a tap on your shoulder. You spin around and see Flowey planted firmly in the ground, one rooted vine poking out of the earth to wave at you teasingly.

“Howdy.”

Rage fills your entire body and you rip your hand out of Sans’ grasp.

“No,” You start “why is it that every time something important happens, or something upsetting happens, you show up just to rub it in my face?!” You loom over him and he leans back, saccharine grin plastered on his annoying yellow face as he shifts his eyes to the side. You reach down and grab his root, pulling him up to your eye level. He doesn’t even look bothered when your fingers clasp around what would be his throat, and is grinning pretty wide when you put your face into his.

“How do you even manage to find me?! Why do you always seem to know exactly when to show
“up to piss me off the most?! What is your damage?!”

“he’s stalking you.” You hear Sans say dejectedly from the bench. You turn around to look at him with confusion in your eyes. “like he was programmed to.”

Your eyes widen “Programmed?”

Flowey’s grin widened too. “Oooooh, that look in your eyes. Seems like you’re finally getting to the bottom of all this.”

“Shut up.” You tell him, squeezing his neckvine and turning to Sans. “Sans, I want answers, right now. From the beginning. What the hell is going on?”

With a heavy sigh, Sans stood up from his place on the bench and walked over to you, taking your hand and uncurling it from Flowey’s vine before turning to him.

“hey. piss off for a bit.”

“No can do, bossman.” He said, grinning up at him. “You know the rules.”

He seemed to glare at him before taking your hand and leading you back to the bench. The casual exchange between them, like they were close acquaintances instead of enemies, made you nervous. You wanted to ask him about it but chose not to. You’d be asking a lot of questions in a little while anyway. He sat down and looked off to the side.

“...i haven’t been completely honest with you.” He says. You scoff at him.

“Gee, you think?”

You’re irritated at him, but the look he gives you prevents you from talking again. You settle into his jacket, prepping yourself for whatever he’s about to throw your way.

He takes a deep breath. “this’s gonna be a long story…” he says, looking off to the side.

“alright so...once upon a time, there was a scientist named gaster.”
Hey, who's up for some backstory huh? ;;D

I’m seriously gunning for 2000 kudos on this fic by the time I finish putting act 2 out. Help me get there!!

“It’ll be brilliant Sans, just you wait.”

There he went again, in another one of his dreamy tirades. Every time he talked to you now left a goofy grin on your face. He was so optimistic about the future, and his new discoveries. You were just as excited for him. After all, it’s not every day your older brother discovers another universe.

“i don’t doubt it.” You tell him, shoving your hands into the pockets of your lab coat. You trailed along behind him as he fidgeted with the knobs on his machine, his face alight with an almost childlike wonder that didn’t suit the professional science-oriented skeleton you’d grown up with. “making a machine to find another universe is a pretty big deal.”

It wasn’t a particularly big machine. It reached the ceiling and was comprised of two parts. The control console of the machine and an open rectangle on it’s left that served as a doorframe.

"It’s not just about finding another universe.” He said, standing up straight to regain his posture and composure. He pulled at the collar of his black turtleneck to ‘fix’ it and adjusted his glasses. You rolled your eyes at him and the explanation you knew he was about to go on. You’d heard it before, but you didn’t mind hearing it again. As long as it made him happy. “It’s a portal to countless universes. A gateway, if you will, to the endless possibilities that they hold. Think about it, entire worlds and galaxies that our sciences haven’t touched yet. Think of the potential this will hold for our world. We can travel through the stars and spacetime to find cures, algorithms, different dimensions. Different possibilities. Did you know that there’s a universe where the humans and monsters incited a war between each other, thousands of years ago? It’s amazing.” He stroked the side of the machine longingly. “It’s everything I’ve worked so hard to achieve, and I’m this close to finishing it. It’s such a shame Papyrus doesn’t share our thirst for knowledge in the scientific field. He would appreciate this so much”

“he appreciates it. he just appreciates cooking and action figures more.” You say, smiling. Both of your brothers had their interests. You were content with sitting back and watching them both be happy. Of course, you had your pursuits too, but they were nowhere near as ambitious as Gasters. Within almost no time he’d become an important, respected member of the community between monsters and humans alike. He’d built a laboratory that was renowned worldwide and had important political figures asking him for scientific and environmental help virtually every week.

You helped too, of course. You were the one that wrote the code that made the machine work. But you didn’t want any of the fame or glory for it. No, you were perfectly content riding on the labcoat-tails of your Brother’s work.
“And what about you, brother?” He turned to you “Any luck on your programming?”

“some.” you tell him, walking out of the room to your own machine setup. With all the commotion around the building about Gaster’s universal machine, your own work was almost completely forgotten. Of course, it was convenient that you two had your own building floor. It made walking everywhere so much easier.

Your work setup was similar to your brothers, in the aspect that there was a large flat circular pad-like machine hooked up to several computers on your side. But while he had been tampering with the spacetime continuum, you’d been dabbling with something a bit more your style.

A universe jumping machine was pretty impressive, but you thought that a matter creator was just as impressive. After all, being able to create something out of nothing was what your magic was suited for best.

“it’s nothing fancy, just a little side project.” You tell him, typing in a few letters and pressing the enter key. The teleporter pad lit up and sparked a bright color blue, leaving a large vaguely dragon-esque skull hovering in the air. The skull opened it’s eyes and stuck out it’s tongue, floating over to Gaster. He leaned back and away from it as it panted and you grinned. “i call it a ‘gaster blaster’” You watched the gasterblaster sniff your brother as he leaned backwards, obviously repulsed. It was like watching a large puppy and a timid child interact.

“Why would you name it after me.” he said as the blasterhead circled him happily. “It looks nothing like me.”

You leaned back in your chair, putting your arms behind your head. “oh, i dunno. i guess ‘cause i was hoping it’d blow you away.”

“We’re not keeping it.” He said defiantly, cautiously reaching up to pet it and ignoring your joke. “As...charming as it is.”

“it’ll grow on you.” You tell him, whistling at the dragonhead to return to you. It happily floated over to the pad and, with a few key clicks, was dematerialized before your eyes. You closed out of the program and scratched the back of your skull. “besides, i don’t really have any plans for where i’ll use it. it’s too powerful.”

“Powerful?”

Gaster’s voice was closer than you expected it to be. Looking up you found him right behind you, staring at your screen and adjusting his glasses.

You shrugged. “yeah, it can uh, shoot beams of concentrated energy that can disintegrate whatever it touches.”

He squinted at you, baffled. “Why in the world could you possibly need something like that?”

You shrugged again and look off to the side. “final boss?”

“Final...oh for the love of...” He reached down and grabbed your mouse, maneuvering to click and open a program filled with concept codes and various character designs. He turned toward you and frowned as you looked to the side harder, intent on avoiding his gaze. You could feel the sweat start to bead your skull as you smiled nervously. “Still with this?”
“a guy’s gotta have his hobbies.” You tell him, taking the mouse from him and exiting out of the program and pulling the jump drive out of your modem. “it’s practically almost done. i even made a helpful program for when the player decides to backtrack. It’ll be watching them every step of the way.”

“Video games are not a hobby, Sans. They’re a distraction.” He said, straightening up and adjusting his glasses again. “Honestly, you’re one of the brightest engineering minds i’ve had the pleasure to work with, but you’re so adamant about this...sidequest...that you completely neglect your true calling. You should take responsibility for your work, especially since you’ll be in charge of the building when I leave.”

You turn your chair to look at him. Leave? This was the first time you’ve heard of this. “what.”

“Oh yes, I forgot to mention.” He says, turning his back toward you. “The portal I’ve created only works one way, considering there is presumably no portal in wherever I choose to visit. Once I step through the threshold of time and space, I’ll be leaving this universe behind. Coincidentally, I’ll also be leaving my previous works in your more than capable hands.”

He said it so matter-of-factly that it took you off guard. You stood up from your chair and approached him, more sweat coating your head. “gaster, c’mon bro. you can’t just...leave. that’s crazy talk”

“Oh, but I can.” He turned towards you, his beaming expression a stark contrast to your worried one. “The boundaries of this world will no longer affect me. I can enter a universe where I am all-seeing. Omniscient and Omnipotent. It will be wonderful. And in my knowledge I will build another machine, and bring you and our brother with me. I will create a world where all three of us can be happy together, with all the knowledge that the universes have to offer.”

You balled your fists in anger “that’s insane. we’re all perfectly happy right now. what about our lives here? you’re gonna throw it away for this?”

“You may be happy, but me...” he sighed and looked at you. No, he looked through you. “I have always been destined for great things, Sans. A mind like mine...the world can only give so much until it becomes boring and dull. Even with the assurances of the people around me I have become so tired of the mundane routine that this universe has come to offer. The search beyond, to other planets and other lifeforms, it interests me not. No, I can feel it in my bones. I’m meant to be out there, exploring the infinities that lie beyond the stars. My life was meant for more than this.”

“bullshit.” You reach up to grab his black turtleneck, tugging at it enough for him to lean forwards. “i know you, gas. you won’t be satisfied with that either. what’ll happen to you when you do get your infinite knowledge, huh? will that become boring too? what then?”

He placed one of his hands gently on top of yours. He didn’t push it away. “No.” He tells you, closing his eyes once and then opening them wide. A smile unlike any regular smile plasters itself on his face and it terrifies you.

“I will become god.”

You release his shirt and immediately take several steps back, accidentally running into your computer chair. You watch him clear his throat, his serene smile and half-lidded eyes back on his face.
“It’s really very straightforward, dear brother.” He says. The regular calm and sweet tone in his voice is gone now, all you hear is sickly molasses. “I trust you to handle things when I’m gone.”

You ball your hands tightly and steady yourself, the flash drive in your palm creaking at the pressure. “so that’s it then. you’re just going to leave me? papyrus? everything we’ve done together? did none of it mean anything to you?”

“Oh no, brother, it meant everything to me.” He said, taking a step towards you. “Which is why I’ll keep the thought of you with me when I transcend the realm of magic and men.”

You went to protest but a knock interrupted your thoughts. You both turned to the lab door where one of the human interns had poked her head in. She had long blonde hair with two lighter streaks coming down the front. You’ve seen her before, several times. She worked in the engineering lab.

“Doctor Gaster?” She said with a raised eyebrow, looking between you two. “Your four o’clock appointment is here. They’re waiting in the lobby for you.”

“Excellent. Thank you Kylee. I’ll be down to see them shortly.”

She gave you two one more look before poking her head back out, closing the door behind her. He turned his back towards you and started towards the door.

“Well, brother, I must be off. But rest assured, when the times comes to fulfill my destiny, I will have both you and Papyrus there to send me off with a smile.”

“and what time would that be exactly?” you ask him, a bit more venomously than you’d intended.

“7pm tomorrow.” He said, opening the door and smiling at you. “Don’t worry. Everything is going to be just fine, you’ll see.”

The venom lingered in you as he closed the door. You were enraged. You’d excused his holier-than-thou attitude over the past several years on the basis that his genius had properly backed up his claims, but this was the last straw. To think that he could leave and never come back and have you face all of the ramifications for it was insane. You couldn’t let it happen. You weren’t ready for the responsibility.

But what could you do to stop him? How could you make it so that whatever world he went to, you would still have him.

You looked down at the jump drive in your hand and clutch it tightly.

“I am, truly, so glad to have both of your here with me in my last moments on this plane.”

You clutched your hands in your jacket pockets. It was 7:15pm and there was only three of you in the lab. You, Papyrus, and Gaster. You’d stripped down to your casual clothes for the night, a white shirt, blue hoodie, and black jogging shorts with white slippers. Papyrus was also wearing his casual wear. A crop-top that said ‘Cool Dude’ and blue gym shorts with a backwards hat and sneakers. You were never one to criticize his style. He kinda did what he wanted to half the time. Besides, he was still pretty young-minded.

“Gaster, don’t say it like that.” Papyrus stepped forward. “You make it sound like you’re dying.”
“Not dying, transcending. Don’t look so down about it.” He said, unclipping his badge from his labcoat and shrugging it off his shoulders. “This is a new beginning for me. A whole new world of opportunities lies around the corner.”

“Yes! And that’s wonderful! But…” Papyrus looked at you, but continued to talk to Gaster. “What about us?”

You watched as Gaster strode towards you, putting the badge in your hand and then moving to hang his labcoat up on one of the deck chairs. “You will be fine. Sans will be in charge while I am gone.”

You grip the badge and half-glare at him. Oh, you’ll be in charge alright.

“I know you have not been home enough, brother.” Papyrus said, crossing his arms. “But Sans can barely take charge of himself.”

“he’s got a point.” You say, pocketing the badge and shrugging, playing along. “i’m a huge mess.”

“Your attempts to stop me are noble, but I’ve made up my mind.” He said, assuredly. He walked over to the machine and fired it up. “I’ve chosen a world where Monsters and Humans have been separated from each other for centuries. In this world I will become someone great, and when I have reached my peak I will build a new machine and go to the next one.”

“But, will you ever come back?” Papyrus asked him, clutching his hands together.

“Perhaps.” He said, going to stand in front of the portal. “But this world is dark for me. I would much prefer to be bathed in the light of what tomorrow will bring. Besides, this next experiment seems very, very interesting. What do you two think?”

“i think you’re insane.” You say, quickly. “but i’m not going to stop you.”

“Noted.” He said, turning to Papyrus. “And you?”

You could hear your brother’s bones rattling slightly in fear. As if he finally understood how serious the situation was. “I...I don’t like it. I don’t want you to go.” He fidgeted with the hem of his shirt. “...But if it makes you happy, I will send you off, with a smile!”

“That’s the spirit.” He said, clapping his hands together. He took one look behind him into the portal, and then back to the two of you. “This will be my last endeavor, so, to both of you, I have some words.”

You raised an eyebone. Gaster wasn’t the sentimental type.

He sighed. “In all my years of scientific discovery, and everything that I have created, I have but one regret. That is, that I did not spend enough time with the both of you.” He started. You furrowed your brow and frowned. He continued.

“Looking back now on my work, I realize that those precious moments that I gave up in my pursuit of knowledge are things I cannot get back and, at this point, do not deserve.” He took a step forward and placed a hand on both of your skulls, on your cheeks. You could feel water well up in your eye that you swore wasn’t there a second ago. “The only thing that is greater than my ambition, is my love for both of you. And though it does not show it, that love will transcend the boundaries of this world and protect you in my wake. No matter where I go or what
universe I find myself in, know this. I will always love both of you, for as long as I am alive.”

You reached your hand up to grasp his. Both you and Papyrus were crying now.

You felt a chill go up your spine and you feel like you’ve made a terrible mistake.

“gas…” you say, gripping his hand hard. “don’t leave us.”

“I’m sorry.” He says, pulling away from the both of you. “But I have to do this.”

You watched him step back into the machine without another word. The portal flashed black as he faded through the rip in space and in no time at all, he was gone.

You blink once and then race to your console in the next room. No. No no no no no no.

Papyrus watched as you booted up your computer, typing in several keys and materializing a set of headphones on your warp pad. He walked over to you, sniffling.”

“Brother? What are you doing?” You could still hear the sadness in his voice from Gaster’s leave. You take the headphones and hand them to him.

“here pap, put these on.”

He takes them from you and looks at you questioningly, but obliges. “Is there a reason why?” He said, adjusting them and raising his volume. “I CANNOT HEAR MYSELF TALK VERY WELL.”

“good.” You say, typing in a few more keys until a remote like device pops out of the pad. You pick it up. “’cause you’re not gonna like what i’m about to say.”

“What?” he yelled before you pressed a button on the remote. The headphones activated, sending an electrical shock through papyrus’s body until he fell to his knees, slumping over unconsciously. You felt bad, having to knock him out, but it was necessary. Everything you were doing was absolutely necessary.

You opened the drawer to your desk and pulled out the photo album. It was filled with pictures of you and your coworkers at various parties. Different scientific divisions and several friends, and a few of Papyrus and Gaster as well. You’d take it with you, as a reminder. As motivation to get back. You held it and walked over to Papyrus, lifting up his body with your magic and walking towards Gaster’s machine. You pressed a few buttons on it and it opened to the same universe that Gaster had teleported himself into. The one that you had tampered with. The one that you had semi-created. The one you were going to save him from.

“we’re going in after him.”

It was dark when you woke up. Dark and cold. This barely registered in your mind as you sat up, blinking several times to register your surroundings.

The first thing that registered was that you were alone, the only thing lying next to you was the scrapbook you’d been clutching when you walked through the portal. The second thing that registered was that you were in a forest, coated in thick white blankets of snow. Something you were completely not accustomed to. The trees stretched far up into the air and the sky was dark. Was it night time here?
You stood up, half-panicked as you looked around for any sign of Papyrus at all, but he was nowhere. You grabbed the photo book and held it in one arm, cupping your mouth with the other in an attempt to echo your voice.

“papyrus!” You called out to the empty wood, echoes of your voice bouncing off the trees and reverberating back to you. The dark barks stared back at you and you felt dread well up in your nonexistent stomach.

A giggle from behind you made you jump. It was high pitched and it unnerved you. You turned to see what it was and you were met with a friendly face. One you immediately distrusted.

“Howdy.” The yellow flower said. It’s petals were bright beacons of sunshine in the dark and you narrowed your eyes at it. “You look lost.”

“You could say that.” you humor it, shoving a hand in one of your jacket pockets. “i’m not from around here.”

“I’ll say.” He said, bouncing slightly. “I’ve never seen you before, and I know everybody down here.”

Your eyes widen. Ah. So this was the one. You smiled at him.

“Well, that’s a relief. i guess you’re gonna be the one to tell me how things work down here?”

It winked at you and stuck out it’s tongue. Precocious little thing it was. “That’s right mister. This is the Underground and down here, things are pretty straightforward.”

You watched as white pellets surrounded the flower, it’s face contorting into a wicked grin. You found yourself mirroring it in anticipation.

“Down here, it’s K I L L O R B E K I L L E D.”

The bullets made a beeline for you and you took a step back. Not because you were scared or anything, but because you wanted room. You felt your eye blaze blue as several bones shot out of the ground, forming an impenetrable barrier in front of you. You watched the flower’s face turn from sinister to horrified as it’s pellets bounced off of your wall and scatter to the wind. The bone wall dissipates back into the ground and the snow in front of you settles. You take a step forward and the flower cowers back, clearly afraid. He knows he bit off much more than he can chew, but he doesn’t know the half of it. You smile at your newfound power, satisfied. This was what you wanted.

“listen here, kid.” You tell it, light fading from your eye as they return to normal. “i know your deal. you show up whenever someone new appears, give them your spiel, and then act as their friend because you’re empty inside, right?”

The flower looks stunned and scared as it listens to you, shivering and looking to the side. It smiled nervously in an attempt to save face “How...how do you know that? You’ve never met me before?”

You stoop down to his level, squatting in the snow. “you’re flowey, right? i’m sans. sans the skeleton. one of a few. you see any other skeletons around here, bud?”

He turned his gaze to you and shook more. Poor thing looked like he was about ready to wilt under you. He clearly wasn’t prepared for you. “Yeah...uh...one guy. Skeleton guy. Kinda tall, real loud, showed up yesterday in Snowdin. Kept walkin’ around in dumb clothes and calling himself great.”
You sighed. Sounds like Papyrus. “any others?”

It looked off to the right side. Wavering. “Uh...no. Not here.”

He was lying. You flashed your blue eye again and it cowered down into the snow. “where.”

“Y-years ago.” It blurted out. “There was one skeleton, a long time ago. Doctor Gaster? He worked with...the king. Was the Royal Scientist for a while. Kind of an uppity guy, thought he was better than everyone. He didn’t say it out loud but you could tell.”

You shift the album under your arm. “where is he now?”

Flowey laughed nervously. “Gone.”

You grimace at him “gone where.”

“I-I don’t know! Nobody knows!” He said, shrinking under your glare. “He just...disappeared one day, without a trace! Nobody remembers him. Well...almost nobody. I remember him.”

“you remember everything.” You tell him, knowing full well what he was created to be. A guide, a tracker, a memory seed. You didn’t create him here, not entirely, but you did decide his purpose.

“Y-yeah.” He said, straightening up a bit as you turned off your magic. “But...how do you know that?”

You stood up, brushing off your shorts. “let’s just say, i’m the closest thing this world has to a god.”

It scoffed at you, but you could see the sweat on it’s forehead. “I don’t believe you.”

“you don’t have to.” You tell it. “all you have to do is watch and wait.”

“Hmph.” It said, looking away from you. “And what makes you think I’m going to listen to you?”

You turn towards it, lights in your eyes fading as you grin menacingly at it.

“do you want to find out what happens if you don’t?”

It squealed and it’s eyes shrunk. “You’re a freak! A real psychopath!”

“maybe.” You say, eyes fixing themselves once again. You’d used too much of this new energy. “be a good flower and leaf me alone. and if you come anywhere near my brother, i’ll weed you right out of the ground.”

He nodded in fear and disappeared into the ground. You sighed. Kill or be killed, huh? You’d have to keep your eyes out for any suspicious activity here, then.

First thing’s first, you had to find Papyrus. And your best bet would be wherever this Snowdin place was.

You gripped the photo album and started down the snowy path.

_________________________________________________________________________

“BROTHER, THERE YOU ARE.”

You heard his voice before you saw him and a wave of relief washed through your bones. You felt
the wind knocked out of you as you were lifted up into the air, bony arms circling you tightly. You’ve never been more happy to have the life squeezed out of you. Papyrus released you and you fell to the ground.

“I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU ALL DAY TODAY. AND YESTERDAY. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?” He chastised you. You shook your head and took him in. He looked the exact same as he did when you jumped through the portal, just louder.

“oh, y’know just, flakin’ around” You said, waving off some of the falling snowflakes and grinning. He huffed at you.

“YOU ARE ALWAYS FLAKING.” He says, crossing his arms. “BUT WORRY NOT, IN YOUR ABSENCE I HAVE MADE MANY FRIENDS, AND HAVE LEARNED MANY THINGS. BUT I WILL TELL YOU THIS WHEN WE GET HOME”

“home?” You ask, and he shakes his head at you.

“YES SANS. HOME. WHERE WE LIVE. HONESTLY, TRY TO KEEP UP.”

You nod at him and he turns to head off into the town, presumably to wherever it was that you were now living. You watched the residents of the snowy town wave at your brother with smiles. He’d obviously been busy in your absence. You found yourself smiling, too, as you approached the elegant looking two story house. Papyrus stopped in front of it, unlocking the door and stepping inside.

You take in the house around you and you’re surprised to see how nicely it’s furnished. Like it’s been here much longer than a day. It looks like it’s been here for years.

“Oh, I HAVE ALSO BEEN INVITED TO A COSTUME PARTY!” He says, taking off his hat and leaving it on the table by the front door “SO, I SUPPOSE I’M GOING TO HAVE TO WORK ON SOMETHING FOR THAT. YOU CAN HELP, IF YOU WANT. WHAT IS THAT UNDER YOUR ARM?”

You blink and then remember the album you were holding and open it to a random page. It’s one of the pages of you and several of your coworkers at a party, drinking and having a good time. He looks over your shoulder at it and you can hear the bones in his face creak as he grit his teeth together.

“IS THIS WHERE YOU’VE BEEN? GALLIVANTING AROUND WITH GOD KNOWS WHO FOR AN ENTIRE DAY? HOW IRRESPONSIBLE.”

He walks away from you and heads upstairs, presumably to his bedroom, and you gawk after him. He should have known the people in the book. He’d met plenty of them before, at christmas parties. Did he forget about them? Did this world wipe his memories? Did you wipe his memories? You close the book as he pops his head out of his room.

“Well? ARE YOU GOING TO HELP ME OR NOT?”

You look between him and the book. If he’s forgotten who the people in the book are, then he’s forgotten about Gaster. He’s forgotten about his old life completely. You were the only one who remembered. The memory of his smiling face outside when he greeted all of those other monsters flashed through your mind, and you sighed heavily.

If he was happy here, with no memory of his past, then maybe...maybe it was for the better. The portal only works one way, and you only had so much control over what happened here. Gaster
was gone and Papyrus was all you had left now.

If it made him happy, you’d be a part of this world too.

“sure, bro.” you said, putting the album down on the table. “i’ll do everything i can.”
“So...you lied to me.” You pull your hand out of his grasp. “About everything.”

He looked down and to the side, avoiding your gaze. You’d avoid your gaze too. It took a minute for the shock of his story to settle in, and turn into anger.

“And you thought that I wouldn’t find out? You thought I wouldn’t be mad? That what, this entire world is some sort of...weird altered sort of video game you messed with because you wanted to pull a prank on your brother? Because you couldn’t handle the responsibility of him leaving?! What kind of sick joke is that?!” You yell at him. You can hear Flowey sniggering behind you but you pay it no mind, standing up from the bench. “What about me, huh? Was I just another...algorithm? A player in your whacked out game universe?! Was I a test run or something?!

Am I even real?!”

“no!” he shouts, standing up with his hands out to you, palms facing you to calm you down. “i mean, yes. i mean...god dammit. you’re real. you’re very real and that’s what’s so messed up.”

You’re clutching your fists so hard you can feel your nails digging into your palms. You ignore it. “What’s so messed up about me being real? Did I come along and ruin all of your hard work? Is that what it is? Am I just one huge accident?”

“S H U T U P .”

His eye flared and sparked, loudly. Flames erupting from his skull as he stood before you, shirt torn and waving in the wind that was his power. You took a step back, clutching your heart through the fabric of his jacket. Flowey appeared next to him, smirking.

“Oooooh, You made him mad.”

One glare from Sans had him backing down, shrinking back towards you. A second glare from you had him rethink his position and he moved himself behind the bench instead, to use it as a shield. San’s eye sparked again before going out and he wobbled, catching the back of the bench and falling back onto it, exhausted. Sweat coated his skull and you could tell that he didn’t mean to cause the flare. Your concern for him overpowered your anger and you went to approach him, but he held up a hand to you again and you stopped.

“i didn’t make this world. i just modified it.” he said, sweat dripping down from his head to eave drops on his shirt. “i didn’t mean for it to be a prank. i was going to go in after him anyway, to pull him out. i planned on making a new machine but when i found out what had happened to him, that he’d disappeared into the fabric of space and time here, i tried to make a machine to bring him back, but it failed. i wasn’t good enough.” he said, lights fading from his eyes. “i couldn’t save my brother from my own mistake, and papyrus doesn’t even remember who he is. i lived with that pain every day of my life, and then a human came along.” He looked up at you, white dots back in place, but smaller. “a human named chara.”

You gulped and took a step back. “Me...”

“yeah...you.” He said, running a hand down his face “except your name wasn’t chara, not at first. it was something else, i can’t remember. you went through so many resets with different names, it’s hard for me to pinpoint which one was first. but you came anyway, and your soul was stronger than flowey’s, which put you in control of this world.”
“Yeah, asshole.” Flowey quipped from his place behind the bench. “I had to reset tons of times ’cause of this guy, and then you happened.”

“watch your fucking language.” Sans directed at him. He shimmied back under the bench before Sans could continue. “you heard the story though, of the first human that came down here. the one that asriel over here befriended and lived with like a sibling.”

You nodded at him. All of this information made your brain hurt, but you listened intently. “Yeah. The one that died.”

“yeah, turns out, they weren’t that great a kid. you didn’t get this far in any of your resets so i’ll tell you.” He said, shifting in his seat “the kid hated humanity with a passion and had a pretty nasty sense of humor. worse than mine. one of their pranks was to die, have asriel absorb their soul, break through the barrier, and then rampage through the upper world killing everything in it’s path before coming back down here to finish the job.”

Your eyes widen, horrified. What kind of human could possibly want something like that.

“thankfully, that didn’t happen.” He continued. You took note that Floweys expression from under the bench looked upset, almost morose. “asriel fought chara for control and came back to the underground, beaten up enough that he died. their combined ashes spread across the flowerbed in the ruins and that was that, until alphys happened.”

You moved slowly, to sit next to him on the bench, enraptured in this new story.

“she was already the royal scientist by the time i got here. she took over for my brother. the king had put the task on her to find a way to break the barrier by using the human souls he’d already gathered, and she’d developed a way to isolate determination and inject it into fallen monsters, as a test. needless to say, her tests failed.”

“What did she do then?” You asked him, leaning in.

He turned to you. “she had the idea to inject determination into something without a soul. something important. she created a being with no heart or mind, but one that was just very determined anyway.” He moved to look under the bench, where Flowey was. You mirrored him and looked at the flower too. The pieces lined up in your head.

“She created Flowey?”

“yup. she created him, i gave him a purpose.”

You look back at him. “What kind of purpose?”

“Watching, waiting.” Flowey answered for him, popping out from behind the bench and in front of you instead. “Meeting and greeting. Saying ‘Howdy hello’ and then watching the humans that fell down into the caverns through their journeys. Not very many of them made it as far as the castle. You were the first, Frisk was the second.” The flower said, mildly annoyed.

You looked from him to Sans “Then...what about me? What did I do?”

“You, kiddo, messed everything up.” he said, pointing at you with a gun-hand and clicking it. “your soul was stronger than flowey’s determination, so you took control of the underground. saved, reset, did whatever you wanted, and then left frisk to open the world to everyone, but each time you reset you started back in that flower patch, covered in the first charas ashes. eventually it got to you, and you went around killing everybody. we know now that you didn't mean it, but chara was
the name that clung to you the strongest. You restarted everything so that we could all be free to roam the earth.”

“Which is why he’s freaking out.” Flowey said, smirking. He popped up behind Sans, stretching his vine to sidle up to him. “He made his powers relative to the world down here, closed off and easily manageable. But you came and rewrote all of his work. The world’s too big now and it’s too much for him. His power can’t control it all, so it’s fizzling out! Getting more and more erratic until it gets to be too much, and it’ll get so big he won’t be able to contain it anymore!” Flowey said with a sadistic grin, turning to you. “And you tried so hard to give everyone a happy ending, but all you did was doom the person you wanted to save the most! The Irony’s so delicious!”

Sans swatted at him and he dodged it, cackling. He kept talking, to Sans now.

“You were so content with sitting back and doing nothing. Reveling in the new found happiness in the world you’d created for your brother, and what did it get you?” The flower curled around his side of the bench and he glared at it. “It’s kill or be killed, bossman. and it looks like you’re gonna die any minute now.”

“No” You say, grabbing one of his hands tightly. “I don’t want you to die. You can’t just…”

“it’s not up to me.” He says, squeezing your hand back. “i can feel it happening faster. me burning your sweater was the start and now, now i can’t even teleport without blinking out. every time i use my magic it just gets worse.”

“Then just don’t use your magic.” You tell him, adamantly. “If you don’t use it, then there’s no chance of it hurting you, right?”

He shakes his head and you frown. The corners of your eyes feel wet and you sniff, knowing full well there’s a dam about to break behind your eyelids.

“my whole body’s made of magic. i’m a monster, remember?” He says, putting your hand down. “the best i can do it just…wait.”

“You can’t just give up like this.” You tell him, tears spilling down your face as you cup his cheek.

He put his hand over yours and held it there, looking down. His smile was hollow, empty. You’ve never seen him look more defeated. “too late, love. i gave up a long time ago.”

You couldn’t help yourself. You grabbed the other side of his face and pulled him into a kiss. Your cheeks felt hot and your eyes stung with tears as he brought a hand up to wipe one of them away. You stayed like that for a long time, and when you pulled away you kissed him again. And again, and again, and again. You kissed him on his cheeks, his forehead, his mouth, and he let you. You were shaking when you rested your forehead against his, sobs escaping your mouth as he tried to soothe you. All of your worries, fear, longing, bubbled up into your throat and he pulled you into his shoulder. You buried your face into it, soaking the thin white fabric of his shirt as you let out small wails of despair. He shushed you, running a hand through your hair gently and hugging you tightly. You hugged him like if you loosened your hold he’d disappear right then and there. It took you several minutes to calm down into small sniffles and hiccups, and he eased you through every one.

You tried so hard to save him, and now he was slipping away because of you.

“I’m not going to let you go like this…” You say once you’ve calmed down enough to speak. “I love you too much.”
“i know,” he said, moving away from you and smiling at you. It was a tired smile, but a calm one.
“which is why i have to let you go first.”

“What?”

You got your answer in the form of a spray of powder to your face. You jolt back and cough roughly at the assault, glowering at the source of it, which was Flowey, but suddenly felt very dizzy. You grabbed your head and San’s shoulder to steady yourself as your vision went blurry, eyelids slowly closing of their own accord.

You could barely make out the words ‘i love you’ as you blacked out.

Sans held your unconscious form in his arms, stroking your hair behind your face as he stood up to gently lay you down on the bench. Flowey looked at him strangely.

“You’re a really messed up guy, y’know that?”

“ouch.” Sans said, going to shove his hands into nonexistent jacket pockets before realizing they weren’t there. He looked down at you, snuggled in his jacket, and decided to leave you be. He didn’t need it anyway. “that’s pretty harsh, coming from you.”

“So what now?” Flowey said, hovering over your sleeping body. “You’re just going to leave her like this? In the middle of nowhere?”

Sans shrugged. ‘she’ll have someone coming for her in no time. we have a lot of friends.”

“And what about me?” Flowey asked, uncertain.

“you do what you’re supposed to do.” Sans tells him, turning to the room's exit. “sit, watch, wait, and act.”

“Do you think that’s what she’d want?”

“It doesn’t matter what she wants anymore.”

Flowey snickered at you. “Gee, now who’s being harsh?”

Sans turned back to him. “since when did you grow a conscience?”

Flowey looked confused, switching his gaze between your peaceful form and Sans’ agitated one.

“listen.” Sans started. “i’m not gonna be here when she gets back, obviously. make sure someone finds her.”

“You’re not the boss of me anymore.” Flowey said, somewhat hesitantly. The devilish smile appeared on his face as he pointed a sharp vine at her head. “Heck, I could kill her right now if I wanted to!”

The threat was empty, Sans knew it, but that didn’t stop him from trying to send one of his own. His blue eye went to glow but sparked and flamed instead, causing him to recoil backwards and clutch it.

Flowey laughed. “Look! You can’t even make a threat without it blowing up in your face!”

Sans gripped his eye as the magic poured out of it in waves, sparking slightly. “then think of it as a
last request.”

Flowey dropped his pointy vine and uncurled himself from the bench, settling back into the ground. “I can’t believe you still want to protect her, after she condemned you to hell like this.”

Sans shook his head and grinned a tired, but satisfied grin. He started to walk out of the room, waving behind him. Memories of a faint side character entered his mind. “i can't go to hell, buddy. i'm all out of vacation days.”
It was dark and cold. Your body felt weightless, featherlight as you drifted in place. You were nowhere, but you felt like you were everywhere. The darkness stretched as far as you could see, but you weren’t scared. You felt serene, calm, as you took in a deep breath and closed your eyes. This was your element, and you basked in it. The vast expanse of the void took you in, and you accepted it just as it accepted you. It was where you belonged.

All at once your ease subsided, a shock running through your floating frame. The darkness no longer felt welcoming, but terrifying. You opened your eyes to watch the neverending nothingness that lie before you and you felt fear. Fear of the dark unknown closing in on you and collapsing. You could not stay here. This was not where you belonged.

You went to yell for someone, anyone, but your voice caught in your throat. Halted by black bubbling tar that rose up from your very core and leaked out of you like the plague. You couldn’t breathe as the tar began to take shape as it flowed past your lips. A figure emerged from the black froth and looked down on you, face distorted and cracked in a permanent smile that sent terror through every fiber of your being.

“HEY PUNK!!!”

You lurched up from your position on the bench, hands flying to your throat and mouth. No tar, no figure, no anything. You looked up to see Undyne staring at you with concern. You took a second to look around you and take in your surroundings.

You were in waterfall, on an abandoned bench in the middle of virtually nowhere, and Sans was gone.

You immediately went to check your phone. It was three in the morning. You’d only been asleep for an hour, and you were put to sleep so Sans could leave. You couldn't stop him. You rubbed your head and looked at Undyne.

“What are you doing here?” You say groggily.

She holds up her own phone. “You texted me for help, so Alphys hacked into the gps in my phone so I could find you. But you were asleep when I got here.”

You looked at her, and then your phone. “I didn’t send you a text.”

She clicked a few buttons and held up her screen to you to show you an incoming message from you, simply typed out as ‘Help’. Checking your own phone, you saw that you had the exact same outgoing message. She pocketed her phone and sat down next to you.

“So.” She said, slinging an arm around the back of the bench. “Why do you need my help? And why are you wearing Sans’ jacket?”
You couldn’t stop the tears even if you wanted to.

It took the two of you no time to get home, with Undyne deciding to carry you all the way there. You fell asleep in her arms three times just because you were that exhausted. By the time you’d gotten inside your house, where virtually all of your friends were waiting for you, minus Asgore, and had told them all what had happened, you were mentally and physically drained. It took another half hour to explain to them what Sans had told you, about Gaster. About the world they were in and how you weren’t actually Chara, but just someone who Chara ended up possessing along your travels. A warm blanket and a cup of hot chocolate later and you weren’t even there. You were half asleep when everyone started forming their own opinions and solutions on how to find him and what to do, and you near jumped when you felt something on your shoulder. You turned to see Toriel, smiling down at you with her brows furrowed. She carefully sat down next to you and you stared at your warm chocolate, willing it to boil.

“You have been through very much tonight, my child.” She said, placing her hands in her lap. You nodded.

“More than i’ve been in my entire life probably.” You replied, dazed. “I’m just...so worried about everything now.”

“We are all very worried about everything.” She parroted you. “We are not sure what to do with this information. Any of it. If this is a world truly created by Sans, and he is losing control over it, then it is safe to assume that none of us are really safe until we find him and figure out how to help him.”

You nod, gripping your cup harder. “We gotta find him. We can’t lose him. I can’t lose him. We gotta go out there and look.”

“Yes, we do.” She said, putting one of her paws on your knee “But you need to stay here and sleep.”

“No. I can’t sleep.” You tell her, looking her dead in the eyes. “I can’t sleep without him here. There’s nightmares, horrible ones. He’s the only one who helps me.”

“I can help you.”

You both turn to see Frisk standing in front of you, listening intently. The rest of the room had their eyes on you too. Toriel shook her head.

“You will not. You also need your sleep, Frisk.”

“Then I’ll sleep with her.” Frisk pointed at you and you blinked at them. “If she has a nightmare, i’ll be there to save her.”

You looked at the kid and thought. If anyone was suited for the job of saving a person in trouble, it was Frisk. You made them, after all.

“Sure.” You say, surprising Toriel. “Okay...if you think you can fit in the bed with me.”

“Sans fit in the bed with you.” Frisk said, beaming at you knowingly. You reach out to weakly ruffle their hair.

“Yeah. Yeah he did kiddo.” You stood up, putting your room temperature chocolate down on the side-table that held the joke-quantum physics book before turning to the rest of the room. “I’m
really sorry...for everything that’s going on right now and how crazy it is.”

“WHY ARE YOU APOLOGIZING?” Papyrus said, crossing his arms. “THIS ISN’T YOUR FAULT, IT’S MY BROTHER’S FAULT! AND HE IS YET AGAIN SHIRKING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES. BUT DO NOT FRET. WHEN WE FIND HIM, I AM GOING TO GIVE HIM A STERN TALKING TO.” He told you. You could tell in his voice that he was just as nervous as you about Sans’ disappearance, but he still wanted to be brave. For himself, and for everyone else. And maybe for you. You walk over and wrap your arms around his torso in a tight hug.

“Thank you Papyrus.” You say into his armor. “I know I can count on you.”

“NATURALLY! I AM PRETTY GREAT, AFTER ALL.” He said, putting his hand on your head and lowering his voice. He didn’t have to shout, you guessed. You were right there. “But you should really get some rest. You look very tired.”

“You have no idea.” You tell him, letting go and waving to everybody as you ascended the stairs with Frisk, into yours and Sans’ shared bedroom.

They all looked after you with small smiles on their faces, but they all disappeared as soon as the door was closed. Nobody wanted to speak, but something had to be done.

“W-what are we going to do now?” Alphys was the first to break the silence. “There’s n-no way we can find Sans...if his p-power is going nuts. He could...he could be anywhere.”

“I DON’T THINK HE WOULD BE TELEPORTING.” Papyrus answered her. “MY BROTHER IS LAZY, BUT HE IS NOT STUPID. IF HIS POWERS ARE GOING CRAZY, HE WOULD BE DOING HIS BEST TO NOT USE THEM AT ALL. AFTER ALL, HE DOES LOVE DOING ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.”

“Then what the hell are we supposed to do?!” Undyne spoke up, crossing her own arms. “Even if we looked for him, we don’t know how long he’s been gone, or where the heck he could have even gone?! What do we do, just go look on foot? that’ll take too long!!!”

“I think, we need to approach this logically.” Toriel said, standing up from the couch. The other three lowered their guards as she spoke. “First we have to find out how long he has been gone for. Papyrus.” She turned to the only skeleton left. “You arrived at my house at eleven thirty last night. Papyrus. Did you say...and then probably another half hour just to get to Waterfall. Or to the bench she fell asleep in, at least.”

“Then it would be safe to say that it was between twelve-thirty and one in the morning when she finally did reach him?” The queen continued. “And easily another half hour for him to have told her his entire story. Alphys.”

“Y-yes ma’am!” She said, being the third to straighten up at the queen’s authority.

Toriel smiled at her to put her at ease. “Do you still have your camera’s set up around the Underground?”
Alphys fidgeted, and thought for a moment. “Uh...m-maybe. Yes...yes I think so.”

“Then our best course of action would be to inspect your tapes from one thirty onwards, to see if he had passed by any of them.”

Alphys fixed her glasses. “That’s...a really g-good idea. I didn’t even think of that.”

“Then what are we waiting for!!” Undyne said, grabbing Alphys’s hand and pulling her towards the door. “He could be anywhere by now, let’s get a move on!!”

Toriel and Papyrus watched them leave and both smiled. They had a plan, a good one. Toriel turned to Papyrus and walked over to him, putting a hand on his shoulder.

“I know this must be very much for you, Papyrus.” She said. His smile seemed half-forced and she could see the trouble brewing beneath his emotional wall. “All of this new information, about you having another brother and what Sans did. If any of this is too much for you, you can always come to me to talk about it.”

He took her paw and removed it from his shoulders, holding it in front of him and shaking his head.

“You don’t need to worry about me, your majesty.” He said, keeping his voice at an indoor level. He didn’t really feel like being loud anyway. “I believe in my brother. I believe that he is going to be okay, and that he’s going to make the best decision he can. He’s a good guy, he just needs a push or two. Or six.”

Toriel pat his hands with her paws and took them out of his grip. “I will go after the girls, could you stay here and watch over the humans?”

“Of course, your majesty.” He said, half-saluting. “Leave it to me!”

“I certainly will.” She said, waving to him one more time as she left to follow Undyne and Alphys.

Papyrus sighed when she closed the door behind her, crumpling onto the couch in a heap.

“Brother…” He said, putting his head in his hands. “What have you done.”

You didn’t want to go to sleep. You didn’t want to leave them to look without you. You wanted to run back out to try and find him. Frisk closed the door behind you and you sat on the bed, pulling up the hood to the blue jacket around you and burying your face into the fluffy lining. It still smelled like him. It smelled like condiments and his weird slime. It also smelled like an old book that hadn’t been opened in a very long time. You guessed that’s what bones smelled like. It never really registered to you before. Your eyes fly open when you feel a small hand on your knee, which belonged to Frisk.

“I knew you weren’t really Chara.” They said, moving to sit beside you. They kicked their feet as they sat. “Chara’s much worse than you.”

“That makes me feel a whole lot better kid, you have no idea.” You say, lying back onto the mattress. You felt the weight of the world push you into the soft blanket and you didn’t want to get up.

"So what do I call you now?" Frisk asked. You thought about it for a second.
"I dunno." You say. "I don't think 'weird lady' is gonna cut it very well."

They giggled and laid down next to you. “You sound like him sometimes. Like Sans.”

You kept your eyes closed and took a breath. “Yeah? Well, I am wearing his jacket. Guess it must have rubbed off on me.”

They giggled and you smiled, but the giggle was short lived. You turned your head to look at them and saw that Frisk’s gaze was seriously ceiling-bound.

“You’re really worried about him.”

You nod, even though they can’t see it. You join them in their ceiling stare. “Can you blame me? I love the guy.”

“You wanna save him, really badly.” They said again. Like they already knew the answer, but wanted to hear you say it anyway.

You nod again, seriously. “I do.”

You felt a shift beside you as frisk moved into a sitting position, staring at you intently.

“How badly.”

You blinked at them, also sitting up. You could feel Frisk staring into your very soul, searching for the answer. You suddenly felt very vulnerable in front of this child. You swallowed.

“I want to save him more than I wanted to save myself.”

“Good.” They said, reaching into their pocket and pulling something out. Something bright yellow that resembled a star. Your eyes widened as you immediately recognized it.

“Frisk.” you say, staring at the save point they held in their hands. “Why do you have that.”

“It’s the last one.” They said, matter of factly. “The very last one since we all left. I kept it, just in case.”

You stared at it in all its twinkling glory. It’s light reflected off the walls and gave a golden glow to everything around you. “Why.”

Frisk shrugged. “I dunno. I thought I needed it. But...you need it more than me now.” They said, taking your hand and depositing the little star into it. It felt warm in your hand and you felt something surge in your chest at its touch.

“You’ve been carrying this around with you this entire time.” You say, looking at them. “And you didn’t tell anybody?!”

“Yup!” They said, beaming at you.

“Frisk…” You say, taking in the glow of the save point and carefully putting it in the pocket of your jacket. “You really are a crazy kinda kid.”

“Crazy and tired.” They said, yawning and fixing themselves on the bed, patting it next to them. “And you’re tired too. You need to sleep.”

You smiled and fixed yourself on the bed, lying down next to them as they curled into themselves,
smiling.

It wasn’t much, but the little point in your pocket gave you a good feeling inside. Knowing that you had the power to save Sans, and that you weren’t as helpless as you thought, filled you with determination as you slowly closed your eyes.

And to your luck, your sleep this time was a peaceful one.

Waterfall was always a dark place, Sans mused as he walked through it. He looked down to inspect himself as he wandered aimlessly through the damp catacombs that made up the most history-laden part of the Underground. His shirt was a mess, torn in several places from his botched teleportation and his white house slippers were dirty and wet from his walk. The only thing that was intact was his shorts.

He half-wished he’d had his jacket to hide some of it, but he knew you needed it more than he did. He gave it to you, anyway, as a goodbye gift.

He didn’t know how long he’d been walking. Maybe an hour, maybe half an hour. Time was relative anyway, he thought. It didn’t matter in the long run, since his was fizzling out. His eye hadn’t stopped glowing since he left Flowey to take care of the human. Chara, was what she called herself here but he knew better. She wasn’t Chara. She wasn’t the real demon that had killed everyone. She’d been possessed to do it, by the true monster that had existed before he had even got to that world. He didn’t know what to call you now, he thought. You didn’t have a name to him anymore. You were just the human. The human that he’d seen a hundred times in the underground. The human that had made a mistake and tried to fix it by resetting everything. The human that had come to understand his struggles and offer to help him through it, because that human loved him for who he was. Even after he’d told her about the horrible thing he did to his brother and to this world, she still cared about him. She was the human that he’d fallen in love with and that he didn’t deserve.

He kicked the dirt in front of him and blinked, looking to his left and seeing a door in the wall. Funny. He’d never seen a door in this hallway before, and he’d remember if he did. He walked this hallway a thousand times, he thought.

Carefully, he reached out to open the door and step through the threshold. It opened to a smooth walled corridor, a second hallway leading to a dark room with something black and moving in the center. His curiosity got the better of him and he walked down towards it, stopping in front of it. It didn’t look very special, just a ominous moving black lump.

But then, all at once it wasn’t a lump anymore. The inky tar that made up whatever it was shifted, getting taller and growing limbs, a white circle appearing at the top to form what Sans guessed was a head. Once the face formed his eyes went wide and he stepped back in fear at the dark, looming figure in front of him. Sans looked behind him to see the doorway gone, the hallway gone too.

“Hello dear brother,” Gaster said, his deep, garbled voice echoing off of the walls of the chamber. “It’s been a long time.”
“gaster….” Sans said, smile shifting nervously. He always smiled when he was nervous.

“What’s wrong, brother? You’re white as a sheet.” Gaster said, tilting his face “You almost look like you’ve seen a ghost.”

Sans turned from him and went to run, but was stopped by black inky tar surrounding his legs, holding them captive to the ground. He struggled to lift them and found that Gaster had moved, and was in front of him now. His dark form bubbled up from the ground to loom over him and Sans felt the coal colored sludge drip onto his face.

“I heard everything you know.” Gaster said, putting his face right in Sans’ as he held him hostage. “Everything you did to me. To this world. You were always one for a good chuckle. Tell me, brother dear, are you laughing now?”

Sans could feel his nonexistent heart pounding in his ribcage as fear flooded his bones. He wanted to see Gaster again, sure, but this wasn’t what he had in mind. Gaster’s mangled voice sent a shiver down his spine and grated on him like nails on a chalkboard. His fear transitioned into energy as his eye sparked loudly, setting any oily slime near it on fire. The demon who used to be Gaster let out an unholy wail and released him, moving to the other side of the room. The flames were gone and Sans stood there, gripping his eye as he fell to his knees wheezing. It was too much, it was way too much for him. He felt the energy from his eye travel down until it encompassed his entire body, causing him to glow blue from the inside out.

“Oh, I see. Interesting. Very interesting.” Gaster said as he approached him slowly, keeping his distance. “You’ve really let yourself go, Sans.”

“you’re one to talk…” Sans smirked at him, standing up. “you’re falling apart at the seams.”

Gaster scoffed at him. “And you’re not? Though I suppose these are adequate prices to pay for our hubris.”

Sans scoffed back. “hubris, right. because that’s what caused all this.”

“It is exactly what caused all this. Yo ur and mine.” Gaster said, shrinking some to resemble a sitting position. “Mine because I thought it was a brilliant idea to play god, and yours because you attempted to stop me by usurping the role that should have belonged to me.”

Sans grimaced and stared at his now glowing hand. Yeah, that sounded Gaster alright. “you’re still talking like that? after all that’s happened? gas, look at yourself and tell me that you really deserved to be in charge of a whole universe.”

“I did, until you changed things.” Gaster’s own black tar welled up, seeming to fall in the opposite direction, evaporating instead of dripping. “I was destined to be something great. I was made to become a god.”

“you were made to be our brother!” Sans shot back at him, angrily, his own energy fuming to the
ceiling. “and i tried to come in after you, to save you, because i felt bad for you. and now i’m sorry i did.”

Gaster laughed, a horrible laugh that sounded like breaking glass and screaming cats. Sans covered his ears but he knew it was a futile move. He could feel the laugh in his bones.

“You came after me because you felt bad for me?” He asked, his smile splitting his face in half. The cracks leading down to his eyes shook like faultlines. ‘Come brother,’ we both know. The only reason you came after me was because you were afraid of taking responsibility for what i left behind. You came in after me because you wanted to be lazy for the rest of your life. Don’t make yourself out to be a martyr when you’re just as selfish as i am.”

“shut up.” Sans yelled, letting loose a burst of blue energy. “you know...i envied you at one point. you were so sure of yourself, so confident in your ability to succeed. you accomplished everything you set your mind to and you weren’t afraid of anything, even mistakes.”

“What happened then?” Gaster asked, sounding intrigued. Sans felt the fake interest in his voice and he tightened his smile.

“i saw you for what you really were.” Sans said. “a narcissist. with his head too far up his ass to see all the shit he left behind. a man who thought he was too good for his own brothers.”

Gaster stopped ‘sitting’ and ‘stood’, reaching full height. His face shifted and his smile changed to a frown. “Too good for you? No, never. Ne ver in my life did i ever think i was too good for you.”

Sans sat down, the weight of his power pulling him down. “bullshit.”

“I speak the truth.” He said, slowly moving towards Sans until he was standing right in front of him, kneeling in front of him. A hand materialized from the goop and reached out to stroke Sans’ cheek. He didn’t have the willpower to whack it away. “I saw such potential in you. Sans, potential that lie dormant and untapped because of a lack of motivation. I thought that by leaving you in charge that it would jumpstart a reaction in you. I thought it would spark some sort of determination in you, so that you would want to succeed and reach the proving that I had.” Gaster took his hand away and sat back. “i see now that i was wrong. i was wrong to leave and expect everything to fall into place after i was gone. I was wrong to put my selfish desires on your shoulders, and for that i am deeply sorry.”

Sans could feel a wetness at the corner of his eyes but he shrugged it off, pushing Gaster’s hand off his face and wiping at them before they could turn into anything. “...i hate you so much.”

“I know. And i’m sorry for that too.” Gaster said, going to back away again. A blue pulse from Sans accompanied by a pained noise stopped him. He leaned back down “You shouldn’t have to suffer for your mistakes like i did, though. Here, allow me to help.”

Before Sans could protest Gaster had put his hands on both sides of his head, looking deep into his eyes before whispering something in a tone he couldn’t recognize or translate. All at once his body started to glow blue violently and he could feel fire through his bones. His eye didn’t just spark or glow, but flame viciously at whatever Gaster had said. The energy around him started to expand and Gaster clicked his teeth, if he had any, and moved to envelop him completely. Within seconds Sans was the only shining star in the neverending nothingness, and then in a blink of the eye he was back in the room, unaffected. He looked down at his hands and felt...nothing. No magic, no
energy. Just his own magic, the kind he was made from. He concentrated and tried to teleport from one end of the room to the other but was met with nothing. He tried to channel something into his hands, anything at all, and was met with the same.

“What the hell.” he said, stunned. A groan from behind him made him spin around to find Gaster...but not the gaster that he’d been in front of several seconds ago. The ink around him was gone, and his form was solid. Tall and thin, with a black turtleneck and glasses, which he adjusted on principle as he straightened himself up. “...what the hell?!?” Sans repeated.

“**Science, dear brother.**” Gaster said, fixing himself and dusting off his pants as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened. “**The combination of your seemingly omnipotent overpowered magical energy combined with my all-encompassing incorporeal and cognizant form created an amalgam between what was real and what was not, resulting in the simultaneous loss of your magic and the gain of my physical form. It was, essentially, alchemy on the fly.”**

Sans blinked at him. “no way.” He said in disbelief. “i’ve been having problems with my magic for two whole weeks, and you, in all the five minutes that i even knew you still existed, just sucked it all right out of me...to give yourself a body?”

**“Yes well, when you put it like that-”**

Gaster was cut off with a wheeze, as Sans had thrown his body forward to hug him. He barely came up to the older brother’s shoulders and was trembling as he grabbed onto the black turtleneck. Gaster smiled fondly and pat his head, allowing him to sob into the black fabric.

“I hate you…” Sans said, arms wrapped around his brother in a death-hug. “I hate you so much.”

Gaster eased them both down so they were in a sitting position. Sans ended up giving up halfway down and let his legs crumple beneath him as he held his torso. **“I missed you too, Sans.”** He said, looking at his now very solid hand. **“I suppose this means I can’t see everything anymore. What a shame. I rather did like that aspect of nonexistence.”**

It took a few seconds for Sans to let go of him. “so…” he said, sitting back lazily with his legs sprawled out in front of him. “what do we do now?”

Gaster crossed his legs and adjusted his glasses. **“Now, dear brother, we wait.”**

---

You woke slowly, dreamily as the realization that you didn’t really dream came to you. You didn’t dream, you didn’t have a nightmare, you didn’t have anything. The second realization that hit you in your wake was that Frisk was gone. You rubbed your eyes and checked around the room and found nothing. You went to check your phone but found it plugged in in the wall on the dresser across the room. Frisk must have done that while you were sleeping. You got up from the bed, groggily, and walked over to unplug it and check the time. It was one in the afternoon, which would have been great if your boyfriend didn’t disappear the night before without warning.

You pocketed your phone and went to head downstairs, the smell of pancakes hitting your nose immediately. Papyrus couldn’t be cooking pancakes this late in the day. You hurried down the steps to the kitchen and found that indeed, papyrus was making pancakes. Frisk was also with him and tapped him to alert him of your presence.

“**HUMAN.”** Papyrus said, holding a frying pan out as he turned around. There was a small stack of pancakes on the counter next to him. **“YOU ARE AWAKE! WONDERFUL! YOU GET TO**
TASTE MY EXPERT CULINARY SKILLS WITH THESE ‘PANCAKES’.” He said, flipping the one in the pan. You watched a drop or two of the batter fly out and hit the ground. He didn’t seem to notice.

“FRISK JUST WOKE UP TOO.” He continued. “SO WE WILL ALL ENJOY THIS BREAKFAST TOGETHER, AND THEN GO SEE WHAT THE OTHERS HAVE FOUND OF MY BROTHER.”

“They haven’t called you or anything?” You ask him, worried. “Did you figure out a way to find him?”

“Yes, absolutely.” He assured you, turning around to put the frying pan down. “The queen thought of the idea to check Alphys’s security cameras after he left you on the bench. To see where he is going. I...have not heard back from them yet,” He said, mildly dejected. “But, when you are done eating, and taking a shower, we can go to Alphys’s lab and find out.”

You didn’t want to wait that long. “Can we go to her lab now?”

Papyrus flipped the pancake onto the stack with the rest of them and turned to you. “Listen, Chara human, if that is what you still want to be called. I know you are worried about my brother. I am...very worried too.” He said, turning around and grabbing the pancake plate. “He is going through something very difficult right now with his magic, and I want to be there for him just as much as you do. Even more, actually, because he is my brother. But I know how he is. If he is having a problem, he is not going to ask for help. We will find him, I am sure of it, but you need to keep up your strength for when we do.” He said, handing the plate to Frisk who happily ran to eat them in the living room. Papyrus watched them scurry out of the kitchen before putting a hand on your shoulder, lowering his voice again. He’d been doing that a lot lately. “I believe in my brother, and I believe in you too. Everything will turn out exactly how it is supposed to.” He said, rubbing the fur lining of the jacket between his fingers. You unconsciously brought your hand up to rub it too.

“Yeah…” You tell him, calmed a little. “I’ll go take a shower. Can you have a fresh stack of pancakes for me for when I come out?”

“Absolutely Dapsodutely.” He said, returning to his normal volume and heading back to the stove with a wink. You smile after him and leave the kitchen, nodding to Frisk as you headed up the staircase to head to the bathroom.

Papyrus believed in you. That thought made you feel a little bit better as you looked at yourself in the mirror, still wearing Sans’ jacket and your clothes from the previous day. You gently removed San’s jacket and held it in front of you. He gave it to you as his last gift, as a memory of him. You knew it. You held it close to you and made a vow, staring at your own reflection in the mirror.

You were going to give it back to him if it killed you.

Chapter End Notes

Looking back, this chapter was a lot of fun to write. I wish I could have done more
garbled gaster but, y'know. Plot happens.
There's some jumping around here. I hope it's not too distracting.

The shower renewed you, but you didn’t feel any better than you did when you stepped in. Papyrus had been kind enough to set out clothes for you while you washed off. Just a simple black shirt and ripped jeans. He left Sans’ jacket for you though, and you were grateful for it when you slipped it over your shoulders, inhaling its scent and checking the pocket for the golden save point. It was still there.

The walk to Alphys’s lab was long and your thoughts ran rampant the entire time. You could only think of the worst cases, and no matter what you did the thought that you could never see Sans again ached at you. It must have been pretty obvious, as halfway through the walk there Frisk had grabbed your hand from inside your hoodie to hold it. Papyrus mirrored them, taking your other hand for the trip. The air between you three was solemn and was only broken when the large metal rectangle Alphys called a home was visible in the distance.

You were significantly happier to see the rest of your troop inside, including Asgore. The thought that he would be there hadn’t crossed your mind, but then again Sans was an important person to everyone, especially Toriel. He was more than likely there for moral support, but you really did hope he was helping.

“ALPHYS.” Papyrus yelled worriedly as soon as he caught sight of her. “IS THERE ANY NEWS ON MY BROTHER?”

Everyone in the room had odd, but disheartening looks on their faces. You got a bad feeling in your stomach.

“Um...w-well.....y-yes...and, and no.” She said, fidgeting with her keyboard. The large TV screen in the wall showed multiple video camera screens, all of Waterfall areas. “I um...I realized that the c-camera’s that I had were...dated. Their s-software was...really old and um, it took me a while t-to remember how to program them. Human computers are so much m-more efficient…”

“And?” You ask, taking a step forward. As much as you loved hearing Alphys go off on tangents, this was a serious situation.

She seemed to remember herself and adjusted her glasses. “Y-yes, well...the feeds from the cameras were...scratchy. It took me a few hours t-to...to clean them up. And, to b-be honest, the p-placement for them isn’t exactly, uh, ideal.”

“But did it work?” Frisk asked, walking up to the incepted screen. “Did you find him?”

She fidgeted nervously and glanced to Undyne for a rescue. The blue monster understood perfectly.

“Sorta.” She said, ushering Alphys to her computer. The yellow dinosaur typed in a few keys and Sans appeared in one of the cameras. You instinctively moved closer to see him. The picture was
fuzzy, but you could make him out just fine. You could also make out the blazing blue in his left eye and you clutched your shirt in worry. Papyrus was behind you in a second.

“HE IS RIGHT THERE.” He sounded optimistic, but you’d been around him long enough to pick up on his voice. The regular enthusiasm in his tone was lacking. “YOU DID FIND HIM.”

“Yes, once.” Toriel spoke, stepping up to the monitor. “But after that, nothing. He did not pass any of the cameras located later on in the caverns, and has not passed them since we started looking.”

“So, he’s still in Waterfall somewhere? Maybe?” You ask her, hopeful. You wanted to be hopeful.

“Yes, that is a possibility.” Asgore added from his spot behind everyone. “A...rather small possibility.”

“But IT IS A POSSIBILITY.” Papyrus said, putting a hand on your shoulder and squeezing it. He wanted to believe Sans was still there more than you did. You placed one of your own on top of it and kept your eyes on Asgore as he continued.

“Of course…” He started, looking down. “The other possibility-”

“Don’t say it.”

You looked down at Frisk, who had backed away from the monitor to join Papyrus in clinging onto you. The truth about the other possibility hung heavily in the air as they balled their fist in the baggy blue fabric of San’s jacket. It seemed, with the atmosphere in the room, that the three of you were the only ones with the firm hope that Sans’ magic hadn’t freaked out and teleported him to god knows where. Everyone else looked dejected.

You refused to give in to the negativity. He was still there, somewhere. He didn’t just disappear. He wouldn’t do that to everyone.

But...he did it to you. He abandoned you on a bench in the middle of nowhere and left with a weak ‘I love you’. He didn’t have to. He could have stayed and you would have figured something out somehow.

The silence in the room was suffocating and had you conscious of your own breathing. It was quick and haggard and you willed yourself to calm down but you couldn’t. It only picked up when the buzzing silence was broken by a high pitched voice.

“He is still in Waterfall, you know.”

Eleven eyes Turned to see Flowey nestled in a flowerpot i the back of the room. He wasn’t standing up straight, like he normally did when he appeared out of nowhere. His stalk was slumped and his petals slightly folded, like the gravity of the situation was literally pulling him down.

His appearance didn’t surprise you, you were used to it, but you could feel the anger in the air from at least half the room. The last time anyone had seen him was when he tried to kill you. Though this time he didn’t look like he was in a fighting mood. You stepped forward before anyone could voice their discontent. Papyrus and Frisk’s hands left you as you approached him.

“Explain.”

He looked up at you with something you wanted to call shame and guilt mixed into his features. “He’s still there, but he’s also not there.” The flower started. “I saw him. I can show you where I saw him last but uh...i’m not really sure if you’ll be able to follow him.”
Undyne stepped forward “What the hell is that supposed to mean!?"

“And more importantly,” You add “Why would you want to help us find Sans. I thought you hated him, and me.”

Flowey looked to the ground and made a face halfway between disgusted and guilty. “Yeah, I did. Or, I thought I did. I hated you a lot.” He said, closing his eyes and shrugging. “Turns out, I don’t hate you as much as I thought I did. I tried to kill you because I thought you were Chara, but you’re not. You’re just a regular human that got caught in the crossfire of all of our problems. You weren’t the traitor I thought you were, and when I learned that at the bench I got this weird bad feeling that I probably shouldn’t have tried to kill you…”

“That’s called guilt, Flowey.” You tell him, picking up the pot to look him in the eyes. “You felt guilty.”

He made another face. “Gross. Is this how he feels all the time?”

You turn to everyone, and then head for the door with Flowey in hand “We won’t know until we find him. Lead the way, buddy.”

“Did you mean it, when you said you envied me?”

Sans couldn’t tell how long they had been sitting there. It could have been minutes, it could have been hours. He couldn’t tell for certain, time didn’t exist in their room. He was absolutely sure that some had passed when Gaster decided to speak, though.

Sans shrugged at his brother. “Sorta. I envied your ability to get things done.”

Gaster brought a hand to his chin. “Hm. I see. Well, if we’re laying our cards out on the table, I envied you too.”

“Really.” Sans didn’t look at him. He knew better. “How so?”

“I envied your ability to relax.” He said, crossing his legs and leaving back on his hands. “Sometimes I had wished your easygoing personality to rub off on me, so I could step back and take a breath of fresh air every once in a while.”

Sans didn’t believe him and scoffed quietly. “You were married to your work. Constantly at the lab, overnighting, like it was the only thing keeping you alive. You never did anything outside of work unless it was for your benefit.”

“Yes, and look where it’s gotten me.” He said, looking off to the side. Neither of them could muster the guts to look at one another, it seemed. “Papyrus seems... happy here, even if he doesn’t remember where we came from. Am I correct to assume that your interference is the cause of his amnesia?”

That got to him. Sans hated it. “His memory loss was an accident. I didn’t program him to forget anything when he went through the portal.”

“So you’re saying that he forgot about me all on his own?” Gaster asked him, raising a browbone.

Sans glared at the wall. “It’s not hard to forget about someone who was never there.” He said,
slightly venomously. “maybe he wanted to forget the image of you leaving us. maybe he did wipe his memory on his own.”

Gaster chuckled. “Please, as if our brother is capable of that.”

Sans snapped his head in Gaster’s direction and stood up, glaring at him. “you don’t know what my brother’s capable of.”

“Oh, but I do.” Gaster said, mirroring him. He took a step forward and Sans internally reminded himself that he hated how much taller he was than him. “I’ve watched you both in your time on this plane, many times actually. I watched you two and your shenanigans, his power, your power. I’m just as privy to the knowledge of your timelines as you and the human girl. What was her name again?”

Sans went to shove his hands in pockets that weren’t there. He settled his hands on his hips in substitute. “she doesn’t have one. not really. she called herself chara but i don’t think that name belongs to her anymore. she’s just…”

“The Angel Of Prophecy.”

Sans looked at him, confused. He’d heard that term before, a couple of times, from various monsters scattered across Waterfall. “what?”

Gaster adjusted his glasses. “Before I became a victim to my shallow desire, I lived in this world a long time before you. And as many scientific breakthroughs as I’ve made, there was one thing that constantly irked me about this world. Their desperation to cling to old forgotten words and children’s bedtime stories, legends from days before the war that separated the worlds, and myths that could never be proven. Of course, one of these was a story, myth, and legend all at once.”

Sans gave him a sceptic look and sat back down.

Gaster continued. “You’ve no doubt heard the story of prophecy on at least one of your past timelines. But for clarity’s sake I’ll tell you the whole thing.”

“you just wanna hear yourself talk.” Sans told him, propping up his head with one hand.

Sans smirked at Gaster’s scowl. He didn’t break stride. “You are aware of the emblem of the royal family. The Delta Rune, correct?”

“yeah. tori and asgore wear it.”

Gaster took a step back to pace. “This emblem was chosen back after the war, when the very first generation of monsters was locked underground by the human wizards. The triangles on the bottom represent monsters and the royal family after Asriel was born. But the winged circle on top was to stand for the symbol of an angel who had seen the surface and who had come down to free monsterkind from the barrier that bound them.” He said, moving his hands in gestures to keep up “Of course, ‘free’ is a very loose term and in the time between my disappearance and your human’s arrival, the term had flipped to a negative. The ‘angel’ would be, instead, a harbinger of death to ‘free’ the monsters from the mortal realm. It’s quite tragic really.”
Sans looked at the ground in thought. “so...you’re saying that she...my human...is the angel?”

“I know so.” He said, assuredly. “Of this I am absolutely certain.”

“hn...angel, huh?” Sans said, leaning back on his arms “doesn’t sound too bad.”

“It does seem quite fitting, doesn’t it?” Gaster said, smiling slightly. “A messenger of the gods.”

“she’s not a messenger. she’s just a human.” Sans corrected him. Gaster shrugged, still smiling.

“If you say so, dear brother.”

An echo sounded in the room and Gaster turned to one of the walls.

“Ah, yes. Right on schedule.” The taller skeleton said as a hallway started to slowly materialize in front of them, and at the end of it the large brown door that Sans had walked in through. Gaster fixed his turtleneck, and his sleeves. “I do believe you have some people waiting for you, brother.”

“What am I supposed to be looking at?”

Six monsters and two humans stared at the blank wall before them. Flowey had led them to the depths of the Underground and into the heart of Waterfall in his certainty. He had assured them multiple times on their path that he knew exactly where to find Sans and that he knew exactly where he went. When they had arrived at the spot he was so sure of, they were not greeted with the smiling lazy face of a short skeleton. They were met with a blank wall.

“What the heck kinda prank are you trying to pull!?” Undyne grabbed the flowerpot out of your hands and glared at him, gnashing her teeth.

The flower recoiled back in fear “I-I swear! It was right here! I saw him go right through the door, honest!”

“YOU ARE LYING TO US.” Papyrus said, walking up to Undyne and also getting in the plant’s face. “IF THERE WAS A DOOR HERE, I WOULD SEE IT.”

“Just because you can’t see it doesn’t mean it’s not there, bone-brain.” Flowey snapped back at him. Toriel stepped forward and lifted the pot out of Undyne’s hands, cradling it to her.

“Enough.” She said, tone authoritative. “This is an important situation. For you to bring us out here with hope in our heart, only to be lying...”

“He isn’t lying.”

Everyone turned to Frisk, who had moved to stand next to you as you both stared at the wall.

In front of you was a door. A big brown wooden door with no discernable markings on it. It wasn’t looming, but it was large.

Everyone else couldn’t see it, but you could. And by the looks of it, Frisk could too.

“Frisk’s right.” You add, eyes fixed to the entrance in front of you. “There is a door here. A big one.”
“THEN WHY IS IT THAT I CANNOT SEE IT?” Papyrus asked, moving to step in front of you. He patted down the wall with his hands and stepped away. Flowey cleared his throat.

“It uh...only appears to people who’ve proven themselves.”

Undyne shook the flowerpot. “Stop talking in riddles you weirdo plant!!”

“Undyne, chill with him.” You tell her over your shoulder. “I can see a door, and Frisk can see a door. If Flowey’s telling the truth then that means that somehow Sans is behind it. If we’re the only ones who can see it, then we’ll go in and find him.”

“A-are you sure?” Alphys piped up, fidgeting with her hands. “If...if you go in and uh, we can’t see the door then, then w-who’s going to open it t-to let you come back?”

“I volunteer.” Frisk said, raising their hand.

You turn to all of them. “Well, then it’s settled. I’ll go through and Frisk will hold the door when I come back. But if I’m not back in a half hour, send someone in after me, okay?”

The group gave you a silent nod, and you returned it to them. Stepping towards the door you wrap your hand around the handle. You would go in after Sans. He would be in there, somewhere, and you would save him, just like he saved you.

You didn’t have to wait thirty minutes after turning the handle. You didn’t even have to wait thirty seconds. As soon as you swung open the door to walk inside you stopped, frozen in place.

Sans was standing right in front of you.

“hey angel...” He said, putting a hand behind his head. “did ya miss me?”
You looked him up and down, briefly. His clothes were still tattered but his eye was just fine. Everything about him was just fine.

You stare at him, shocked. “You’re alive.”

“I’m alive.” He parrots sheepishly.

You don’t give him time to say anything else. You grab him in a bone-crushing hug and pull him out of the doorway, into everyone’s sights. He wrapped his arms around you to return it, much less enthusiastically. You don’t care if everybody’s watching you. Sans is here, and he’s okay, and having him in your arms is the only thing you care about right now.

“You’re okay.” You whisper to him, clutching the back of his shirt as hard as you could. He rubbed circles into your back and smiled into your neck.

“I’m okay.”

You pull back to look at him, grinning, before smacking him upside the head.

“Don’t ‘hey angel’ me. What the hell is wrong with you?!” You scold him. He reaches a hand up to rub the spot that you hit.

“Yeah...i deserved that.”

You flick his forehead for good measure and grab the front of his shirt. “You abandoned me on a bench and disappeared you asshole! Do you know how worried we’ve been?! We thought you could have died! We thought you could have disappeared and we’d never see you again! We thought the fuckin’ world was going to end for christ’s sake-why are you laughing.”

He was, indeed, chuckling at your anger. “I just realized how big my jacket is on you.”

You couldn’t tell if your face was red from anger or embarrassment and you were smiling even though you didn’t want to. You release his shirt. “I can’t believe you.”

As soon as your hold on Sans was gone, another took his place by way of Papyrus scooping him up into his arms into another hug.

“SANS! YOU HAD ME WORRIED SICK!” He said, flailing his brother back and forth in his arms.

The shorter skeleton patted him on the back. “Yeah, sorry bro. I just needed some time to breathe.”

Papyrus let him back down on the ground and grabbed his shoulders, looking him seriously in the eye. “YOU HAD US ALL WORRIED. NEVER DO THAT AGAIN.”

Sans smirked. “I’ll make sure to never leave you sans my presence again.”

Everyone around you groaned, Undyne the loudest. Papyrus shoved him away, but was still smiling. “I SUDDENLY REGRET COMING TO FIND YOU.”
“no you don’t.”

“YES I DO.”

“What happened?” You ask him, taking a step forward and putting your hand on his face, inspecting his eyes. “Your magic, it’s not fritzing out anymore.”

He brought his hand up to cup yours “uh...yeah. about that…”

“I believe, my young Angel, that I would be the one to thank for that.”

You all turn to the doorway again and see a taller skeleton step out, clad in a black turtleneck and black pants. He was taller than Sans and shorter than Papyrus, and his figure was thinner than either of them. He adjusted his glasses.

“My name is Doctor W.D Gaster, and it is a pleasure to finally meet you.”

You stare at the skeleton a bit. This was the guy. This was the brother that Sans had gone through that entire ordeal to save. The guy that apparently left behind clues and followers and who made The Core.

You wanted to feel like everything you’d done up to that point had led up to that moment, but one of the words he said stuck with you.

“Angel?” You repeat, looking at Sans. He’d said it too. “Did you tell him my name was Angel?”

Sans shrugged, beads of sweat appearing on his skull. “it...sorta just became a thing. we can’t call you ‘chara’ anymore.”

“Yeah, I guess you can’t.” You say, thinking on it for a second and looking him in the eyes. “Angel, huh? Sure. Why not. I'll be your Angel, any day of the week.”

“I THINK IT’S A PRETTY NAME.” Papyrus interjected “OF COURSE, IT’S NOT AS GREAT AS THE NAME ‘PAPYRUS’, BUT IT’S CLOSE.”

“i don’t think any name’s going to be as great as yours, bro.” Sans smiled up at him. You stepped forward to shake Gaster’s hand.

“It’s nice to finally meet you too.” You tell him. “I’m...Angel apparently. Though I guess you already knew that.”

“Oh yes, I’ve observed you for quite some time now.” He said. His hand was cold as he shook yours, colder than you expected it to be. “I suppose you could say that we were fated to meet.”

“Observed?” You raise an eyebrow at him but the question lingers in the air without an answer. The good doctor instead stepped around you to greet the royal family behind you.

“Asgore, my old friend.” He said, holding out his arms as he approached. He quickly lowered them in a bow to Toriel. “And Your Majesty.”

Asgore looked shocked to see him, but it quickly melted away into relief and acceptance.

“It is a miracle.” The former king said, taking a step forward to embrace Gaster in a hug of camaraderie. He pulled away quickly, holding Gaster’s shoulders and looking him up and down. “My friend, it is good to see you alive and well. It has been a very long time.”
“Ages, yes. And I have been here for all of them.” He said as Asgore released his shoulders. “I should not have tried such a foolish endeavor on my own. Though, I am happy to know that The Core is functioning just as I had left it. Though, I suppose you don’t need it anymore.”

Asgore nodded. “Yes, it is a shame, but our lives are much more fulfilling now on the surface.” He said “The humans took a while to adjust to, but once the shock of monsters returning to the upper world subsided…”

Gaster shook his head. “You don’t need to tell me what happened, dear friend. I have been observing the world from my spot behind that door ever since I first fell into The Core. Though, I must say, it is rather disheartening to see something you’ve spent a good part of your life making become obsolete.”

“uh...e-excuse me, D-doctor Gaster?”

Alphys’s sidled up next to Asgore, her small voice noticeably more trembly than usual. She was fidgeting quite a bit and smiling quite a lot. “Um...h-hi! I’m uh...i’m Alphys and uh...wow. This is...s-such an honor, t-to meet you. You’re, um, i’ve...i’ve studied your w-work. It’s...incredible, really. The way y-you made The Core, all the um...t-technological knowledge you had, have. I n-never thought i’d be able t-to, uh, tell you in person, though.”

Gaster seemed to swell with pride at the compliments, his smile widening. “It is such a pleasure to be able to receive such praise from a fellow scientist. I suppose my shoes were a bit big to fill, but you seem to be doing a fine job.”

Alphys blushed at his words. “O-oh! Th-thank you so much! I, uh, I try. Very hard.”

“And it shows.” He told her, still smiling. His smile withered when Flowey scoffed at him from his place in Toriel’s arms.

“Hmph...so you’re the guy everyone’s been making a fuss of this whole time? What a letdown.” The flower said, shrugging his leaves. “And here I thought you’d be this big impressive guy but no, you’re just another scrawny nerd.”

“Flowey, please.” Toriel scolded him “It’s very rude to talk that way to someone you’ve just met.”

“Bite me-EEYOW!” The flower mumbled, earning him a hard tug at one of his petals courtesy of Toriel. Asgore stepped forward.

“What happened, Doctor, after you fell in? You have been here, behind this door, this whole time?”

Gaster adjusted his glasses. “Ah, yes. Well you see, it’s quite a story…”

You didn’t have any interest in hearing about Gaster’s story. You kind of did, but you were more concerned with Sans. The fact that he was okay kept running through your head. Undyne and Frisk had walked over to stand with you as the adults and scientists talked.

“You’re really alright.” You say, more of a statement than a question. He shrugged.
“pretty sure we covered that already.”

You look over to the scientist. “And...him? He’s the guy you went through all that to save?”

He seemed to grimace a bit at your words. “sure looks that way, doesn’t it.”

Papyrus cleared his throat beside you, more than likely to signal that he was still there. He leaned over to whisper to you both. “Sans, if the story that Angel told us is true...then that man...is also my brother?”

“yeah.” Sans shrugged, putting his hands behind his head. “you don’t remember him, but he was our older brother.”

“WOWIE.” The younger skeleton jumped up, excited. “OUR FAMILY IS GROWING BIGGER AND BIGGER EVERY DAY!”

“You don’t seem very happy about having him back.” Undyne notes, glancing over at the good doctor.

Sans made a grumbled noise. “it’s complicated.”

“You eye’s not going crazy anymore.” Frisk pointed out.

He drops his hands from his head, rubbing near his eye with one. “yeah, i uh...i’m pretty sure all my magic is gone.”

“What.” Papyrus knelt down to inspect him too, grabbing his head and moving it side to side. “WHAT DO YOU MEAN ‘YOUR MAGIC IS GONE’.”

“i mean it’s gone, jeez.” He said, pulling himself out of Papyrus’s grip. “i don’t have my powers anymore, i think.”

“The hell do you mean ‘you think’!??” Undyne questioned him. “Either you have them or not!!”

“He doesn’t have them.”

A smooth voice behind you had you all turning around to look at Gaster, who had overheard your conversation and walked closer to your group.

Sans face shifted from uncertainty to worry and you looked at the black clad skeleton skeptically. “He doesn't have them...at all?”

“Yes, that is correct.” Gaster said, adjusting his glasses. “As I was just telling my friend Asgore, while I was stuck in that room I had turned into an incorporeal being. I had no true form, my consciousness was split and my presence was everywhere and nowhere at once. I could see what was happening in the outside worlds, but my involvement and movement in it was limited to that room.”

You frowned. “Yeah, that’s great and all, but what about Sans’ magic?”

He frowned back, unhappy with your lack of interest in his exploits. “Right to the point then. When my brother here entered the room his magic was already unstable. I could feel it tugging at the seams of reality and falling apart as it tried to take in the whole world at once. So, being the generous older brother that I am, I took it upon myself to ease his burden and
absorb his magic. The result of which was the gain of my physical body and the loss of the magic that was tearing him apart. It was simple science.”

He seemed proud of himself. You didn’t like the tone of his voice. He kept talking.

“And now, since that explanation is out of the way, I do believe you have something that belongs to me, my dear Angel.”

You blink at him and look at Sans. He shrugs his shoulders and looks suspiciously at Gaster. You mirror him.

“I don’t think I have anything for you.” You tell him, a bit adamantly. “Sorry dude but, i’ve never met you before. I don’t understand why you think I could have something of yours.”

“Oh, but you do.” He says, smiling at you.

“It’s right there, in your pocket.”

You reach into your pocket and pull out the glowing gold star. You hear gasps from everyone around you as it registered in all of them. Gaster beams.

“Yes! That’s exactly it! Brilliant work, truly brilliant.” He says, clapping his hands together.

“Now, if you’d kindly hand that over to me, everything will be right as rain.”

“Frisk did. They gave it to me. I was...I was gonna use it to save you. Or...I thought I was going to use it. I didn’t really know what I was going to do with it.”

His face shifted. “you were going to use that to save me? that’s...so selfless.”

You felt heat creep up your cheeks under his gaze. “Y-yeah well...you’re worth it so...”

A loud humming noise snapped both of you out of your stupors. Gaster had his hand held out, waiting.

“As much as I hate interrupting a loving couple, i am on a tight schedule so, if you would be so kind.”

Everyone’s eyes were on you and Gaster at this point. You pulled the save star closer to your chest.

“Why should I give it to you?” You asked defiantly. “What are you going to do with a save point.”

He chuckled at you and it made you angrier.

“Oh, my dear child, that is no mere save star. It is a True Reset button.”

Your eyes widen and you freeze. A shiver runs down your back and suddenly you feel very heavy. Like the weight of the world was being carried above you and had dropped onto your shoulders at that very moment. You look down at the twinkling point in your hands and you suddenly don’t want it anymore.

But you’re not going to give it to him.
“and what are you gonna do with it, gas?” Sans speaks up, angrily. You felt like he knew exactly what he was going to do with it.

You felt like you knew what he was going to do with it too.

Gaster took a step back and laughed, putting a hand on his chest.

“Why, my dear brother, i’m going to use it, of course. To send myself back to the beginning. Back before all of this happened. Before you broke my machine and sabotaged my work.” he said, stepping forward. You could feel a menacing aura radiate off of him. “I’m going to fix your horrible mistake and become the man I was destined to be this whole time. I’ll rewrite this entire timeline and make myself it’s true king! Just like it was supposed to be.”

“like hell you are.” Sans stepped in front of you, shielding you with one arm. You saw your friends around you all take offensive stances and you wanted to join them, but you were scared. For some reason you felt fear pool in the pit of your stomach and you stepped behind Sans, accepting him as your shield.

Gaster laughed again, looking around at your comrades and smiled. It was a wicked smile and the air around you felt heavy with dread.

“Oh, my dear sweet Sans.” He said, closing his eyes briefly and reopening them. A bright yellow circle took shape in his left eye and glowed brightly, menacingly. It reminded you of Sans.

“Who are you to stop me.”

You felt the air around you intensify. You felt your body being pulled down to a kneel and it took a great effort to keep your head level. Everyone around you had fallen too, pulled down by the sudden increase in gravity. Asgore and Toriel were completely incapacitated, and Undyne had taken a knee just like you. Frisk and Alphys seemed to be out cold at the sudden surge.

Sans and Papyrus, however, were unaffected, and had both moved to stand in front of you. You watched from the gap between them as two large white dragonic heads formed behind the black-clad skeleton. His face had twisted into a nasty grin as he addressed the blasters around him.

“Gaster Blasters. Really, such a remarkable name. A fitting weapon for a final boss, wouldn’t you say?”

Sans was seething. He clenched his fists and stepped forward.

“You took my powers!?”

“Well, where did you think they went?” Gaster said, taking a step forward. The blasters had focused on everyone else on the ground, guarding them like hounds. “Now, the deal is simple. You hand over your girl and her star, and I’ll let your friends go. Once I reset everything, you won’t remember any of this and we can all live our lives peacefully and prosperously as can be.”

Sans growled at him “and if we refuse?”

The demon before you grinned. “Then we’ll have to do things the hard way.”

You clutch the star to your chest. “You’re n-not getting this. I won’t let you have it.”
“HE WILL NOT GET TO IT, OR YOU, ANGEL.” papyrus said, stepping in your line of sight and addressing Gaster. “YOU...YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE MY BROTHER. I WANT TO BELIEVE THAT. I WANT TO BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE A PART OF MY FAMILY, BUT I ALSO WANT TO BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE A GOOD PERSON. GOOD PEOPLE DON’T HOLD THEIR BROTHER’S FRIENDS HOSTAGE. GOOD PEOPLE DON’T THREATEN TO END A WHOLE WORLD.”

“Good, bad, it’s all relative really.” Gaster said, taking another step forward. Sans and Papyrus braced themselves. “What is good to one person can be bad to another. Like that girl there behind you. She was a good thing to come out of this world, correct? Or was it a bad thing that she fell into the Underground. Either way, she owes me that star. I did her a favor.”

You squint at him and cough. The pressure on you was almost too tight for you to talk. “W-what the hell are you talking about!!”

“Oh, yes. Didn’t you ever think about why you came to the Underground in the first place? Whether it was because you were angry at the world, or whether you had a bad life. No, my dear child.” Gaster said, holding up a hand.

“The reason you came to the Underground, was because of me.”

Chapter End Notes

Ayyyyyyyyyyyyy. Plot twist.
Unaveling Gaster

Chapter Notes

Whatever you do, don't listen to Don't Give Up from the Soundtrack while reading Papyrus's monologue. You're gonna have a sad time.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You stare at Gaster, eyes wide with shock. “W-what?”

You watched Undyne struggle to get up off of the ground, in an attempt to attack Gaster, but a blaster blocked her way. Gaster didn’t pay her any mind.

“Oh yes, it’s really quite simple. Would you like me to explain it for you?”

“frankly, i’m sick of hearing your voice.” Sans said, eyeing the blaster warily. “and i’m about five seconds away from beating my powers right out of you.”

Gaster scoffed “Your powers. Please. I was responsible for these powers. You wouldn’t have had them in the first place if you weren’t so bullheaded to stop me. They don’t belong to you anymore.”

“SANS PLEASE.” Papyrus said, stepping forward and putting his arms out between them. “THERE IS NO REASON FOR THIS TO DEVOLVE INTO VIOLENCE. WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT PEACEFULLY.”

You clear your throat. “I want to hear him talk.”

The skeleton brothers turn to you, shocked. You hold onto the star with both hands.

“I want to know.” You say, staring at the blasterheads.

Gaster’s smile widened. “Excellent choice, young Angel. You see, when I first came to this world I had felt that there was something off about it. I wasn’t exactly sure of what, and it took me a very long time to figure out why I felt that way. Of course, I didn’t find out until after I had fallen into The Core.” He said, waving his hand dismissively. “I had realized too late that the world had been tampered with, and upon my brothers’ arrival, why it was that way to begin with. The instant I found out that your lazy boyfriend had changed this world to make sure I could never have a higher place in it, I was enraged. To think, the least motivated person I’d ever met in my life had the nerve to strip me of the only thing I ever wanted. You could imagine my burning hatred for him once the realization had set in.”

Sans clenched his fists in anger. “get to the point.”

One of the Gasterblasters growled at Sans before turning back to the flattened monsters on the cavern floor. Undyne had managed to work herself into a standing position, but with one flick of Gaster’s hand she met the ground with the rest of them.
“Yes, the point.” He said, clearing his throat. “After your appearance I became bitter in my state. ‘How dare he take what was rightfully mine’, I said to myself. I was furious, so I devised a plan. One that I could actually accomplish. A bout of revenge, if you would, for the man who had usurped my throne. I had come to the conclusion ‘if everything in this world is set the way he made it, then what would happen if someone came along and entered his world’.”

“It was a brilliant idea, I had thought.” Gaster kept talking, taking a step forward. The brothers before you kept their ground. “what if i called out to some poor lost soul, and pulled them into his little game’. Of course, it couldn’t be just anyone, oh no. It had to be someone with a powerful soul, more powerful than my brother’s, and a pure heart. It had to be someone who fit the criteria of the myth of this world. Someone curious and strong, but who had given up on this world just like it had given up on me. And then, I found you.”

“And you really were perfect." He said, looking right at you "A perfect blank slate. Impressionable, easily moldable, curious and eager. Eager enough to accept that your dreams were a reality. Eager enough to listen to the voice inside your head beckoning you to the mountain. Eager enough to stumble down into the ruins and become the new player in his game. He didn’t expect you at all.”

He was smiling wide now. It sent a shiver down your spine. “And play you did. You ran right through the ruins, through the door to Snowdin, and you met my brother for the first time. He didn’t know what to think at all! He didn’t know what to make of you, it was adorable really. Seeing the look on his face as you walked through all of my youngest brother’s puzzles. And then you went further. Further down to Hotland, through The Core, and finally to The End. When you reached that final corridor and he judged you worthy enough to pass and break the barrier, I was so happy, truly I was. The barrier was the end of his game.”

“And I knew once you had broken it that his game would be over.” He said, adjusting his glasses. “That I would be free of this prison, free to walk the world again and gain my true retribution on my brother. But, you didn’t break the barrier. You didn’t do anything at all. You simply...reset.”

His tone dropped, turning dark. “I was disappointed in you, to say the least. My ultimate revenge foiled, by a child who didn’t want to stop playing. You went back time and time again, to spend time with them. You knew just as well as I did that once you’d completed his game that your story would be over. You wouldn’t be able to ‘play’ anymore.” He said, looking over his shoulder at Flowey who was glaring daggers at him from his flowerpot. There was some kind of connection there between them but you couldn’t piece it together.

“The rest is, as you know, history. You became possessed by Chara’s ashes, slaughtered everyone in your path, even my own two brothers, and reached the end. I suppose I should have felt some kind of satisfaction when I saw my lazy protege disappear, but then you reset. Again. Because you felt bad and wanted to change everything, but at that point you knew as well as I did that you couldn’t free anyone. Not really. So, you resorted to the machine to run a ‘true reset’. Which, I will also take credit for.” He said, putting a hand to his chest. “If you hadn’t failed so many times then I wouldn’t have had to fix it for you. Willpower really is such a wonderful thing to have sometimes.”
You almost couldn’t believe what you were hearing. You grabbed into Sans’ arm, forcing yourself to stand up. He helped you and wrapped an arm around your waist to hold you. You wrapped your arm around his shoulder in-kind, still clutching the star.

“And then, gloriously, a new child was sent to the underground thanks to you. A child that succeeded in breaking the barrier and setting all of the monsters free. All of the monsters, except yours truly. It did not free me like I had expected it to, disappointingly, but it did expand my reach to the outer world. And with that reach, I found you all over again. And what a stroke of luck!” He said, taking another step forward. “I knew it was you the moment I felt your SOUL. It was just as strong and unwavering as it was when I had first found you. And that, my dear, was when I hatched my second plan to free myself from this accursed hellhole.”

He took another step forward and was now a few feet away from you. Papyrus had held an arm out in front of you and Sans in protection. You knew it was futile, but Gaster didn’t move to stop him. Instead, he kept talking.

“I had to wait, though. I had to bide my time and give my brother his ‘happy ending’.” He looked at Sans, who was glaring furiously at him. “So I gave him a year to adjust, let him settle in and think that everything was well with the world, as it should have been. I figured I would give him at least that much satisfaction before bringing his entire world down around him. And when that year was up, my plan was set into motion. One whisper to a flower, one whisper to a Skeleton, one bump in the road, one shopping trip one day and...well...you know the rest.”

“And then, oh, and then, with one thought in my head the chaos started to unravel. The thought that ‘the world is far too big for my brother to control now, what will he do?’ and suddenly the bricks fell into place. His magic, predictably, grew unstable with no way to control it. The world was, indeed, far too big for him. So, being the...generous brother that I was...I called him to Waterfall. I showed him the door. I took his powers as my own and finally set myself free!”

You felt your heart drop. Everything you’d ever done...was because of Gaster. You felt tears at the corner of your eyes. You had no control of anything. You never had control over anything. Someone else was telling you what to do the entire time.

The thought that you had been nothing but a puppet this whole time filled you with...Resignation. You felt yourself go a bit heavier in Sans’ arms and you knew it wasn’t because of Gaster’s gravity.

He laughed at your expression. It was a wild cackle and you hated the sound of it. “Yes, my dear, The one behind your appearance in The Underground, the one behind Flowey’s near-enacted revenge in the Upper World, Sans losing control of his powers, everything you have done up until this point was all because I willed it to happen. Though, I suppose in the end, I really did become the true god of this world. Really, I should thank you...” He said, holding up a hand to you. “But...it would be much easier to kill you.”

The Blasters stopped circling the group on the ground and turned to the three of you. Papyrus stepped in front of you, holding his own hand out.

“NO.” He said, shielding you and Sans from the blasters. “I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO
STAND THERE AND SAY THAT EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE UP TO THIS POINT WAS FOR NAUGHT. THAT YOU BROUGHT ANGEL TO THE UNDERGROUND. THAT YOU ARE THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF OUR FATES. OR THAT YOU DID ALL OF THIS BECAUSE YOU HATED MY BROTHER. I WON’T ACCEPT THIS.” He said, taking a step forwards. Gaster, unexpectedly, took a step back. “ANGEL...SHE WENT THROUGH THE UNDERGROUND ON HER OWN. SHE RESET ON HER OWN. SHE IS NOT JUST A PLAYER IN A GAME, SHE IS MORE THAN THAT. SHE IS MY VERY SPECIAL FRIEND, AND I WILL NOT LET YOU TAKE HER FROM ME. NO MATTER WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE.”

Gaster chuckled, loudly. “Are you really going to stand up to me? Me? Your eldest brother?”

Papyrus took another step forward. “IF YOU HAVE TO KEEP REPEATING THE FACT THAT YOU ARE MY BROTHER, THEN MAYBE...YOU WEREN’T A VERY GOOD ONE.”

That got to Gaster. Enraged, he held up a hand. “Enough of this. Give me what is mine!”

You flinched in Sans’ arms as the blasters charged up for an attack, and then stopped when they immediately fell to the floor. A dark blue glow fell over them as the sharp points of their mouths embedded themselves into the soft ground. The shock on Gaster’s face paralleled the smirk on Papyrus’s.

“What did you do!” He questioned him, trying to summon the blasters back up from the earth. They stayed put.

Papyrus laughed at him. “NYEH-HEH-HEH. HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN? MY BROTHER IS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO IS SKILLED IN MAGIC.” He said, crossing his arms triumphantly. “THEY’RE BLUE NOW. THAT’S MY ATTACK”

“So it is a battle of strength then. Fine.” Gaster said, his eye glowing a bright golden yellow. “I was going to spare you, Papyrus. You were always such a kind boy, with a good heart. But I cannot allow you to stand in the way of my happiness. This world will belong to me.”

“Don’t count your Temmies, pal.”

You watched thick green vines sprout up from the ground around Gaster, wrapping around his legs, up his torso and his arms, holding him down. He didn’t anticipate the sudden attack and anticipated it even less when Flowey’s head popped out of the vines, right near his.

“Now, I’m not really fond of the human girl either but killing her? Don’t ya think that’s a bit extreme?” He said, constricting Gaster’s arms to his sides. “And I mean, who do you think you are huh? Coming into this world and telling me what to do? I may not have a soul but I sure as hell don’t take orders from a scrawny geek like you. And y’know what? I’m pretty determined to squeeze you to a pulp for thinking you could be the boss of this world. Especially when it doesn’t need one.”

Gaster wasn’t having any of it as he struggled against the flower’s hold. “Who do you think you are, detaining me like this!”

“I think I already tried this before, pal. And it didn’t go very well. And I’m not gonna sit here and let you mess up a world that’s already just fine.” Flowey said, turning to Sans. “Hey, bonebag, take your girl and run.”

“What.” Sans said, staring at him. Papyrus turned around to face him too.
"LISTEN TO HIM, SANS. TAKE ANGEL AND GO FAR AWAY FROM HERE. WE WILL HOLD HIM OFF."

You watched your friends slowly rise from the ground at their own paces, Gaster’s gravity hold on them weakened in Flowey’s grip. As soon as each of them were standing they had formed a circle around him.

“There’s no way in hell we’re gonna let this guy erase our world!!!” Undyne cracked her knuckles at him.

“Certainly not since we’ve grown so accustomed to it.” Toriel followed her, dusting off her robe.

“Y-yeah!” Alphys chimed in. “even though uh...it might be really hard. I’m not going to let h-him win, either!”

“Gaster.” Asgore stepped forward. “I once considered you a friend, but now...I am ashamed to say that I thought of you that way at all.”

You nearly recoiled when you felt the fabric of your jacket shift, a light tug pulling at your arm. You look down to see Frisk staring up at you, Determination set in their eyes.

“We’ll be okay.” They said to you and Sans. “Make sure you are too.”

You look between them and sans, and your friends, and Gaster in his strained hold. You put the True Reset star in your jacket pocket and nod to the skeleton supporting you.

“Sans, let’s go.”

“what.” he said, pulling you all the way up so you could stand. “no, i’m not leaving papyrus. i’m not leaving anyone.”

“YOU SEVERELY UNDERESTIMATE ME, BROTHER.” Papyrus told him, cape waving in a wind you couldn’t feel. “YOU HAVE BEEN WATCHING OVER ME, THIS WHOLE TIME, AND PROTECTING ME WITHOUT ME KNOWING ABOUT IT. AND I HAVE BEEN TAKING CARE OF YOU, THROUGHOUT MANY TIMELINES APPARENTLY. BUT NOW, NOW IT IS MY TIME TO BECOME THE REAL HERO, AND PROTECT YOU LIKE YOU DID ME. AND, I WOULDN’T BE WRONG TO SAY THAT EVERYBODY IN THIS ROOM FEELS THE SAME WAY.”

He looked up at his brother in awe. The valiance Papyrus was nearly radiating with reflected off onto all of your friends. You could feel the Determination swell within all of them.

“bro…” Sans started, seemingly unsure of what to say until he chuckled and smiled wide. He embraced his brother in a hug and you could see small droplets drip off of his chin. “papyrus. you’re a really great brother, y’know that?”

“YES, WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITHOUT ME.” He said, returning Sans’ hug before pushing him back gently. “NOW GO. I BELIEVE IN YOU.”

“...right.” Sans wiped his face and nodded at him in resolve. He grabbed your hand and squeezed it. “c’mon.”

The two of you took off running down the corridor and hung a sharp left, down towards where the Ferry person was stationed. You couldn’t see Gaster through the circle of your friends as you turned the corner. To your luck, the ferry person was there, and had asked no questions when Sans
had hastily threw the word ‘Hotland’ from his mouth.

Papyrus turned around to face Gaster, who had gone limp in the display of heroics. He stepped forward.

“I DON’T CARE IF YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE MY BROTHER.” Papyrus said, materializing a large bone in his hands. “THIS ENDS, NOW.”

Gaster stirred from his boredom and looked around at all of them. He tilted his head and started chuckling, and the chuckles turned into full blown laughter before he calmed down, drooping his head.

“I can’t believe you’re all so stupid”

Chapter End Notes

Lore Lore Lore Lore Lore.

I'm a sucker for a good backstory, aren't you?

Comment and Kudos lovelies~
“I can’t believe I was so stupid.”

Sans watched you pound your fist into the bottom of the boat, the loud thunk resonating down the watery corridor. The boatperson, thank god, had kept to their routine and had only asked where they were going. Sans was grateful for their silence, but curious about the boat’s convenient location. The way things were going today he doubted that it was actually convenient, but he didn’t want to look a gift boat in the mouth.

“you’re not stupid.” he sat down on the boat, crossing his legs in front of you. You looked up at him and pre-emptively wiped at your face with the long sleeve of his jacket.

“Yes, I am. Or, I was. I still feel like I am.” You say, bringing your knees up to your chest and wrapping the jacket around them. “I can’t believe this entire time I was just a...a puppet. A puppet being controlled by Gaster. And everything else that happened just happened because he wanted it to! What kind of messed up reasoning is that? That nothing in my life was ever under my control. Not from the beginning, not before I reset, and not even now! If I’m just alive because I was supposed to let that maniac loose, then what’s the point of me living at all!”

“to see me, right?”

You looked up from your knees to see Sans reclining, leaning back on one arm with the other propped up on his knee. “i mean, the reason you reset so many times in the underground was to see me. you told me that yourself.”

You sniffed in a breath. “I wanted to see everyone. Mostly you though. I just...didn’t want to leave. I didn’t want it to be over.”

“you want this to be over though.” He said, letting his hand drift off the boat to skim the water. It was starting to get warmer as you slowly approached Hotland, the boatkeeper’s ‘tra la la’ a quiet background noise. You pulled up a sleeve and reached your hand into the water too.

“I just want everyone to be happy.” You tell him. “I just want to be here, with you and all the friends I made. I wanna just...keep going. I don’t want to keep having to run to find that happiness, but i don’t wanna give up on it either.”

“sounds like you’re filled with a lot of determination.” He said, running his hand back and forth through the water. “that’s good. but do you really want to save everyone? even gaster?”

You pulled your hand out of the water and shook it off, wiping it on your jeans. “I don’t know. I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for him. I wouldn’t have met you, wouldn’t have met everyone else. But, then again, I wouldn’t have been possessed, wouldn’t have lost my memories. I wouldn’t have gone through hell and back without him. I guess...i should thank him but...”

But it would be easier to kill him, you finish in your mind. You returned your hand to its pocket and gripped the star inside. All of this over one dumb star. One stupid chance to rewrite everything, erase memories, start over. You already did that once, you didn’t want to go through it again. You look up at him. “Do you want to save him?”

He thought for a while, letting his hand drift next to the boat.

“he’s too far gone to be saved.” He tells you, the lights in his eyes dimming slightly.
“Yeah, but do you want him to be saved anyway?”

“No.” He pulled his own hand out of the water, wiping it off on his torn shirt. “I thought I could save him once, but I was just being selfish. I only went in after him because I didn’t want to face reality. I’ve never wanted to save him, not even once.”

You look down sadly, the heavy atmosphere getting to you. “Gaster wants to reset everything back to the beginning.” You start, pulling the save star out to stare at it. “Does that mean that whoever uses this can control how far they go back?”

He scoots up to look at it, holding out his hand for it. You trust him and let it float into his hands. “Dunno. Never really saw one of these before now, but it’s safe to say that he knows more about it than I do. If he thinks he can go back to his beginning, then he probably can.” He says, handing it back to you. You furrow your brow at the twinkling light.

You have the literal fate of the world resting in your hands, and you don’t know what to do with it.

You pocket it again, the bright light making you sick. “What was it like...your world? Before you came here?” You ask him, in an attempt to lighten the mood.

“Boring.” he said, propping his chin in his hand. “It was like this, monsters and humans working together since the beginning of time. It was a different universe. No war happened, Asgore wasn’t alive anymore by the time my brothers and I were created. It was...sorta peaceful.” He said, leaning back to lie down on the boat. The boatkeeper stepped forward just enough to give him the space. “I lived with my brothers, obviously. Gaster was the oldest, I was middle, Papyrus was the youngest. Our parents passed on when Papyrus had reached ‘adulthood’, so it was just the three of us at home. Or, the two of us mostly. Gaster was always working. I took care of Papyrus but uh, things were pretty much the same back then as they were in Snowdin.”

You watched the Hotland pier slowly make its way closer to you before the boat stopped, signaling the end of your ride. You thanked the boatperson as you both hopped off.

“Come again sometime~” They said, moving their head side to side. You doubted you’d be coming back anytime soon, but you nodded back anyway.

Looking at Hotland now, it was almost unbearable. The air was sweltering and the heat coming off of the magma pools was already starting to make you sweat. Without anybody in the underground lab, no ice blocks were being thrown to cool the core. Without a working core, it was like the inside of a volcano.

You felt dizzy and you’d only been standing there for a few seconds.

Sans, sensing your discomfort, wrapped his arm around your waist to keep you up. The thought that Skeletons couldn’t feel temperature flashed through your mind briefly and you smiled at him as he walked you up the steps and into Alphys’s lab. She was the only one of your friends that still lived in The Underground, that you knew of. She didn’t want to go through the effort of relocating her building and the underground lab up to the surface, so she didn’t. You were eternally grateful when the air conditioning hit your skin and Sans had let you go, quickly walking past the desk to the elevator in the back. You followed him, fanning yourself out with the collar of your shirt.

“What are you doing?” You ask him as he opened the elevator doors. “Are we going to the True Lab? Is that where we’re going to like...make our final stand?”

“No.” he said, stepping inside. “This elevator doesn’t just go to the true lab.”
You look in after him and step in to join him. “Then where does it go?”

He pressed a button and the doors closed. “up.”

You leaned against the wall as the elevator started its ascent. “Up and out? To the surface?”

“no, it leads to the end.” He corrected, crossing his arms. “but that’s essentially where we’re going.”

“You do I feel like you have an idea.” You ask him.

“i might have an idea.” He shrugs “I don’t know if it’ll work, but it’s better than doing nothing.”

He smirked back. “normally, but right now i can’t really afford to do nothing, can i?”

“No, I guess we can’t.” You say, redirecting your gaze to the ground before standing back up.

“You’ve changed a lot, you know.”

“Really?” he raised an browbone as you moved to stand next to him. “i think i’ve been a pretty bone-afide guy from the start.”

He lets you take his hand in yours and lace your fingers together. “Hmmm. You sure you’re not ribbin’ me?”

“It’d suck for me tibia liar this late in the game.” He said, smile widening until it filled his face.

“You’ve changed though.” You say, squeezing his hand. “You used to be lazier. Back when we were down here. You gave up a lot, your smiles were all fake and practiced. Ever since I met you up here you’ve been different. You’ve been working really hard to keep things the way they are, and all of your smiles are real now. Just like the smiles from your photo album….” You trail off, looking at the ceiling. “I mean, you put forth the effort to eat me out once. That was a shocker.”

“You have changed though.” You say, squeezing his hand. “You used to be lazier. Back when we were down here. You gave up a lot, your smiles were all fake and practiced. Ever since I met you up here you’ve been different. You’ve been working really hard to keep things the way they are, and all of your smiles are real now. Just like the smiles from your photo album….” You trail off, looking at the ceiling. “I mean, you put forth the effort to eat me out once. That was a shocker.”

You watched the doors of the elevator for a few seconds after that and it occurred to you that this was the longest elevator ride you’ve ever been on in your life.

“You’ll change though.” You say, squeezing his hand. “You used to be lazier. Back when we were down here. You gave up a lot, your smiles were all fake and practiced. Ever since I met you up here you’ve been different. You’ve been working really hard to keep things the way they are, and all of your smiles are real now. Just like the smiles from your photo album….” You trail off, looking at the ceiling. “I mean, you put forth the effort to eat me out once. That was a shocker.”

You chuckled at him and nudge his shoulder. “They’re good changes, you dork. And even now, when we’re at the end of everything, you still want to keep trying. You’ve got a lot of determination in you now. You turned into a real hero, y’know?”

He sighs, pulling his hand out of yours. “I’m not a hero, kid.”

“No looking like that, no.” You tell him, shrugging his oversized jacket off of your shoulders and holding it out to him and smiling. “A real hero needs his cape, and i’ve been meaning to give this back to you for a while.”

His eyes widened at your words, stuck speechless for a few seconds. The hum of the long elevator was the only thing that rang in your ears before he went to reach up for the jacket and stopped, instead opting to grab his ripped shirt and pull it up and over his head.

You blushed and stepped backwards at the stripping skeleton in front of you, nearly dropping his jacket as he grabbed your arm and back of your neck to pull you into a kiss. You kiss him back but
you’re still completely taken off-guard when he pulls away to look you in the eyes.

“i need you to do exactly what i say, no questions, alright?” He says, making you blush even harder as you lean up against his now bare ribcage.

You nervously look to the side, face hot at the sudden change. “Sans, we are in an elevator at the end of the world. This is not the time and place for-”

“i have a plan.” He cuts you off as the elevator finally stops.

“Oh…” You mutter as the elevator doors open. You swallow and nod at him. “Okay. Let’s hear it.”

You held the white ball that used to be Sans’ shirt in your hands and stared down the narrow golden hallway. The Final Corridor. It had been so long ago since you stood in this hallway, you almost forgot what it felt like. Even though you were on the other side of the hall looking back, the gleaming pillars and windows on either side of you made you feel infinitely smaller. Even after all this time, it looked just as neat and pristine as the first time you’d seen it. The first time you realized that Sans was much more than he seemed to be.

And now you were the one at the end of it, gazing back at where you had come. It was different on this side, more powerful on this side. Being the only thing standing between Gaster and the outside world…

Well...almost the only thing.

“Are you sure this is going to work?” You ask him, looking down at the ripped bundle of fabric in your hands. He’d shrugged on his jacket before you’d exited the elevator and handed you the shirt to hold onto. He almost looked like his old self when he shoved his hands into his pockets. The act seemed to calm him down some and he sighed, probably reveling in it.

“no.” He said, looking up at you. The difference between your eyes in height wasn’t that much, only an inch or so, but you didn’t feel very much taller than him. “but i know that gaster likes to settle scores. he’ll come after me first. just make sure you’re outside when he comes after you.”

When. The certainty of the word filled you with dread. You had both agreed to this. You knew what would happen if you failed. You nodded at him and clutched the shirt closer to your chest.

“Please don’t die.” You warn him, stepping forward to cup his cheek with a free hand. “We’re in this together, remember?”

“can’t make any promises, kid.” He said, taking your hand and holding it with one of his own.

You squeeze it before pulling your hand back to wrap around the shirt. “Remember, it’s in the right pocket if you need it.”

He smiled at you, a mischievous smile. You halfheartedly smiled back. “oh, i’m gonna need it alright.”

“Well, well, well. What have we here?”

You both look at the front of the corridor to see Gaster, an inky black silhouette against the glistening gold world around him. Two blasterheads were at his shoulders and the serene smile on his face made you want to vomit. Sans gave your shoulder a shove.
“go. i’ll be right behind you.” he said, eyes not leaving his ex-colleagues form.

“take care of yourself.” you tell him, quickly turning heel and running out the hallway.

gaster chuckles as you leave. “and where does she think she’s going?”

“this is between us.” sans said, squaring his shoulders and pocketing his hands. he was the one wall between gaster and the outside world now. “she doesn’t need to be involved anymore.”

gaster smirked. “is that so? how noble of you.” he said, taking a step forwards. the heel of his shoe echoed loudly down the chamber hall. “though i suppose revenge is a tempting thing to dangle in my face. especially since your friends tried so hard to get it for you.”

sans grimaced at him. “what did you do to them?”

“hmph. use your imagination.” the scientist scoffed, holding up a hand and tilting his head. “i would have brought them to you, really i would have, but you see...i couldn’t find an urn big enough for all of their ashes to fit in.”

sans heard a snap in the back of his head and his smile widened dangerously as the lights dimmed completely from his eyes. “is that so…”

“mmmm…” gaster said, smiling back. “he was so dashing. standing up to the big bad monster in his way. valiant, courageous, never faltering. at one point i would have considered it endearing...but when i heard him prattle on to you about how it was his turn to be the hero it only made me want to vomit. of course...if you were to hand over what is rightfully mine, i could go back and fix that for you.”

“yeah, i guess you could, couldn’t you.” sans said, unmoving. “well as it just so happens, i’ve got exactly what you deserve right here in my pocket. but y’see, i’m not really feelin’ up to moving from my spot right now after hearing that. if you want it, you’re gonna have to come get it.”

almost before he could finish his sentence, gaster had teleported in front of him.

“How childish.” he said, holding out his hand. “then again, you never learned how to grow up and take responsibility. now, if you would be so kind as to give me the star.”

“oh i’ll give it to you alright…” sans mumbled before pulling his clenched fist out of his pocket, grabbing gasters with it and-

PFFFFFFFFFFRRRRRRRRRRRRRRBBBBBHHHHHHTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTHHHHhhhhhhhhhhl

The fart noise echoed down the hallway, sending gaster and his two blasters into horrified shock. sans smiled and pulled back his hand, revealing the small pink balloon strapped to his palm.

“hehehehehe. the old whoopie cushion in the hand trick. it’s always funny.” he said, stepping back from gaster and shoving his hand back in his pocket. the lights in his eyes returned at full force.

“What?!” gaster yelled, baffled and flustered. sans only smiled wider.

“joke’s on you. i don’t actually have it in my pocket.”

“then where could it-” gaster stopped, realization hitting him as he stared at the door. “angel.”
The lights in Sans' eyes blacked out once more as his smile threatened to break his face in half.

“get dunked on. y o u d i r t y b r o t h e r k i l l e r.”
You tie a knot in the white fabric in your hands and heft the ball up once, catching it easily. It was heavy enough. There was a weight to it. You stare out at the setting sun from your place on the cliff. Things did always seem to happen to you when the sun set. You vaguely remember thinking about this once and shake your head, looking out over the horizon. You’ve never been here before. You’ve never seen what was on the other side of the barrier. Was this what Frisk saw when they saved all the monsters from the Underground the first time? What were they feeling when they came out and saw the world again? It must have been better than what you were feeling now. Scared, upset, nervous. You would hazard a guess that standing at the edge of the world and looking out to the horizon should fill you with...something. Something other than uncertainty. Other than dread.

You clutched the wadded up ball in your hands and turn around towards the exit, but stop halfway. You go to move your head but nothing happens. You go to take a step but your feet stay still, paralyzed by an invisible force.

You soon realize what it is when you’re forced to turn around the rest of the way, and see Gaster standing at the exit with one hand extended.

Neither of you are happy to see each other.

"Oh, you poor naive young thing." He says, taking a step forward. You mirror him involuntarily. "To think that you could trick me and run away with my prize. How foolish."

"I’m not running away from you." You tell him pointedly as he forces your forwards another step. Your arms stay clutched around the ball and are the only things on you refusing to move, for now.

He raises a browbone. "Oh, really. Then, what pray tell were you planning on doing? Were you going to be the ‘last line of defense’ between me and the outside world? Take a look around you, Angel dear." He opened his arms in a wide gesture. "I’m already here."

"What did you do to Sans." You demanded.

"Nothing." He said, scoffing and taking another step forwards until he was just a few feet from you. "Once I realized that you had what I wanted I left him behind. He can’t do anything to me anymore, so why waste my time toying with him when I can deal with you instead. Now, I’m going to let you go, and you’re going to hand me that star in your hands." He said, pointing to the shirtwad. "I’m going to reset this timeline, prevent my brother from tampering with my machine or following me, and become the exalted god that I was meant to be."

You glared at him and watched him lower his hands, releasing his hold on you. "You really want this dumb thing so badly?" You taunt him, holding it up to your eye level, and then smirking. "Then GO GET IT!!!"

His horrified yell when you pitch the shirt over the cliff edge behind you was music to your ears. The sight of it falling over the edge made you smile.

The sight of it being brought back up by a Gasterblaster, however, made your stomach drop.
The feeling of another one picking you up by the back of your pants made you yell.

“That was a bad idea.” You heard from behind you. You watched the blaster holding the shirt float off out of your sight, and the one holding you turned you back around towards Gaster, who was petting the shirtsaver admiringly. His eye was glowing a brilliant shade of yellow as he clicked his tongue at you. “And to think, I, who created you, could be treated with such disrespect. I’m of half a mind to teach you some manners.”

With a snap of his fingers, the blaster holding your pants threw you up and moved to your arm, clamping down hard. You yelled as the sharp teeth of the dragon skull bit down hard enough to break skin and dangle you above the cliff edge. Gaster, of course, paid your agony no mind.

“And now...the moment i’ve been waiting for.” He sighed, taking the white shirtball out of the Blasters mouth. “Say goodbye, dear Angel. Your god no longer needs you.”

You watched him struggle with the knot and undo the shirt to find…

Nothing.

You smirk at him once the realization sets in. “If you have to keep repeating the fact that you’re a god, maybe you aren’t a very good one.”

Several seconds of tense silence passed, each second seeming longer than the last. Your arm throbbed in the Blaster’s mouth and you could feel the adrenaline in you rising in anticipation in the break. Your black t-shirt was riddled with blood droplets and you silently grieved that you’d have to throw it out.

“.....Do you think this is a game?” Gaster asked you, holding up the torn white shirt that held nothing in it.

You smirk at him. “No, but I know you’ve just been playe-ACK.”

You’re cut off as you’re ripped from the blaster’s mouth, flung into the rocky ground below with a loud ‘CRACK’. You try to move your head to look up but you’re stuck there. You can feel Gaster’s fury boring into the back of your head and you swear you can feel something dripping from your nose.

“Where. Is it.” He demands, reaching down to grab your collar and pull you up to his height. Your nose is definitely bleeding. You find the nerve in you to smirk at him through the blood.

“I don’t habe it.” You tell him, a bit garbled from your now cracked nose.

He tightened his grip on your shirt. “Then who does?”

“i’ll give ya a hint.”

You sigh a breath of relief when you hear your backup arrive. Gaster, however, frowns at the voice and turns halfway around to stare at his younger skeletal counterpart. You’ve never been more thankful to see his lazy grin in your life.

“yo.” Sans says, stepping forwards into the sunset with the rest of you. “for a guy who calls himself a genius, you’re not very smart.”

“Of course.” Gaster said, grip on you strong as he glared at Sans. “I should have known that
you’d once again be the foil to my plans. Do you get some sort of sick satisfaction to watching me fail?”

“kinda, yeah.” Sans shrugged, smiling ominously. “though, you really gotta listen better buddy. i told you i didn’t have the star in my pocket, but i never said that she had it either.” He said, pulling his left hand out of his pocket, along with the True Reset Star,

Gaster’s eyes widened at him. “So this is how it’s going to go then? A stalemate? You forget, I have your little human’s life in the palm of my hand.” He said, releasing you back to fall into both blasters. One clamped around your leg while the other bit your already bloody arm, holding you dangerously close to the edge of the cliff.

“Saaaaans!” You yelled, pleading at him with your eyes and praying the blasters don’t drop you. Sans just shrugs.

“yeah, i can see how you’d think that. but then again, you’ve only been free for what, maybe an hour? hour and a half? and you’ve been abusing my powers ever since you walked outta that room.” He said, taking a step forward. “y’see, great power comes with great responsibility. i read that in a book up here somewhere. and you haven’t really had time to adjust. from where i’m standing, you’re just not ready for that kind of responsibility."

His words seemed to catch Gaster off guard. “You must be insane. I’m perfectly fine. I was more accustomed to your powers than you were. Can’t you see now easily they switched from you to me?”

Your arm was really starting to hurt as you watched the two ex-colleagues argue.

“yeah, see, that’s the thing about magic, pal.” Sans said, closing his eyes for a second before opening again. “it always manages to come right back where it belongs.”

His left eye was blue, bright, and glowing. You felt yourself gasp once you saw it. Gaster, shocked at the cobalt glow in Sans’ eye, took a step back.

“I-Impossible.” He stuttered. “I absorbed your power. I took all of it away from you!”

“you took some of it away from me.” Sans said, whistling to the two blasterheads holding you captive. After a second or two the blasters picked you up and over Gaster to set you down behind Sans. With a snap of his fingers, they disappeared. He handed the reset star to you and you held it close, getting more blood on your shirt as you wiped your nose with your collar. “buddy, do you even know how long i’ve had these powers? do you know how many timelines i went through to get the hang of them? i mean, of course you do. you saw every single one. they may have gone out of whack a little while ago, but with your help they’re right back where they’re supposed to be.”

“NO.” Gaster yelled, his yellow eye flaring as the sun set behind him. The orange and red hues of the sky were quickly fading to blue and black tones, the fiery orb in the sky casting Gaster’s shadow over the two of you. “I refuse to be beaten by you again!”

“tough luck, pal.” Sans said, raising a hand up to Gaster. The scientist was swiftly lifted off of the ground and shoved over the edge, stuck to hover over the several hundred foot drop to the bottom. He walked up to the edge to meet him. “any last words, gas?”

“You’re going to kill him!?” You questioned him, eyes wide.

“he murdered toriel.” he said simply. You couldn’t see his face from behind him but you could feel
the chill in his smile. “he killed papyrus. frisk. all of our friends. he tried to take over the world, he tried to kill you. he deserves to die.”

“I didn’t kill Papyrus.” Gaster said nervously from his place in the sky. It was obvious he was trying to use his own magic to cancel out Sans’, but it just wasn’t strong enough.

Sans took a step forward. “liar.”

“I am not lying.” The black-clad skeleton argued. “You really think I would be so cruel as to murder my own brother?”

Sans shrugged. “i dunno, actually. you never wanted him around when you were working.”

“That was different. That was work.” He tried to justify. Sans, jokingly, released him for a split second before catching him again. It was a real threat. “I didn’t kill anybody! I said that so it would rile you into giving me the reset star. I left them unconscious in Waterfall, right back where you ran from them.”

Sans wasn’t moved. “do you think telling me that is going to spare you?”

“No.” You answer for Gaster, reaching your non-bitten hand up to rest on Sans’ arm. “but it’s enough to give him the benefit of the doubt.”

The shorter skeleton looked at you questioningly. “are you serious?”

“Yeah. I am.” You pull Sans back and lower his hand, causing Gaster to float back to the ground. “You asked me once in a dream...if I thought that even the worst person could change, and if anybody could be a good person if they tried.”

“that was a dream.” He retaliated, eyes not leaving Gaster’s kneeling form.

“Do you want to know what my answer was?” You ask him. His eyes still don’t move as he takes a second to slowly nod. You sigh quickly. “I told you...that I believed that if someone was determined enough, they deserved a second chance. Just because someone does bad things, doesn’t mean they’ll be bad forever.” You look at Gaster, a small smile on your face. “As long as that person is willing to walk the road of redemption, there’s still hope.”

It took a few seconds for both of the brothers to absorb your words. You watched as both of the glows slowly dimmed from their eyes until Sans’ pinpricks of light were back in their place, and Gaster’s sockets had returned to the void that they once were. You sighed a breath of relief and turned Sans with your free hand to face you.

“Listen.” You start, half-glancing at Gaster. “If you really do have your powers back, or still, which you obviously do, and if what he’s saying is true, it’ll take you two seconds to teleport back to Waterfall to check on everyone. You can even take this back with you, to make sure he doesn’t get it.” You say, gently putting the star in his jacket pocket and patting it.

“What about you?” he asked, putting a hand over yours once it settled on his pocket. “i don’t trust him alone with you.”

You pull his hand up to grip it with both of yours. “I’ll be fine. Trust me. Go. And if he’s lying, well...we’ll figure out what to do together.”

He squeezed your hand and looked down. “yeah...together...you better be here when i get back.”
“I’m not going anywhere, numbskull.” You tell him before releasing his hand and stepping back. “Now go.”

He took one grimacing look at Gaster, and then you, and in an instant he was gone.

You turned towards the fallen scientist. He seemed so much smaller now than he had when you first saw him emerge from the door. You cautiously approached him, and sat down across from him. He’d been staring at the ground this whole time and you could see the defeat in his eyes as he brought his head up to look at you.

“Why…” He started. “I don't understand. After all of that, you would be the one to spare me. Are you not afraid of me? Of what I can do to you?”

“Not really.” You shrug. “I mean, you’re a selfish asshole ‘who wanted to take over the world in his quest for power’, but all you really want is to just be loved, right?”

He sputtered at your accusation, looking to the side adamantly and...blushing? You couldn’t tell in the rapid descent of black and blue in the sky, but you could swear you saw a tinge of yellow in his cheeks. “I am a man of science, not emotions. I don’t have time to ‘be loved’. I have work to do.”

“You say that, but I can see it in your eyes.” You tell him, scooting closer until you were two feet from him. “You wanted to find a world where everyone loved you. You didn’t feel like you were doing enough in the world you came from and that you didn’t deserve anybody’s affection until you proved yourself somehow. You came here with the hope of being able to get that, but when you failed you panicked and took the first opportunity out that you could see.” You told him. He didn’t interrupt you, only returned his gaze to the ground. “You had the power that you wanted, but you still didn’t have anybody to love you for it. You actually had the opposite, and it made you so angry that you wanted to change it, right?”

He didn’t respond for a few seconds, and then crossed his legs to sit pretzel style, mirroring you.

“I did have that love, once.” He said, adjusting his glasses. “Before I started to pursue science. Before Papyrus was created, Sans and I had a bond unlike any other. We were nearly inseparable. He understood me better than anybody else in the world, and then…”

“And then?” You goad.

“And then, once our youngest brother popped into existence, it was all he ever cared about. How quickly Papyrus was growing, how enthusiastic he was in all of his endeavors. And Papyrus...he loved that attention. Craved it as if he needed it to live. I thought...I thought that if I started studying something that Sans had liked, that we would be able to spend time together again. Before I realized it I had thrown myself into the world of science and had made such a renowned name for myself that I didn’t even have the time to spend with him like I wanted. I was so busy all the time, with things I wasn’t even as passionate about as he was. And when we finally reached a point of interest...well…” He trailed off, looking out behind him, towards the horizon the sun had already buried itself under. “I was jealous of my baby brother. Jealous of his attention. It didn’t make it any easier when he reached adulthood and our parents...withered.”

“And that jealously made you do horrible things.” You tried to clarify.

He nodded “I told them before I left that the only thing I regretted was that I was not able to
spend as much time with them as I had wanted, and that I would always love them, no matter what universe I found myself in. I meant every word. I wanted that Reset Star so I could go back to my beginning and...change things. I tried so hard to become someone they could look up to, but in my ambitions I failed that and instead became something they despised....” He said, closing his eyes and turning his back on the bleak horizon. “I only wish that somehow, I could make up for all of it.”

“now where have i heard that before.”

Gaster snaps his head up as you turn yours around. To his surprise, Sans is standing right behind you. You quickly scramble up off of the ground.

“Well?”

“he was telling the truth.” He said, eyeing Gaster. “everyone was fine, just knocked out. there wasn’t a scratch on any of them.”

“Oh thank god.” You clutched your chest and hissed at your arm. The blood was starting to cake and it stung a little bit. “And Toriel can fix this when she’s in better condition, hopefully. How long have you been standing there?”

“i came in at ‘jealous’.” He said, stepping around you to face Gaster, who had also risen up from his spot on the ground. “i mean, i can see why you’d be jealous of papyrus. he is pretty great.”

Gaster looked simultaneously upset and mortified. “You just have to rub it in, don’t you.”

“you’re not off the hook, bucko.” He said, squaring his shoulders. “you still need to be judged.”

“Right. Your divine and holy judgement.” He said, squaring his own shoulders. “Well then, get it over with.”

The air between the two brothers was tense, but it was a different tense than before, when they had faced each other with glowing eyes. In a few moments, Sans will rule his verdict, and together you will change the fate of this world.

“right then. you will be judged.” Sans started. You’ve heard this before, but listeing to it now meant something so much more to you. “you will be judged for your every action, in this life and your last one. so, look inside yourself. have you really done the right thing? and, considering what you’ve done...what will you do now?” Sans said seriously, and then shrugged. “i mean, you’re a pretty bad person, all things considered, but you could be worse. and you pretty much suck at being evil.”

Gaster thought on this for a second, and seemed to come to a quick conclusion. He addressed both of you.

“I….I don’t deserve your forgiveness, for what I’ve done. I was being controlled by petty selfishness and jealousy and nearly destroyed everything trying to achieve an empty goal. I became Daedalus and Icarus in the same story, and I’m...sorry.”

He said the last word with such a heaviness to it that it made your heart hurt. Sans pulled out the save star and held it up between all of you.

“and this?”
Gaster scowled at it. “I don’t want it anymore. There’s no point in trying to go back and fix something that was never broken in the first place. Honestly, I wasn’t even sure when I was going to go back to, or what I was going to do. It was the power driving me.”

“Well, that’s good. Because if you still wanted it now that would suck a lot.” You say, grabbing it from Sans to let it hover in your hands. “Anyway, you have the memory of a person who wants to do the right thing inside you. And...who knows.” You look at Sans, smiling. “Maybe all you need is some good food, some bad laughs, and some nice friends along the way. And maybe, maybe you won’t ever really be happy. But it’s worth a try, right?”

“This is the worst de-ja-vu i’ve ever had in my life.” Sans said, smirking at you and shoving his hand back in his pocket.

Gaster, however, was looking at you like you were the light of the moon in the darkness you were all engulfed in.

“I am...so very glad that I found you...” he said, smile softening as he adjusted his glasses. “You really, truly are, an Angel.”

“Aaaaah, oh no. Hoo boy, I wouldn’t go that far.” You say, blushing “I just...speak from experience, is all.”

“And it shows.” Gaster said, putting his arms behind his back and straightening himself. “So then, what are we to do now?”

“you’re gonna go clean up the mess you made, and then work overtime for it.” Sans said, pulling his hands out his pockets to put them behind his head. “you’ll be working yourself to the bone by the time i’m done with you.”

You chuckled at Gaster’s scowl. Clearly he wasn’t one for Sans’ jokes, but you could see a hint of happiness in his frown. You move your eyes from the taller skeleton to the True Reset star, contemplatively.

“Hey, Gaster.” You start. He makes a noise of acknowledgement before you continue. “Is this really just a True Reset Star?”

“I’m not sure.” He said, looking at it quizzically. “You’re the only one who’s been able to use them thus far, it only serves that you would be the one to see it’s effects this time around.”

“What else could you even do with it?” Sans asked you. You smiled at him happily before turning to the bright star. It started to glow brighter in your hands before the white/yellow light washed out all three of your colours. Maybe, with what little power you have...

"I can save you all."

Chapter End Notes

Now would be a good time to look at the first letter of every chapter in Act 2.
It was a Monday.

It stuck out in your mind like a sharp sink corner.

The beginning of the week was always rough for you, even though it technically shouldn’t have been.

You had a typical schedule for a part-time restaurant worker. Nights and weekends, and weekend nights. It was unfortunate, considering you liked to be up and about at night. It was especially unfortunate because your work schedule messed up your sleep schedule, and left you sleeping halfway through the day. You would have liked to have weekends for yourself, but those days were doubles, and you couldn’t pass up the money.

Especially when you had so many mouths to feed in your house now.

Monday was the day you did your food shopping though, so really, you could blame your current situation on the fact that it was a Monday.

“ANGEL?? ARE YOU ALRIGHT? DID I DAMAGE YOU?”

You laughed from your spot on the ground, grocery bags strewn across the sidewalk as Papyrus loomed over you in worry. You rubbed your head and waved your hand.

“No, Papyrus, i’m fine. Don’t worry about me.” You said, pulling yourself up off of the pavement.

You went to reach for your bags but Papyrus had already grabbed a few of them and was holding his hand out for the one in your arms.

“NONSENSE.” He said, pulling the bags out of your hands anyway. “ALLOW ME TO CORRECT THIS MISTAKE.”

“I can carry my own bags, Papyrus.” You say, smiling.

“NO, IT IS THE LEAST I CAN DO TO MAKE UP FOR RUNNING INTO YOU.” He tells you, and passes right by you to head towards the house. You sigh and stay a couple steps behind him, putting your own hands in your new jacket pockets. You’d finally gotten a new one after all of the commotion had died down and you’d settled on a nice looking black and white striped one with cute gold wings on the back of it and gold cuffs. It fit you well, you thought, and went well with your collection of white and grey striped shirts. It was a christmas present from Sans. Y’know, since he burned your other one.

“He’s not gonna take no for an answer.” You mumble to yourself idly as you watched Papyrus before you. You didn’t even flinch when you felt a nudge at your elbow.

“not even if you asked him nicely.” Sans said, matching your stride. “hey.”

“Hey.” You nudge him back. “How’d it go?”

He shrugged “pretty much as expected. tori wanted to throw him in like, jail, for attempted murder,
“but he’d already been imprisoned for so long it wouldn’t have felt like a punishment.” He said, “they decided that they were gonna keep him on a short leash, metaphorically, and he’s gonna be working under alphys, which should go great. he’s back home now, brooding probably in his room.”

You could sense the sarcasm in his voice and you frowned. “But what about you?”

he raised a brow bone at you. “what about me?”

You take the opportunity to wrap your arm around his. Small flurries of snow were starting to fall from the sky and you could see the smoke from your breath wisp out in front of you. “Well, Gaster’s going to be living with us now, in the room out back. You’re probably not going to see him very often.”

“good.” he huffed, burying his face into the fur lining of his own coat. “he can stay back there.”

“You don’t mean that.” You tell him. At this point Papyrus was already well out of both of your sights. “You were brothers once.”

“that was a long time ago, angel.”

“Everyone deserves a second chance.” You tell him, not willing to let it go.

“he had his chance, and he already blew it.” Sans told you, also huffing into the cold air.

You frown at him. “You know, new year's is coming up.” You say, changing subject. “Got any resolutions?”

“sleep more.” he said, lazy grin slowly returning to it’s place. “eat more. chill at grillby’z more. did i mention sleep more?”

“No, I don’t think you did.” You say, smiling out at your house as it came into view. “I made two.”

He smirked at you. “two whole resolutions? whoa, that’s settin’ the bar a bit high, don’t you think?”

“I’m serious.” You tell him, smiling back. “My first resolution is to help Gaster.”

He grimaced at you, but didn’t make a move out of your armlock. “why.”

“Because he needs it.” You tell him, tugging his hand out of his pocket so you could hold it. “I had you to help me through my...problems. You don’t want anything to do with him and, well...i figure it’s the least I can do for him like...making me I guess?”

“you don’t owe him anything, y’know.”

“I know.” You say as you approach your front door, taking both of his hands in yours. “But I want to help him. Especially since everyone else doesn’t.”

He doesn’t look happy at your conclusion, but he doesn’t argue any further when he sees that you weren’t going to budge on it. “what’s your second resolution?”

“My second resolution.” You say, stepping forward and wrapping your arms around his neck to close the gap between you. “Is to repay you for all you’ve done for me.”

“i haven’t done much of anything.” He said, resting his hands on your hips. “i’m pretty sure i’ve
“You’ve done plenty.” You tell him, resting your forehead on his. “Even if you don’t think you have, you have. Without you I wouldn’t be who I am now, and that means a lot more to me than you know.”

“You don’t owe me anything either.” He said, closing his eyes. You kissed his forehead.


Sans shrugged “I’ll be happy when i can go inside and fall asleep on the couch.”

You roll your eyes at him and let go of his neck. “Put something good on Netflix. I’ll be right behind you.”

You stepped back from the doorway to let him go inside. Sighing, you walked around to the back of the house and stared at the hidden door. It wasn’t really a lab anymore, and none of you were using it, so it only made sense that it would have turned into a third bedroom for the eldest skeleton brother.

You knocked lightly before slowly opening the door.

“Gaster, you in here?”

The room was small, smaller than Sans and Papyrus’s bedrooms, but he had managed to fit a twin sized bed in at the very back, where the time machine used to be. It wasn’t much, but he had already told you that he didn’t need very much.

He was there, to your relief. He had set up a small makeshift lab on the countertop, tiny machines whirring away as he clicked and typed on his computer. He didn’t seem to notice you come in.

You closed the door behind you and walked over to sit down on the bed, idly waiting until he’d notice you. When it became apparent that he was too absorbed in whatever he was typing, you decided to give him a friendly poke on the back of his knee. It took him off guard, but it got his attention. He fidgeted with his glasses and turned around to face you.

“Ah. Angel. To what do I owe this visit.”

“We’re gonna be watching a movie soon.” You tell him, nodding your head towards the door. “Netflix and chill, but like, minus the suggestive chill part. You wanna join us?”

He seemed to consider your offer for a moment, but quickly dismissed it, turning back around to type at his computer. “No. I...don’t think that would be a good idea. I do have a lot of work to do, after all. It would only be a distraction.”

You rolled your eyes at him. “You’re not going to be able to fix anything if you don’t put forth the effort, you know.”

“Yes, I’m well aware.” He said, not even breaking speed at his keyboard. “I have a lot of integrating to do, both with my brothers and in this world. It has been a very long time since I have been...physical. And with this fraction of magic I’ve inherited from Sans I have even more to discover after that.”

“Sounds like you’ve got a lot of work to do.” You get up from your seat on the bed and walk over
to the counter. He seemed to be typing in some long lines of complicated code. You wouldn’t know where to start. “Do you want any help? With like...integrating?”

He stopped typing, raising a brow-bone at you. **“You would help me? After all I’ve done?”**

“Everyone deserves a second chance.” You offer. “I got one, Flowey got one. Now it’s your turn. It’s not like you don’t deserve it. You wanted to be noticed, but you just went about it the wrong way. I’m sure if you try being a brother instead of a scientist that things might go better this time around.”

He looked at you, almost incredulously, like the thought had never occurred to him. You started to feel sort of hot under his gaze and you cleared your throat.

“Anyway uh…that’s what I think.” You say, walking back towards the door to leave. “If you ever wanna talk about anything...or any of this...you can come to me, okay?”

He nodded. **“Yes...right. I’ll take your offer into consideration.”**

You smiled at him, opening the door to the cold outside. “That’s all i’m asking, man. It’s a new year, for all of us. Let’s try to make the best of it.”

Gaster watched you close the door behind you, off to watch some sort of movie with his two other brothers.

**“Make the best of the new year…”** He murmured after you, before giving a small smile. **“Yes, my dear Angel, I believe i just might.”**

You closed the door behind you and took a deep breath.

Things were, for the most part, back to normal.

Gaster existed now, which you supposed was a good thing, and everyone seemed generally happy at the circumstances.

Nobody dies, nobody's hurt, not even you.

You look down at your arm, inspecting where the bite marks from the Gaster-blasters would have been.

Thank god you saved that moment, or you'd have two giant holes in your arm right now.

The True Reset Star was gone, lost in it's final use. You only used it to Save, not to Reset. You didn't want to use it for that.

But you didn't need it anymore. You'd save memories and good things in your mind. You wouldn't go back, you wouldn't interrupt the timeline again.

You told yourself this as you headed back into the house.

It was a new year, a new beginning, a new you.

You were going to make the best of it.
And with that, we have reached the end of Act 2.

But there is one more act in this magnificent story, one which will bring the happy ending that everybody wants, and some insight on the good doctor's chance at saving himself.

Stay tuned for Act 3. Comment and Kudos, if you'd please.
You're Gonna Carry That Weight

Chapter Summary

It's always painful putting a popped joint back where it belongs, but sooner or later that pain subsides and you're left questioning if anything was wrong in the first place.

Act 3 Start

- We’re sorry. The number you have dialed is no longer in service. Please check the number, and try your call again. -

You stared at your phone, glowered at it really. It was the third time it had given you that message and you’d already gotten sick of the call lady’s voice.

Christmas had gone and passed like nothing had happened at all, and the new year with it. You’d celebrated both with your new friends, nearly family, and had made both holidays as traditional as you could. Christmas went off well. The gift exchange went smoothly and you’d gotten a new jacket out of it, courtesy of Sans. An apology present for burning your sweater, he said. You gave him a new white shirt in return, since his other one got destroyed. You didn’t know what size he was so you asked Papyrus for help. He didn’t know what size he was either, since human clothes sizes were much different than monster sizes, but you’d settled on a men's medium and that seemed to work pretty well.

New Years also went off pretty well, all things considered. Monsters didn’t really have any semblance of daytime or nighttime in the Underground, always working at the pace of whatever clocks fell down in the garbage dump without really knowing what time it was on the surface. You assumed that Asgore had kept some kind of calendar, you’d seen it, and that he was up to date when it came to things like hours and weeks, but you didn’t know if the monsters celebrated the new year like humans did.

And it was a nice celebration. You and your friends had a party at Grillbys, watched the ball drop, drank, celebrated, kissed to ring in the new year. Undyne enthusiastically with Alphys, you pretty comfortably with Sans. The night went well, and the promise of a new year seemed to bring a new spark of enthusiasm throughout your ragtag monster troop.

A spark of enthusiasm for everyone, it seemed, except yourself and Gaster.

He was, predictably, not very comfortable in his regained physical form. He didn’t seem to grasp the concept of object permanence and often held out his hands, expecting something nearby to suddenly appear in it, and then become angry at himself for forgetting that things don’t suddenly appear in your hands whenever you want them to. He, also predictably, could not easily control the fraction of magic he had absorbed from Sans. He had broken several dishes and cups by way of gravity-tossing them either into the floor or the walls. You promised him in the new year that you would help him work on it, but he scowled at you and insisted he would figure it out on his own. You didn’t doubt that he could, but you knew it would be better if he had someone there.

His relationship with Sans hadn’t gotten any better either. The shorter skeleton seemed nervous around him, hesitant and expecting. Almost the same way he was when he first met you. This you.
The Upper World You. He watched Gaster constantly when he was in sight and tensed when he made any sudden movements. When the scientist was out of sight he became visibly relieved, grin back to it’s unfluctuating smile. It was obvious that he didn’t trust him yet, but he was trying to put on a good face. If Papyrus had noticed anything odd about his behaviour around the new addition to their family, he didn’t say anything. But you could see it, and you were sure that Gaster could too.

He was also noticeably lazier. Considering that he was no longer the sole supporter of the household, with Gaster offering to pay for one third of the house’s expenses (Which you gracefully accepted after Sans declined his offer) , Sans had taken it upon himself to lounge about the house more than usual, refusing to go outside unless he absolutely needed to. He also slept more, which wouldn’t be odd if his naps weren’t several hours long at a time. That was one thing that Papyrus was worried about, and had asked you to help with. You told him you’d do your best to motivate him to do more, but you weren’t exactly sure how you were going to do that.

But now, right now, you weren’t worried about Sans or Gaster.

You tried to call your father three times in the fifteen minutes following the end of your shift. All three times you’d gotten the same message. Your emotional state worsened with each rejection. You had to have the right number. It’s always been there in your phone. There’s no way he would have changed it without sending you a message of some sort.

He couldn’t have just vanished without a trace.

You huffed and sat down on the bench outside your restaurant. It was well within the first week of the year, a Friday, and you’d resigned yourself to sit outside and wait for your ride while the snowflakes gently fell from the sky. The buildings around you were already coated with the white powder, settled after the initial snowfall of the season. You, thankfully, had prepared for the shift in season and had bought appropriate outerwear for it. A white peacoat dress for the season and a matching dark grey scarf and knit hat. It went well with your black skinny jeans and white winter boots. You’d changed out of your work clothes in the bathroom before you left for the day and packed your uniform in the gold pull-string bag on your back.

You’d wash them all later. Right now you were occupied.

You tried calling again and almost threw your phone into the snow when the message replayed itself. The number wasn’t wrong. You’d had it for a year. You knew it worked. It had to work.

You were pulled out of your frustrated glaring by a bony finger snapping itself in your face.

“hey.” the mouth belonging to the hand said as it retreated. “*snap* out of it. you’re scaring your customers.”

“I don’t have any customers.” You told Sans as you stood up from the bench “I’m off the clock.”

“What a coincidence, so am I.” He says, grinning and nodding to your phone. “what’s the deal?”

You pocket it and fix the bag on your back. “It’s nothing.” You tell him, starting the walk to your house. He falls in step beside you.

“didn’t look like nothing.”

“Really?” You say with a bit more attitude than you’d intended. “Then what did it look like, mister observant?”

“you looked like you were about to cry.”
You slow your walk, slightly shocked. You thought you looked angry, not sad.

“Oh...” You say softly, gripping the strings on your bag a bit. “...You’re imagining things.”

He reached up to pull one of your hands away from the strings, holding it in his as you walked.

“what happened.”

It was a demand, not a question. His tone left no room for argument.

“I tried to call my dad.” You tell him, squeezing his hand to hold it back. When it became apparent he wasn’t going to interrupt you with a question, you continued. “The number doesn’t work anymore.”

“sounds pretty bad.” He says. Something in his voice made you think he didn’t mean it. You didn’t know why or what.

“It’s...complicated.” You say, turning a corner. “I’m feeling a lot of things right now because of it.”

“What are you feeling?” He asks, this time with more attentiveness.

You put your free hand in your jacket pocket and stare at the ground. The sidewalks were frosted over just enough with fresh fallen snow to bleach their brown colour. “Sad....melancholy. Kind of scared. Angry. Sorta lonely. Unsure.” You list off. “Just...not good. I feel off.”

Sans seemed to think about this for a second “that’s a lot of heavy stuff to be feeling.”

“Yeah...it is pretty heavy.” You say. “But it also brings up something that I’ve been avoiding talking about.”

He raised a brow bone “which is?”

You sigh and look off to the side, away from him and into the street. “Whether or not I really belong here. Or...why i’m here at all. If the only reason that I was brought into this world in the first place was to set Gaster free, then what am I even still doing here.”

“You’re here because you’re filled with determination.”

You turn your head to look at him, but there’s no surprise in your eyes. You feel like you expected his answer. He continued.

“At least, that’s why most humans are here.” He says. “you’re a determined person. i saw it in you when i first met you. don’t give up hope just because of what my stupid brother said.”

“I don’t feel very determined anymore.” You tell him, as softly as the snow threatening to coat both your shoulders. “I don’t feel like I really belong here. I don’t have any memories of my childhood and I don’t have any family now. Gaster pulled me out of that.”

“Well, why don’t you ask him about it?”

The suggestion was offhanded, but it hit you hard. Gaster was the one who pulled you out of your past life, he must have known something about who you were before you fell into the Underground.

“That’s a good idea, actually.” You grab his shoulders and turn him towards you. “Sans, can we take a shortcut home?”
“What?”

Gaster was predictably holed up in his room when you and Sans had teleported home. It took some coaxing to get him into the living room, he still wasn’t comfortable with the house. Once you made it clear that it wasn’t for any interventional reasons, and that Papyrus was busy off at Undyne and Alphys' house, you got to business.

“What kind of person was I like before you found me?” You repeat from your spot on the couch. Sans had opted to sprawl out beside you. You hadn’t had the time to take off any of your outerwear before the confrontation, too adamant about finding your answer first. “What were my parents like? Do you remember that far back?”

It took a second for Gaster to pull himself out of the unexpected shock of the question. He adjusted his glasses and cleared his throat. “It has been a very long time since I initially found you.” He confessed. “The timelines when I was in that room were unstable, meshed together in an amalgam of spacetime holes. You went through many resets and runs and, in the year after your grand finale, the world opening up to me was much to take in. I’m sorry, but I do not remember anything about your upbringing. It didn’t occur to me to care.”

You frowned at his answer and brought a hand up to your heart. It hurt at the words, just the slightest. The air in the room seemed a bit heavier than you would have liked it to. Gaster, sensing the tension, kept talking.

“I do, however, remember what you were like when I found you.” He said, moving to sit between you and Sans’ sprawled out form. The shorter skeleton grunted and moved for him, but wasn’t happy about his persuasion. “You were a very curious child, very eager. Hungry for knowledge, adventure, excitement. You were drawn to the mountain, quizzical about it’s mystery and lore. You had heard so much about it, you had to see it for yourself. You wanted to be the judge of the rumors. One whisper was all it took for you to spiral down into the abyss below.” He smiled oddly, as if he was remembering something, but stopped once he realized you weren’t smiling with him. You were doing the opposite. “Why do you ask?”

“she’s depressed.” Sans tells him. The words sting a bit, their honesty cutting into you. You were depressed. “she’s having trouble connecting with this world because of you.”

“I hardly think her issues are any of my doing.” Gaster huffs back at him, offended.

“you’re the cause of all of her problems, bro.” he says, crossing his arms and putting them behind his head.

Gaster seemed to perk up at the nickname, but it was gone in a second. “Fine. I am. What would we do about her situation, then?”

“I’m right here, guys.” You tell them, balling your hand into a fist and grabbing your elbow in uncertainty. “And...I don’t really know what to do. I just feel like...empty.”

“Hm.” Gaster said, putting a hand to his chin. “Maybe an examination of your Soul will yield an answer.”

“My Soul?” You say, looking down at your chest. Sans gets up from his reclining position and Gaster excitedly stands up from the couch.
“Yes! A human’s Soul tells a lot about who they are. Whether they stand for kindness, perserverence, patience, bravery. A full examination of your Soul should be able to determine not only what your strongest attribute is, but also what you will need to work on to fix whatever it is you’re feeling. It’s the most logical solution.”

Sans held out his hand. “whoa, hold on. you sure that’s safe? i mean, pulling a human’s soul out only works for like, confrontations. we don’t need to have one of those.”

“Nonsense, it’s not a confrontation. Just an...inspection. It’ll be perfectly harmless.” He assures him with a smile. Sans looks as nervous about the prospect as you do, but sighs in defeat.

“fine. i mean, the decision is hers anyway, right angel?”

You look back down at your chest and you can feel it tighten. You forgot what it was like to have your Soul on display. The prospect of having it out in front of the two of them, with Sans, made you incredibly nervous. You didn’t think anything of it when you were in the Underground, but back then you were young. You didn’t know what it meant to have your very being out on display. You didn’t know how vulnerable it would make you feel back then. You swallowed once, and nodded, turning to Sans.

“Okay. But, you do it. Pull my Soul out.”

He locked eyes with you and nodded. “i’ll be careful.”

“I know.” You say, taking off your hat and scarf and placing them on the couch behind you. Gaster just watches from his spot, very interested. Sans takes a breath of his own and holds his hand out to your chest, between the top two buttons on your jacket. You close your eyes in an attempt to relax, ready yourself for the pull. When you felt a tug at the very core of your being, it wasn’t hard. It didn’t feel like the sudden jarring you remembered way back when. It was cool, and your body suddenly felt lighter. Not by much, but it was noticeable.

A sharp intake of breath and a muttered ‘Oh my’ had you opening your eyes.

You almost stopped breathing when you saw it, floating in the palm of Sans’ hand.

You’d remembered it to be red. Bright and obvious in your journey. It kept you strong, an unwavering force in the brunt of the new world you were thrown into.

Your Soul now, however, wasn’t red.

In fact, it wasn’t any color at all.

It was completely clear, transparent, as if it were made of glass, and you could see Sans’ shocked smile as clear as day when you looked through it.

“Fascinating.” Gaster said, looming over it with a large grin on his face. “A Soul devoid of color. Devoid of light or dark, of substance! A completely empty vessel. This is the first time I’ve ever seen anything like this!”

“What does it mean?” You say, reaching out towards it but stopping before you could touch it. It looked fragile. “Why doesn’t it have any color? What’s wrong with it?”

“nothing’s wrong with it.” Sans said, grabbing your midair hand with his to calm you down. “it’s fine, just as heavy as any other soul. maybe a bit heavier.”
“But it doesn’t have any color.” You remind him, worried. “That means something’s wrong with it. Souls are supposed to have color in them, right?”

“Yes, normally.” Gaster says, kneeling down to get a better look at the transparent heart floating in Sans’ hand. “But this, this is something new entirely.”

“Yeah, but what does it mean?” You ask Gaster hurriedly. Sans takes your Soul in both hands, cradling it. You feel a surge of something cold and calming in the center of your chest. He’s absolutely mesmerized by it, gently lowering it into his hands to feel the weight of it. You take in a breath as soon as it hits his hands and a sudden wave of lightheadedness rushes through you. You see a tinge of blue appear at Sans’ cheeks and you can feel yours heat up in kind.

“I can’t say for sure.” Gaster continues, completely immune to the new intimacy of the situation. “Either your Soul simply hasn’t found a purpose yet, meaning you haven’t found what you stand for yet, or…” He pauses, standing up. “…or you’ve lost your reason for living, and your Soul has become empty because of it.”

His words are fuzzy in your head. You move your hands over Sans’, cradling them with your Soul before he releases it so you can hold it. It’s heavy, heavier than you imagine it being. It feels like glass in your touch, it’s outer surface cold and smooth.

It’s not fragile, though. You can feel that much.

You look up at Sans, who’s looking at you with tinted cheeks. A sudden blink on your part had your Soul out of your hands, dissipated back into incorporeal existence. You stare down at your now empty hands.

“That was...weird.” You say, rubbing your arm a bit. “Does...does this mean that i’m like, broken?”

“you’re not broken.” Sans assures you, putting a hand over yours to squeeze it. “just because your soul is clear doesn’t mean anything’s wrong with it. every soul is different.”

“Not as different as hers, apparently.” Gaster said, ruining what could have been a moment. “A completely transparent Soul, how exciting. I’d love to run some tests-”

“no tests.” Sans told him, adamantly. “you’re not experimenting on her.”

“I don’t like the idea of being a test subject.” You agree.

Gaster scoffs at both of you. “Fine. No tests or experiments. But there is a reason that your Soul is devoid of colour. One way or another, you’re going to find out.”

“and when she does, we’ll let you know.” Sans says, standing up and pulling you with him. You follow, a bit dazed after what just happened. “right now, it’s late. i’m tired, she just had her soul pulled out of her body, and you’re gonna be late for work tomorrow.”

Gaster narrowed his eyes at him and gave him a smirk. “Since when were you ever one for work deadlines?”

“It’s a recent development.” he shot back before guiding you up the stairs, into your shared bedroom. You’re still a bit out of it when the door closes behind you, but you come back to reality pretty fast.

“Sans, what was that about?” You ask him as he walks over to sit on his bed, kicking off his shoes.
You take the opportunity to finally take off your jacket, hanging it on the doorknob behind you.

“i hate when he does that.” he mumbles and you barely catch it.

You move to sit next to him. “Hate when he does what?”

“when he gets excited like that.” he says, lying back on the mattress and closing his eyes. “he gets too caught up in things and doesn’t think of the bad that could happen.”

“I’m not going to let him experiment on me.” You tell him, moving to lie on top of him. You prop your elbows up on either side of his head. “And if I did, You’d be there to stop him from doing anything ‘bad’ or ‘stupid’, right?”

“in a heartbeat.” He says, lazily wrapping his arms around your torso. “but it’s not gonna happen, so i don’t have to worry about it.”

“Well, i’m worried. I’m really worried, actually.” You tell him “I’ve never seen a clear Soul before.”

“neither have i.” he said, rolling you over until you were on your side with one arm under his head and one draped over his shoulder. “but it wasn’t broken. it was heavy and whole, and it felt just like you. so whatever you stand for, whatever you’re living for, you’ll find it. and we’ll all be right behind you.”

You smile at him, his words encouraging and calming. They’re what you needed to hear. “You really think so?”

“clearly.” he smirked, moving in to kiss you. You kissed him back, a feeling of safety and calm welling up inside you.

You’d find out why your Soul was clear, and Sans would be there with you when you did.

The thought that you weren’t as alone as you thought was the last thing that drifted through your mind before you fell asleep in his arms.
Don't Go Believing That Everyone With Glasses Is Smart

Chapter Summary

Having a second set of eyes doesn't necessarily mean you can see anything better. It only means you can see clearer.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“A….a c-clear Soul?”

Flowey watched Alphys attach another white patch to his petals, the little flower clearly uncomfortable with it. He had one on every petal and two on his leaves, and each one was wired and hooked up to a large monitoring machine. It was weird, having his whole body covered in these patches, but he’d signed up for this.

“Yes, absolutely transparent. No color whatsoever.” The other scientist said, figuring out the settings on the machine behind him.

At least, that’s what Flowey thought he was doing. He couldn’t see behind him.

They were experimenting on him. Testing, really, to see if a glimmer of Asriel still existed in him. It was Frisk’s idea to check, and Flowey had agreed to subject himself to the tests, but it still made him uncomfortable, all of this fussing and mussing over him. He didn’t really care about it, but something deep down had him worried. Worried what would happen to him if they did find something.

He pushed the thought to the back of his mind and focused on their conversation.

“I’ve never heard of a…a clear Soul before.” Alphys told him while twisting two wires together. They were talking about the human girl, Angel, and how weird she was.

Flowey already knew how weird she was, everyone he knew was weird, but when Gaster started telling Alphys about how the human girl didn’t have any color in her Soul, he got interested.

“Neither have I.” The taller scientist said, entering Flowey’s line of vision with a clipboard. “I didn’t know it could exist. I’ve seen countless human Souls while I was trapped in the room, and each of them had some sort of value that they held on to, but this? This is unprecedented. A completely empty human Soul, and so accessible to us. Who would have thought?”

“I w-would have liked to see it.” Alphys said, picking up a remote of some kind. “M-maybe run a test on it, t-to see why it’s uh, empty.”

“You’re still talking about Angel, right?” Flowey interrupted them. He didn’t need to join in the conversation, but his current state had him feeling a sort of kinship towards the human, for being seen as something to be tested on. Maybe kinship wasn’t the right word really, but he felt something. He’d look it up on the human internet later. Feelings like this were new to him. “She’s still a person connected to the weird see through Soul.”
He didn’t think he sounded angry about it, but Alphys flushed at his tone, embarrassed at thinking that one of their friends was something to be tested on. A scientist is as a scientist does, he supposed. Gaster, however, continued unshaken.

“Sans has prohibited me from experimenting on her without their shared consent, hers preferably. She will want to know what it means, to have a clear Soul. I am sure of that much. And when she does, I will give her the option to work with me to find it.”

“Everything’s a science fair project with you, isn’t it?” Flowey asked him, irritated.

He frowned at the flower. “The way I see it, the world exists to be discovered. And if I am the one to discover all of it’s secrets, then so be it.”

“So that’s a yes.” Flowey said, rolling his eyes and itching at one of the patched on his leaf. “Y’know, as great as it is to be strapped up to this machine, I’m not a huge fan of you guys diving into my own Soul to find this kid again. Kinda feels like you don’t even want me here, to be honest.”

“It’s...not that we d-don’t, want you here, Flowey.” Alphys said, trying to comfort him. “It’s just...w-well...after knowing that Asriel is uh, inside you somewhere, s-somehow, we just want t-to uh. See if he’s still in there.”

Flowey pouted. “And what if he is? What if you find him? I mean, I’m still my own monster too. What are you gonna do if you find out he’s inside me?”

Alphys looked up at Gaster.

“We will do what we have to.” The taller scientist said to reassure her. It didn’t sound very reassuring. In fact, it sounded kind of threatening.

“I don’t think I like the sound of that.” Flowey said, tugging at one of the patches, to no avail. “I don’t like knowing that my life is in the hands of two brainiac dweebs. Especially you, bones.”

Gaster leaned back slightly and leered at him through his glasses, offended. “Your life was never under your control to begin with. You should be thanking us. We’re giving you a chance to make up for what you tried to do.”

Flowey laughed at him. “Hah! You wanna be the pot or the kettle here? Your life’s never been under your control either, genius. You’re just a broken figment of what your brother made you into. And you tried to take over the world too! And oh, let me guess. You think that by finding Asriel and bringing him back to life will somehow make you out to be a good guy? So that your brother will forgive you for trying to kill him? Look at me, wise guy.” He said, splaying out his leaves in a grand gesture. “This is what happens to people like us. We don’t get the choice to be good people anymore. We get strapped up to machines and have to listen to what other people tell us in hopes that it’ll somehow redeem us for what we did wrong. You don’t get to be a good guy after you’ve fucked up, it doesn’t happen. You either die a villain in everyone’s eyes or live by everyone else’s rules for the rest of your life in some fickle chance at recovery. You’re in the exact same boat as me!”

Gaster reeled back, infuriated, and summoned a Blaster to aim straight at Flowey’s head.

“How dare you.” He said, taking a step towards the flower, his pristine white lab coat flapping in an invisible wind. “You have the nerve to dictate my life. You, a flower without a Soul, think...
that you can tell me whether or not mine has a chance to be saved? You know nothing of my will, or my brother’s. Do not assume anything about my life just because yours has fallen apart.”

“And yours hasn’t?” Flowey said, goading him on. “You’re in a place out of your league. The only reason you have that bug zapper behind you is because you stole it. And you didn’t even steal enough of it for it to be threatening! You have to pull it out at every convenience, just to deal with little old me. You must not have a lot of confidence in yourself if you’re resorting to your powers so quickly.”

“A-alright! That’s enough!” Alphys said, stepping between the both of them. “I-I can’t do this. Not with you two f-fighting. Doctor Gaster, p-please put that away.”

Gaster frowned at her, unhappy at the situation and probably about being bossed around by someone so much smaller and younger than he was, but he listened. With a sigh and a snap of his fingers, the blaster disappeared.

He straightened out his coat and adjusted his glasses. “I apologize, Doctor Alphys, for my poor misconduct. I’ll refrain from doing it again.”

“G-good...thank you. And you.” She turned to Flowey with a finger out. “Don’t provoke him. He’s only t-trying to help me.”

Flowey smirked. “Trust me, lady. He needs the help more than you do.” His grin grew wider when he saw Gaster twitch from behind her, but faded completely when she pressed a button on the remote and a white dome appeared around him, blacking out his view. He tried to yell in protest but the magical barrier surrounding him seemed to block it.

Alphys stared at the encasement with Flowey inside and sighed, turning to her lab partner. “I, s-so sorry f-for his behaviour.” She told him, fidgeting and putting the remote down. “J-just, ignore what he says. He doesn’t m-mean any of it. He’s just...nervous.”

Gaster fiddled with his cuffs. “Yes, well. Nervousness is no excuse for rudeness. We will proceed with the test as planned, without any more provocation. This isn’t the first time I’ve had to deal with an unruly subject. I will be fine.”

Alphys didn’t look very convinced, but took his word for it anyway. “Okay. If...if you say so. Um...Thank you...b-by the way. For working with me on this.”

Gaster smiled down at her. “No thanks are necessary, my dear Alphys. It has been a very long time since I have had the pleasure of working on an active project. It is a pleasant change back into my comfort zone. I should be thanking you for allowing me to assist you. I am...admittedly not used to being the assistant in a project. I hope you can forgive my overbearing tendencies.”

Alphys flushed under his words, nervous and embarrassed. “O-oh, n-no it’s fine! I’m j-just glad that someone more experienced than me is w-working on something like this. Last t-time I tried to d-do something like this by myself and...w-well…”

“I know.” Gaster said, resting a hand on her shoulder. “This will not be like that time.”

Alphys nodded at him, assured. This wasn’t going to be like the time with the amalgams. This time
she had help. “R-right. Thanks.” She moved out towards the exit of the room, away from Flowey’s case. “Uh...You said that y-you’ve worked with um. More unruly people before?”

“That is correct.” He said, following her “I have worked with a wide variety of partners on a wide variety of projects, mainly spacial science and theoretical physics. The nature of what makes up the universe, what makes up magic. Why it is why it is. It’s a very broad spectrum.”

Alphys nodded in understanding. “That sounds...complicated. Much more complicated than p-putting a ghost into a robot body...”

“Yes, it was difficult sometimes.” He said, sitting down in one of the lab chairs. “But I didn’t do any of it alone.”

“You had partners.” Alphys said, sitting down across from him. “I’ve...never had a partner before. F-for lab stuff! S-science stuff. I’m with Undyne now but, uh...w-what’s it like?” She asked, eyes wide in wonder. “What were your partners like?”

He looked at her for a second, unprepared for the question, and then settled his chin in his hand.

“What were they like indeed...”

“whaddy doin?”

Gaster almost didn’t hear his brother come up behind him, too engaged with the two small objects on the worktable. To any outsider they would have looked like modified miniature blenders, but a scientist knew better. He adjusted his glasses and turned around to face Sans with a calm smile.

“What am I always doing?”

“science.” Sans answered, beaming at him with a tiny smile. He was in his early teen years now and Gaster had already entered his adulthood phase. Just the word was enough to make the smaller skeleton happy, and Gaster reveled in his smile.

“Science.” He parroted back, turning back around to his project. Sans took a seat next to him, staring at the not-blenders. “Important spatial science. Changing the fundamental laws of the universe science.”

“that does sound pretty important.” Sans said, putting his arms out lazily on the countertop. “just be careful you don’t space out while working.”

Gaster patted his head affectionately at the pun, appreciative of his support. “I’ll try not to. Now, watch closely brother. I am about to make history.”

Gaster pulled a styrofoam apple out of one of the plastic drawers. It was one he’d experimented on many times before. Sans had gotten to it at one point and tried to eat it jokingly, leaving a chipped off piece on the top, but he still kept it for small testing. It was the perfect subject.

He placed the fake apple carefully on one of the discs and pressed a button. Both machined whirred to life, glowing green at the base and beeping until... nothing.
Nothing happened.

Gaster frowned, taking the apple off of the first machine and picking it up, inspecting it.

“I don’t understand. It was supposed to work. My calculations were perfect.”

“what’s it supposed to do?” Sans asked him. He put the machine down.

Gaster confided in him, aggravatedly but still calm enough to explain. “I have a working theory that this universe is made up of pathways that each individual being exists on.” He said, holding up both of his index fingers in demonstration. “Sometimes those pathways intersect physically, like yours and mine.” He said, bringing both of his fingers together. “But I have a hypothesis. What if it is possible to travel a pathway from point A to point B without intersecting with anything along the way. To move from, let’s say, here in the lab to our house in no time at all, without stopping.”

“you’re making a teleporter?” Sans said, eyes going wide.

Gaster sighed. “In simpler terms, yes. What I am doing is finding the fastest pathway from Point A to Point B and coercing this apple to travel through it.” He said, pointing to each teleporter piece.

“like finding a shortcut.” Sans added. He always had a way to flawlessly break down whatever you were explaining into the simplest explanation. Normally he’d be appreciative of his brother’s immediate understanding, but right now he was frustrated.

He adjusted his glasses. “Yes. Exactly like a shortcut. But it is not working.”

“maybe the apple just doesn’t know where to go?” Sans said, picking it up off the table. “maybe you gotta tell it where it needs to be so it can get there. maybe it needs to have already been there before it can go back?”

Gaster looked at his little brother, stunned. The idea hadn’t even occurred to him, to have something ‘know’ where it needs to be before it can get there. Gaster quickly plucked the apple out of Sans’ hand and placed it on the other teleporter, pressing a few buttons on the interface before doing the same to the first machine. After another attempt and some more bright blinking, the apple disappeared off of the first platform, re-appearing effortlessly on the second.

“The answer was so simple, I was vastly overthinking it...” Gaster said, staring at his success. Sans was smiling too, picking up the apple and taking another joking bite from it. Bits of styrofoam stuck to his face, but he didn’t seem to care.

“still tastes like the same apple.” he said, gulping it down. “needs ketchup though.”

Gaster once again took the apple out of his hands, putting it back in the drawer before taking his shirt sleeve and wiping the styrofoam bits off of Sans’ face. The smaller skeleton grimaced at the gesture of affection, but didn’t move to stop him. “Sans, please. Stop eating my test subjects.”

Sans grinned at him. “tell your test subjects to stop looking so delicious.”

Gaster rolled his eyes and stood up from his chair. The success of his test was still thrumming through his bones. “We have created history today, Sans.” He started. “To anyone with magic, teleportation could be an easy feat. But with science?”
“with science it’s even more impressive.” Sans said, also getting up from his chair. “you should send it into a university. you could get a scholarship or something.”

“This is true, that is an option.” Gaster said, putting a hand to his chin. “If I submit this to one of the bigger ones out of country, I could be given the tools to work on much more impressive and important projects. I could bend the fabric of space and time and discover all of the secrets this universe has to offer, if I had better equipment…”

Sans frowned a bit, walking over to his side. “out of country?”

Gaster looked down at him, still smiling. " Well, yes. The universities in this country aren’t as advanced in their technology as they are in, oh let’s say, any of the bigger countries on the next continent over. They don’t have the supplies I would need to expand my research. If I were to make any progress on my discovery, I would have to do it somewhere el-”

“i don’t want you to leave.”

Sans was looking up at him with big eyes, the white pupils in his sockets bright and adamant. He could see the sheer determination of his sentence reflected in his face and it took him off guard.

Sans was never serious.

“if you leave, i won’t be able to see any of your experiments.” the smaller skeleton said. “and if you leave you won’t be able to see Papyrus anymore.”

Gaster blinked. Oh. That’s right. Their youngest brother was still in his childhood phase. He did like walking into a full house after a long day of working in his laboratory, the makeshift one he made out in the shed. It’s expanded quite a bit since he first started working in it.

“You have some very good points, Sans.” He said, taking a knee to get down to his brother’s level. “As you always do. I would regret to think of where I would be without your unshakable grounding.”

“in another country, obviously.” He said, stance firm. Gaster smiled at him.

“Well, if my assistant says I can’t go, then there’s no point in me arguing now, is there?”

Sans eyes widened again, his grin shocked. “assistant?”

Gaster nodded. “Yes, assistant. After all you have done to help me with my work, I see no need to shy away from the title. You have been one of the most helpful people I could have chosen to work with. I would be honoured to have you on as my formal and official right hand.” He said, straightening back up. “Of course, I would be doing a majority of the work, and you would do just as you have been doing. Giving input, asking questions. Not eating my test subjects. Nothing would change. We would have to get you a lab coat, though.”

Sans’ smile was so wide Gaster thought it would break his face in half. “well, i guess you can’t really do much sans my presence.” He said, the joke rolling off effortlessly in his enthusiasm. Enthusiasm which he was trying very hard to mask, Gaster noted.

“No, no I can’t.” He said, patting him on the back. “Why don’t you go tell our parents the news, yours and mine, and I’ll be right behind you.”
“oh, yeah. they're gonna want to know about the teleporter too.” Sans said, casting a glance behind him. “creating a shortcut to do less work and to get to places faster sounds like my kinda deal.”

“And soon, it will work on a much larger scale.” Gaster told him. “This is the beginning of something wonderful, Sans. I can feel it.”

“yeah, me too.” Sans said, still smiling as he walked out of the shed.

Gaster blinked out of his memory, the realization that Alphys was still waiting for an answer hitting him quick.

“I had one in the beginning who was exceptional.” He told her, rapping his fingers on the table. “Bright, inquisitive, nonchalantly eager. He always knew exactly what to say whenever something went wrong, and was always willing to help to make it better. He was, in a sense, the perfect partner.” He told her, nostalgia lingering in his voice.

She seemed happy for him, but she knew he didn’t have that partner anymore. “What happened to him?”

“We had a falling out due to creative differences.” He said quickly, maybe too quickly. “But now, you are my partner. And we will work together to find Asriel and restore him.”

“Y-yeah.” Alphys agrees, fixing her own glasses. “We can do it...I know we can. I’m still...really s-sorry about what he said earlier. About you not having a, a chance to make up for your mistakes.” She fidgeted with the cuff of her sleeve. “T-to be honest...I didn’t really um...I wasn’t sure if I wanted t-to work with you, after the whole...thing...”

She trailed off and Gaster raised his brow bones, not expecting the blunt honesty. “Do you want to work with me now?”

She flushed slightly and looked off to the side. “I...I don’t know. B-but...everyone deserves a second chance. And, I need your help, so. I have to.”

Her answer didn’t make Gaster feel any better. It was neutral, unsure, and it settled strangely in his stomach.

The small silence between them was broken by a loud high pitched girl’s voice yelling something in a language Gaster didn’t recognize. Alphys flushed harder and pulled her phone out of her coat pocket.

“It’s, Undyne…” She said hurriedly. “I’ve gotta take this. I’ll be right back.”

He watched her rush out of the room, phone to her ear and sighed.

She didn’t know if she wanted to work with him, but she had to, she said. If they were going to find Asriel, they would need to work together, and she needed him around for that.

He couldn’t tell if he was feeling appreciative or melancholic when she walked out the door.

It was a start, he told himself. The beginning of a new path to walk in this world.

he would give her a reason to trust him again. And then, when she was sure, he would try again with Sans.
That thought was what pushed him up out of his chair, prompting him to go back into the room with the contained flower. He didn’t move to let Flowey free, just stood there in the doorway, looking at the lab around him. He sighed again.

He had a lot of work to do.

Chapter End Notes

AAAAAA now we delve into the real 'before' to this eventual happy ever after.

More Lore.

Comment and Kudos, if you would.
Sometimes we forget who we are in our day to day lives. Sometimes we need others to be our reminders.

I present to you, Sans in a horse mask.

You're all welcome.

“wanna see me chug this entire bottle of ketchup?”

“How about no.”

“how about yes?”

It was hard to contain your laughter, as it had been for the past ten minutes. You had been sitting on the couch when Sans walked in, attempting to read through Game Of Thrones on your kindle. You had seen the first season on tv and you could put faces to the names now, so you figured it would be a good exercise. Reading was also fucking fun dammit.

You expected to see a splash of blue in your peripheral, but you didn’t expect to see a splash of brown. Marking your page and looking up from your book, you faced him and had almost yelled.

Sans bought a horse mask.

He bought a goddamn horse mask.

You couldn’t contain your laughter for nearly three whole minutes. Something about seeing him so nonchalant with the head of a horse was the most hilarious thing to you. And, if you were totally honest with yourself, you needed the laugh. You really did.

But now you were stifling back giggles while trying to convince him that drinking ketchup through the mask was a horrible idea.

“You’re going to get ketchup all over the mask.”

“not if you help me i won’t.”

He was very adamant about it, but you couldn’t take him seriously when you were staring in the eyes of a horse, with him holding the ketchup bottle in his hands. You peer into the horse’s mouth and see his smug grin from the inside. He’s clearly enjoying himself.

“neigh.”
“Goddammit—” You double over in a fit of giggles, the soulless eyes of the horse mask staring off into different directions doing nothing to help you. It was only a matter of time before he got something like this though. You make a mental note to keep him as far away from any other memes as possible.

When you come out of your laughing fit you look at him to see him with half the bottle already shoved into the horse’s mouth.

You speak between giggles. This was the dumbest thing you’ve ever seen.

“Sans no.”

“sans yes.”

Before you could say anything else he squeezed the bottle, a loud wet squirting noise echoing from him, and then silence between the both of you. You both sat there, frozen.

“i missed.”

You couldn’t hold back your laughter, clutching your stomach. You don’t know why the simple statement was so funny to you. Maybe it was everything combined, but this was hands down the dumbest thing you’ve ever experienced in your entire life. Sans shared in on your laughter, both of your giggles filling up the room until you were interrupted by Papyrus loudly announcing his presence at the front door.

“BROTHER! GOOD NEWS! FRISK WILL BE J-” He stopped halfway through his sentence and looked at the both of you, you on the floor and Sans in the horse mask. You watched Sans slowly turn his head in his brother’s direction, ketchup bottle still held up to the snout.

“‘sup.”

You put a hand over your mouth to stop yourself from laughing more. Your stomach already hurt too much. Papyrus’ expression went from surprised to unsurprised in a matter of seconds, eyes narrowing in what you have come to learn was his ‘i’m now 100% done with my brother’ face.

“SANS, TAKE THAT OFF OF YOUR HEAD RIGHT NOW.”

“Yeah Sans.” You added, nudging his knee. “Quit horsing around.”

Sans shrugged through the mask, pulling out the ketchup bottle. “and if I say neigh?”

You goad him on. “Then Papyrus will stirrup some trouble.”

He turns his head to you. “guess i’ll have to reign it in then.”

“I HATE BOTH OF YOU, SO VERY MUCH.” Papyrus said as Frisk stepped in around him, little eyes going wide at Sans.

“Horse mask!” They said, pointing to him. You knew Sans couldn’t see it, but he nodded anyway. The sight of the mask mouth flopping up and down made you snort behind your hand.

“just got it in.” He said, putting his hands behind his head and laying back on the couch. “figured i’d get it to harness my true comedic powers. i think it’s working.”

“You’re a dork.” You tell him as Frisk pattered around you to him, poking at the head.
“Can I try?” The kid asked curiously. Sans pulled the mask up and off his face and you snorted again. The entire front of his head was completely covered in ketchup. He handed it over to them.

“knock yourself out, kid.”

Before you could protest a warning about ketchup, Frisk had it on over their head and was giddily spinning in circles. They ran around the couch and ended up tripping over your extended leg.

“I’m okay.” They said, pulling themselves back up. Papyrus ‘tsk’d at the three of you.

“HONESTLY.” he started. “AM I THE ONLY MATURE AND RESPONSIBLE ONE HERE?”

“pretty much.” Sans said, closing his eyes. The ketchup all over his face didn’t phase him. You shook your head and stood up, turning to Frisk.

“C’mon munchkin.” You say, heading towards the kitchen. “There’s ketchup in that mask. Let’s get a rag to clean you and Sans up.”

“Okay.” They say, feeling around on your leg until they grab onto the belt loops of your jeans. You leave the living room with frisk in-tow, leaving the taller skeleton to chastise his brother in peace.

Once inside the kitchen it takes you a while to find a clean rag. Most of the ones you kept around had been soiled by Papyrus’s new attempt at combining six different types of spaghetti noodles into one dish. It was good, all things considered, but there was a lot of sauce to clean up afterwards. What was it with these skeletons and tomato based products? The world may never know.

Once you found one in a drawer you picked Frisk up, sitting them down on the counter and taking the mask off of their face. Lo and behold, ketchup smears covered their face and a good part of their hair. You sigh and start cleaning out the horse mask first.

“So.” You start while running the mask under the warm water. “Paps didn’t get to finish his sentence, but I’m guessing you’re here for dinner.”

“Yup!” They beamed “And i’m here to see you!”

You smiled at them. That was so sweet. “Aww. Well, i’m flattered that you’d want to spend time with me.”

They nodded as you dried out the horse mask, flapping it out until you were sure all of the ketchup was out of it.

“You’re the only other human I know.” They said, kicking their feet against the countertop “And you’re sorta like my mom, kinda.”

You almost drop the mask in your shock, turning to them and setting it down on the counter. “I am not your mom. We’ve already talked about this.”

They pouted as you went to clean their face with the warm rag. “Yeah...but what if you were?”

“I’m not.” You say, pinching their cheek once it’s clean enough to do so. “You already have a mom. Toriel is your mom.”

They pouted and stayed silent after that, letting you carefully wipe away all of the ketchup from their face and hair, but you could tell that something was bothering them. Bothering them enough to suggest you to be their parent.
“Frisk.” You say after you’re done wiping them down, a calm tone to your voice. “What’s wrong.”

“Nothing…” They mutter, looking away from you. They’re gripping the edge of the counter pretty hard and their shoulders move up to their ears in apprehension.

They’re not going to talk about it, you conclude, and you switch subjects. “Okay. It’s nothing. How’s school been?”

They tensed, making a grumbled noise to avoid answering.

It’s suddenly not nothing anymore.

“Frisk, what’s going on at school?” You ask them putting the rag down in the sink and crossing your arms. Your tone came out a bit more authoritative than you’d meant for it, but Frisk didn’t flinch away. They just whined.

“I don’t wanna worry anybody…” They said. “Everyone’s gonna make a big deal about it…”

You frowned at them. “I’m more worried about you lying to me.” You say, moving in front of them and placing a hand on their shoulder. “Frisk, if something’s going on at school, you have to tell me.”

They refused to look you in the eye, but didn’t move your hand from their shoulder. “...You’re gonna tell Toriel.”

“No I won’t.” You reassure them.

“Yeah you will.”

The kid was stubborn, you’d give ‘em that. You held your other hand out to them, extending your pinky.

“No, I won’t. Pinky promise.”

They were hesitant at first, but they brought their pinky up to grab yours, squeezing tightly.

The sacred oath of a pinky promise was one of the most important unspoken rules of the world. The heart broke the more Frisk talked. To have a kid so young be the brunt of so much racism in their everyday life. You couldn’t imagine how much pressure that must’ve put on them.

“Okay.” They started, releasing your pinky. “Some of the kids at school have been picking on me and my friend. Because they’re a monster, and my whole family’s monsters.” They confided in you, fidgeting with their shirt hem. “They say that Toriel and Asgore aren’t my real parents, and that my parents didn’t want me. They call my friend names and make of him when he loses his balance, but he doesn’t have any arms so he can’t help it. And when the human parents come to pick them up they always give Toriel mean looks. She didn’t do anything to them.”

Your heart broke, the more Frisk talked. To have a kid so young be the brunt of so much racism in their everyday life. You couldn’t imagine how much pressure that must’ve put on them.

“I don’t feel like I fit in with the other kids.” They continue, wringing their little hands together. “I’m not a monster like my friends, and the human kids don’t like me. I don’t feel like I belong anywhere. I tried being nice for so long, but nobody wanted to listen to me. I even tried flirting with one of the kids, but they almost hit me.” They said, pulling up their knees to wrap their arms around them. “Why do humans have to be so mean?”

You’re not sure what to do with them, but their school story pulls at you. You understand the
trouble they’re going through. Maybe not the racism, you hadn’t experienced that in your day to day life yet. Certainly not to that degree. But you did understand their loneliness.

“’I know exactly how you feel…” You tell them in a small voice, looking down. “About not feeling like you belong.”

They peeked at you through their mop of brown hair. “Really?”

“Yeah.” You tell them, hopping up on the counter next to them. “I took a look at my Soul the other day, to see why I was feeling so down and out. It didn’t have any color in it when Sans pulled it out. It was just...empty.”

You felt more than saw Frisk’s eyes widen in surprise at the new information. Clearly they didn’t know anything about a colorless soul either.

You continue. “Something’s wrong with me. I know it. Your Soul is filled with Determination, but mine? I don’t even know what I want to do, or what I stand for. I was a person drawn to the underground by a vengeful scientist to set him free, and now that he is I don’t feel like I have any reason to keep going. I don’t know what to do. I feel like I’m just coasting through everything. I don’t feel like I belong here anymore.” You confess to them. It seemed to be sharing hour anyway, might as well get it off your chest while you could. You chuckle halfheartedly. “Guess we’re in the same boat, huh squirt?”

“We’re not in a boat. We’re on a counter.” They smile up at you. You scoff and ruffle the hair on their head.

“Well, whatever we’re on, we’re in this together.” You tell them, hopping off of the counter. “Now, I’m not gonna tell your mom. I swore it. You need to tell her instead.”

Frisk made a face. “She won’t listen to me.”

You quirk an eyebrow. “Have you tried to tell her already?”

“No. She just...hasn’t been listening.” They admit, their expression turning bummed. “She’s been really occupied with Flowey.”

You tilt your whole head at that. What in the world could Toriel want with Flowey?

“Why?”

Frisk fidgets and looks off to the side, avoiding your eyes. “Because Asriel might be in him…”

This comes as a shock to you. “What? How does she know?”

“She doesn’t. She asked Alphys and mister Gaster to look for him.” They tell you, a bit despondent. “She hasn’t been listening to me…”

It takes you a couple of seconds to piece things together.

“Oh. Frisk. Frisk sweetie, Toriel isn’t trying to look for Asriel because she doesn’t love you anymore.” You tell them, cradling their head in one of your hands so they can look up at you. “Toriel loves you very much. So does Asgore. She’s never going to love you any less.”

“Yeah but i’m not hers.” They pout, crossing their arms. “I’m not her first kid. She was so excited when she thought she could see Asriel again. She wasn’t that excited about me.”
You pick them off the table and settle them on the ground, taking a knee to get down to their level.

“Frisk.” You start, keeping a hand on their face so they can’t turn their head away from you. “As long as I have known Toriel, she has never once not loved everything that you were. I know that back down when you first fell into the ruins that she did her best to take care of you, even if she didn’t know you. I know she made you pie and tried to protect you, and she did all of that because she loved you very much.” You say, from experience. Your long ago memories of your own run through the ruins fueling the truth behind your words. You were that young child once. You remembered the first time you had met Toriel. She had shown you through the traps of the Ruins and gave you a bed to stay in, even if you didn’t want it.

You knew that Toriel cared for you with all her heart back then. And you knew that she cared for Frisk with all her heart too.

“...Not as much as Asriel.” They pouted, looking down. You brought your other hand up to cup their face with both, gently.

“No. Not as much as Asriel.” You agree with them. “There is never going to be a connection like a mother and her firstborn kid. But you, Frisk, you’re special. Not because of your Determination, or because I made you, or even because you saved all of the monsters. You’re special because you chose to stay with Toriel, and she chose to stay with you. She may not ever love you as much as she did Asriel, but she loves you all the same. She loved you enough to take you in as her child, and that should say enough about how much she cares for you. Out of all of the people she could have chose to spend her life with, she chose you.”

Their expression changed as you spoke. First upset, then realization, then thoughtful, and then acceptance, understanding, and the determination you were so used to seeing flared back in their eyes.

“Yeah. She chose me and I chose her. She’s my mom and I love her, and she loves me.” They said, confident and sure. “Thanks Angel.”

“No problem squirt. It’s what I’m here for.” You tell them, ruffling their hair again. “Now let’s get this dumb horse mask back to my idiot boyfriend.”

Before you could reach for it, Papyrus popped his head into the kitchen, a look of concern on his face.

“IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT IN HERE?” He asked with worry in his face. “YOU HAVE BEEN IN HERE FOR NEARLY TEN MINUTES AND THERE WERE NO SOUNDS OF DINNER BEING MADE, SO I CAME IN TO CHECK ON YOU.”

You smile at him. “Yeah Papyrus, we’re fine. Just cleaning up and talking.”

He seemed relieved and stepped all the way into the small kitchen. “GOOD. BECAUSE IF YOU’RE NOT PREPARING DINNER THEN IT IS TIME FOR MY CHARISMATIC VISAGE TO GRACE THE STOVETOP, YET AGAIN.”

“Oh really?” You prompt him, crossing your arms. “And what magnificent meal is The Great Papyrus going to make for us tonight?”

“IT IS A SURPRISE.” He said, putting his hands on his hips. “BUT IT WILL PROBABLY BE SPAGHETTI. OR A FORM OF IT.”

“Can we order a pizza?” Frisk asked, tugging on your black T-shirt. You look up at Papyrus.
Normally all house decisions were put to a vote, but when it came to dinner Papyrus had the sole final say-so. He was incredibly accommodating though, so even dinner turned into a house vote.

“I SUPPOSE, SINCE FRISK IS STAYING WITH IS, THAT WE COULD INDULGE IN A PIZZA. JUST FOR TONIGHT. TOMORROW I AM COOKING. NO IF’S, AND’S OR BUT’S ABOUT IT.”

You grin despite yourself. “I didn’t think skeletons had any butts.”

He frowned and focused a lesser powered ‘100% done’ look in your direction. “YOU HAVE BEEN SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME AROUND MY BROTHER.” He told you. You quickly wrung out the rag from the sink and headed towards the kitchen door.

“He’s still got ketchup on his face.” You say offhandedly. “I’ll clean him up and then we can order Domino’s.”

Papyrus stepped out of your way. “YES, WELL, ABOUT SANS…”

He didn’t get to finish his sentence. The second you stepped out of the kitchen you saw Sans on the couch, face still covered in ketchup, completely unconscious. You turned around to look at Papyrus.

“How long has he been sleeping?”

He wrung his hands together, bashfully. “A FEW MINUTES BEFORE I CAME TO CHECK IN ON YOU. I WANTED TO WAKE HIM BUT, THIS IS THE THIRD TIME THIS WEEK HE HAS FALLEN ASLEEP UNPROMPTED. IT IS ALMOST AS BAD AS WHEN HE WAS A SENTRY.”

“Good thing Undyne isn’t here to yell at him…” You mutter, walking over to the sleeping bag of bones. “Jeez. What am I gonna do with you.” You say to no one in particular as you proceed to clean his face of the pastey condiment. You were careful with it, and he didn’t move an inch. He didn’t even show signs of stirring. He was just, out. You turn to Papyrus.

“Can you help carry him to his room? I’ll talk to him once he wakes up.”

“YES, OF COURSE.” He straightens up and effortlessly sweeps the smaller skeleton off of the couch, taking him upstairs and into his room. You move to put the red-stained washcloth rag into the kitchen, shadowed closely by Frisk.

“Is something wrong with Sans again?” They asked you, worried.

“No, he’s just tired.” You reassure them. You didn’t want to think of anything else going wrong, after the hellscape you’d already endured. You didn’t want to think of anything else going wrong with Sans after almost losing him once.

You’d keep things stable here if it was the last thing you’d do.
To Believe In Someone Is A Dangerous Thing

Chapter Summary

It's hard to put your faith in someone who has let you down before.

Chapter Notes

I love introducing minor conflicts

See the end of the chapter for more notes

His excuse was that he was hungry.

At least, that’s what he told himself.

He could have eaten at any time on his way home, but Gaster had thought long and hard about his options. If he ate before he came home and holed himself up in his room, then he wouldn’t be making an effort to fix his current situation. If he ate inside the house, and made an olive branch to the rest of his family, there would be a small chance that Sans would see it as him reaching out, without an ulterior motive.

He did have an ulterior motive, though. His ulterior motive was to have his brother trust him again.

He expected to be greeted by either of his skeletal brethren when he walked through the door. He did not expect to see you and Frisk in the middle of the living room, backs to him as you stared up at the balcony in concern.

He clears his throat and the two of you turn to face him.

You didn’t expect him to be home this early.

“Oh. Hi, Doctor Gaster.” You greet him. You feel more comfortable talking to him with the honorific than by his regular name. It seemed a bit more polite. “We were just about to order a pizza. Do you want anything on it?”

He blinked at you and closed the door behind him. “I’m sure whatever you decide to put on it will be just fine.” He assures you, eyeing the ketchup stained rag in your hands. “Did something happen while I was away?”

“Sans fell asleep so Papyrus carried him to bed.” Frisk told him, taking the rag from you. “How’s Flowey?”

“Your flower friend is...faring.” Gaster said, albeit a bit irritably. “He is proving to be difficult to deal with. We had an argument, but he’s since been taken care of. I am confident we’ll be able to find Asriel in him.”
You frowned a bit. For all the flower’s faults and misgivings, you felt for the little guy. He had tried to help you, back at the misunderstanding at Waterfall. Even though he didn’t have a Soul or a reason, he tried to help you. To learn that he was being experimented on in a plan to essentially erase his very being...

Well. You didn’t have any say in the matter, but it made you upset all the same when you heard the words ‘taken care of’

“Yes, but how is Flowey?” You ask him. He seems surprised at your knowledge of his work. “How is he doing?”

Gaster scoffed. “He is the same as he has always been, and needs to mind his own business.”

You frown again and turn to Frisk. “Frisk, can you go upstairs and check on Sans for me? The adults need to talk now.”

They nod at you and run to put the dirty rag in the kitchen, before bouncing up the stairs into Sans’ room, out of your sight.

You take a place on the couch. “You know, I was serious when I said you could talk to me.”

He hesitantly takes a place opposite you, leaving as much space between you as possible.

“Forgive me if it’s difficult to reveal myself to anyone.” He says, fixing his glasses. “I’m not entirely used to...talking. To anyone. About anything. It’s difficult to trust someone when you have seen the evils that lie in the hearts of this world.”

You look away from him, resting your hands on your lap. Being trapped in that room, in whatever form he was in, gave him access to the entire world. He must have seen some dark parts of humanity in his used-to-be prison.

“Yeah, but if you don’t trust anyone then you won’t be able to change.” You tell him.

He furrows his brow. “You have a fair point. I suppose accepting someone as a confidant would be logically helpful to my situation. A catalyst for my own personal growth.”

“You don’t have to treat it like a project.” You say, unfurling your fists from your lap and leaning back on the couch cushions. “Just...treat me like a friend.”

“Right. Friend.” The word seemed foreign on his tongue when he said it and you felt a twinge of pity in your heart for him. “Well, if this is between friends. I’m not entirely...sure...about working on this project with Alphys.”

You raise an eyebrow at him. “Why not?”

“A multitude of reasons.” He says, straightening up. “The highest of which is the positioning of the job. I have never in my life been an apprentice under someone.”

You shrug. “There’s a first time for everything. Why? Do you think you should be in charge?”

He avoids your gaze. “I have far more experience working in the field of science than she does. Decades of it.”

“Yeah but how often have you worked with monster biology?” You ask him. He hesitates and you
take advantage of it. “Maybe you should stop having the mindset that you need to be in control of everything. Maybe you need to sit back and let someone else take control for once?”

He crosses his arms and one of his legs. "There's not a being on this earth that has the power to control me."

“Sans seems to.” You counter him. “Considering how hard you’re working to make him love you again.”

This seems to anger him. “My brother does not have any control over me.”

You put up your hands in defense. “Alright, alright calm down. He doesn’t have any control over you. Nobody has control over you. But would it kill you to chill out a bit? You’ve been going through everything with this mindset that everything is supposed to work out the way you want it to, and that you’re the only person who has any say in whether it happens ‘correctly’ or not.” You air quote at him, and then turn to face him with your whole body, moving your legs to sit pretzel style on the couch. “What if you just...let things happen. And stopped trying to make a plan for every situation?”

“Then I would never be prepared for anything.” He answers, unmoved.

That wasn’t the answer you were looking for.

“Listen. I know what you’re going through.” You tell him. “I know what it’s like to be in a position where you’re uncomfortable and afraid of failure. I do, I really do. But if you don’t stop expecting the world from everyone around you, you’re gonna see yours falling apart way too quick. You have to step back. Everyone’s different, including you and me. You have to learn to accept them for who they are, instead of who you want them to be. If you don’t start seeing people as people instead of projects, then you’re not gonna be able to connect with anyone.”

He looks at you, stares at you really, with an expression you can’t quite place. It’s a mix of shock and awe that settles into a gentle, half-lidded smile. He brings a hand up to your face, cupping your cheek.

“You have such wise words for someone so young in your time.” He tells you. “You really never cease to amaze me.”

You can feel your face heat up at his touch, and his look. You lean back, blushing, until your face is out of his hand. “Y-yeah...well...I said I would help you, and I meant it.” You tell him, trying to quickly recover.

“And I am very grateful for that.” He says, lowering his hand. “And I will offer the same help to you, with your Soul dilemma.”

You close your fist over your chest unconsciously. “Uh. I’m not sure I really want to like...subject myself to any tests, or have wires hooked up to me or anything…”

He moves forward a bit on the couch, erasing some of the space between you. “There would be no wires. All I would ask is a second look, to see it myself. The first time was...insufficient.”

You nervously look towards Sans’ bedroom door. “I don’t think Sans would like it if you messed with my Soul without him here.”

He scoffed at the door. “Are you saying that because you believe he’s trying to protect you? If
he really wanted to help you, he’d find out what your ailments are and then work on a cure for them.” He puts a hand to his chest. “He is keeping you from discovering what you are truly meant to be, simply because I am in the picture. Are you going to be sheltered by him until your end? Or do you want to find out what kind of person you can truly become?”

You clutch your chest harder and look down, bright blonde strands of hair falling in your face before you brush them behind your ear.

“I do...want to know what’s wrong with me...” You say in a small voice. “I want to know why I feel empty. I want to find out what I stand for. Sans said that we would do it together, so I wouldn’t get hurt....”

“But he does not have the necessary tools to help you.” He points out. “And I would never dream of hurting you, dear Angel. You have my sworn word. And...it really was so beautiful the first time. I would love to be able to see it up close, just once more.”

You fidget in your seat, looking long and hard at the second story door, before turning to Gaster. Sans didn’t have the tools to help you. He probably didn’t even know how to help you. But Gaster had been a scientist his whole life, and had seen countless human souls before yours.

It wouldn’t hurt to get a second opinion.

“Okay. Just one more look.”

Sans is still asleep when Frisk enters his room, and Papyrus is still worrying about him. They close the door behind them and look around the place. This is the first time they’ve been in the shorter skeleton’s room since you came along. It was cleaner, much cleaner, no doubt due to your caretaking. There was better furniture now, a nicer dresser with a lamp that worked. The treadmill was gone, which gave the room some space to it, and the bed was actually made up with pillows and a blanket.

Frisk would have thought it a completely different room, if the swirling tornado of trash wasn’t still spinning in the corner.

They silently smiled to themselves and approached the bed.

“Is he gonna be okay?” They asked the taller skeleton, some worry in their voice.

“I THINK...HE IS JUST TIRED. THIS TIME.” He said, sitting down on the edge of the bed. “BUT HE HAS BEEN FALLING ASLEEP FREQUENTLY. VERY FREQUENTLY. ALMOST AS FREQUENTLY AS WHEN WE LIVED IN THE UNDERGROUND.”

“He slept a lot back then...” They nodded

Papyrus crossed his arms. “HE ALSO SLACKED OFF, JUST AS HE HAS BEEN DOING EVER SINCE OUR ELDEST BROTHER CAME BACK INTO THE HOUSE.” He said, wavering a bit on ‘eldest brother’. “I’M NOT SURE IF IT IS BECAUSE HE THINKS HE CAN AFFORD TO, WITH THE HOUSE BEING COVERED BETWEEN THE THREE OF THEM. BUT I WILL NOT HAVE HIM FALLING ASLEEP IN THE MIDDLE OF A CONVERSATION.”

“sounds like a problem i should put to bed.”

The sleepy skeleton yawns, theatrically, and sits up from his spot. “though, i guess you already
“kinda did, huh bro?”

Papyrus facepalmed at him. “THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BE MAKING HORRIBLE PUNS, SANS.”

“i don’t know what you’re talking about.” The blue-clad skeleton put his arms behind his head and flopped back onto his pillow. “all my jokes are comedy gold.”

“YOU FELL ASLEEP IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR CONVERSATION.”

“must’ve been tired. sorry about that bro.” His apology didn’t seem too sincere, but his smile didn’t falter. “what were we talking about again?”

Papyrus looked down at Frisk, nervously, and then back to his brother “IT DOESN’T MATTER WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT. IT MATTERS THAT YOU FELL ASLEEP. THIS IS THE THIRD TIME YOU HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING THIS WEEK. I’M GROWING CONCERNED.”

Sans sat up at that. Concern was the last thing he wanted his brother to feel for him. “nah, i’ve just been taking it easy, y’know?” He tells him as convincingly as possible. “i mean, i’m not the one bringing in all the cash now. i can afford to slack off a bit, right?”

Papyrus’ concern doesn’t leave him. It just shifts to another mindset. “PLEASE DON’T UNDERWORK YOURSELF. OR OVERWORK YOURSELF. JUST REGULAR WORK YOURSELF AND PLEASE DON’T FALL ASLEEP FOR NO REASON.”

“sounds like a something i can work on.” He said, slinging his legs around the side of the bed. “you figure out what we’re having for dinner?”

“We’re gonna have pizza!” Frisk exclaimed to him, holding their arms out. “With pineapple and bacon! And we’re gonna watch a movie!”

“pizza and a movie huh? that’s a pretty tall order for a shortstack like you.” He said, ruffling their hair. “count me in. where’s angel?”

“She is downstairs, probably ordering the pizza.” papyrus said, standing up off the bed.

“She’s talking to Gaster about adult things.” Frisk corrected him. “We asked him what kinda pizza he wanted but he said whatever’s okay.”

“she’s what?” Sans’ head snapped up and he jolted off of the bed instantly. “like hell she is.”

“BROTHER WAIT.” Papyrus stepped in front of him, blocking his exit. “PLEASE, JUST HOLD ON A SECOND.”

He could teleport past him and into the living room. He didn’t have to listen to him, but it was Papyrus. He’d always listen to Papyrus. Frisk joined the taller skeleton in his barricade.

“What.”

“I...DON’T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT OUR BROTHER. THERE IS PROOF, IN YOUR ALBUM, AND IN YOUR EYES THAT HE IS, OR, WAS, SOMEONE VERY IMPORTANT. IF HE IS TALKING TO ANGEL IN AN ATTEMPT TO BETTER HIMSELF, THEN MAYBE WE SHOULDN’T INTERFERE.”
“he’s not going to talk to her to better himself.” Sans says, shoving his hands into his jacket pockets. He feels better about balling his fists where nobody can see them. “everything he ever does, he does for himself. whatever talk they’re having, it’s not good. he’s gonna hurt her.”

“IF YOU KEEP THINKING LIKE THAT, YOU ARE GOING TO BE THE ONE WHO WILL HURT HER.” Papyrus combatted. It took Sans back a bit and he continued. “YOU HAVE BEEN VERY PROTECTIVE OF HER, OVERLY SO, WHEN IT COMES TO OUR BROTHER. YOU DO NOT TRUST HIM, AND THAT IS YOUR PROBLEM, BUT YOU HAVE TO TRUST THAT ANGEL WILL HELP HIM. IF YOU KEEP TRYING TO KEEP HER TO YOURSELF, THEN YOU ARE BEING JUST AS SELFISH AS YOU THINK GASTER IS BEING.”

Sans froze at that. He wasn’t selfish, he just wanted what was best for everyone. They had lives now, real lives on the surface without any resets in their future. He just wanted things to stay this way, and to stay happy.

He wasn’t selfish for wanting the world to stay the same, right?

“....yeah. you’re right.” He sighed, unclenching his fists in their pockets. “i need to start trusting him, and trusting her. if i don’t then we’re never gonna get anywhere. thanks for helping me, bro.”

Papyrus stood up straight, puffing out his chest and crossing his arms. “OF COURSE! WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITHOUT MY MAGNIFICENT ADVICE.”

“i don’t even wanna think about it.” Sans turned to Frisk. “how about we go ask gaster what he wants on his pizza.”

Frisk beamed back at him and nodded, moving out of the way so he could open the door. He’d give Gaster the benefit of the doubt this time.

He immediately regretted his thoughts once he opened the door to find Gaster and Angel on the couch, the former physically holding a clear, heavy looking glass heart. The latter was flushed, shaking and panting as Gaster ran his fingers along the transparent Soul.

Sans would have heard a gasp behind him, if he wasn’t so angry. He watched Gaster look up at him from his place on the couch and he tilted his head, smiling at him as if he hadn’t been caught in an act of betrayal.

“Oh, Sans. So nice of you to join us.”

Sans felt his smile threaten to break his face as the lights in his eyesockets all but disappeared.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?”

Chapter End Notes

And at this point in the story, I am caught up with my rampant updates and will resume my regular unmarked schedule.
Sanity? What Would I Do With A Useless Thing Like That?

Chapter Summary

...Yes, the desire to protect something... is, at the same time, none other than the wish for something to violate it.

Chapter Notes

I didn't plan for this love triangle to happen this way but god if it doesn't exist now.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was just a second opinion, you told yourself. He wouldn’t hurt you, you knew he wouldn’t hurt you.

Of course you were nervous when he put his hand up to your chest. The last time you’d had your Soul pulled out was sort of...intimate. At least, it felt sort of intimate. Like something that should normally be done behind closed doors.

But when Gaster pulled your Soul from your chest, it didn’t feel the same as the first time. The first time Sans had done it, it was careful. Cautious and cold and afraid, afraid that he would hurt you. But this time was different. There was no fear, no cold. The pull on you was eager and sure.

Gaster knew exactly what he was doing, and he wasn’t afraid of it.

“Oh my.” He mused, letting it float in front of him. “It really is even more beautiful this close.”

You blushed at the sentiment. Bearing your Soul to Gaster and having him call it beautiful was...awkward.

“Yeah...I guess.” You say, fidgeting. “Was...was my Soul like this before everything?”

“No.” He said, grasping the heart with both hands. You sucked in a breath. “It was red the first time. Filled with Determination, much like Frisk’s. I suppose one explanation could have been that your reason transferred to the little one, leaving behind an empty shell.” He said. His hold on your heart was firm and warm and you could feel yourself getting wrapped up in it.

“But it is no ways any less substantial than any other Soul’s I’ve seen. It is still very...what’s the word I could use here...firm.”

He squeezed it gently to give emphasis and you shuddered in another breath. When you felt your Soul the outside seemed like smooth glass, but you could feel it give softly under his touch. He was holding everything you were in the palm of his hand and turning you to putty with each press.

For scientific reasons, you assured yourself, since he didn’t seem to notice exactly what he was doing to you.
“So...what can I do?” You ask him as steadily as you can manage. “To...fix it?”

“Well, looking at it from the outside seems to convey that the only real problem with it is that it’s lacking in a color. Which, in turn, means that you are lacking in whatever resolve you stand for.” He said, running his thumb over it. You shiver slightly. “The only way to see what is truly ailing you would be to take a look inside it.”

You furrow your brow. “Inside?”

He smiled at you. “Yes, inside. This is but the outer shell of what your Soul contains. In order to truly understand it, or see all of it, I would have to send a wave of my own magic into it to act as a seeker source, and then relay what I find to you in the hopes that we can get to the root of the problem.”

“Send a wave of your magic...into my Soul?” You ask him, clenching your fists slightly. “That sounds a bit…”

“Dangerous? Nonsense. It is a common practice between monsters.” He said, adjusting his glasses. “It's different with humans, but when a Monster Soul starts to look weak to another monster they are close to, they will often go out of their way to take a look inside, see what the issue is, and then offer their own magic in an attempt to heal them. It is an even easier concept for those who are prolific in healing magic. And while I am not a healer, I understand the practices behind it to a high degree. I am certain, with your permission, if I were to send my own magic into your Soul, that I can help find a solution to whatever question about it you may have.”

“I thought you weren’t going to experiment on me?” You asked him adamantly. Though you didn’t feel very adamant right now. You felt sort of vulnerable.

“It is not an experiment, only a gesture of goodwill.” He says, looking back down at your soul. “After all you have done for me...it is the least I can do to help you.”

You gauged him, hard. You wanted to believe he was genuine. The look on his face was one of adoration mixed with excitement when he stared right through your Soul. He was curious about it, you could tell, but Sans had told you to be careful of him. You wanted to believe that he wouldn’t hurt you, and with your entire being in his hands you could feel that he wouldn’t. You wanted to find out what was wrong with you just as much as he did.

You’d give him the benefit of the doubt.

“Alright.” You tell him, switching to a kneeling position so you were sitting on your legs. “It’s really not going to hurt me?”

He shook his head “On the contrary, it should do quite the opposite.”

You wanted to ask him about what that was supposed to mean, but you stayed quiet and nodded instead.

You weren’t prepared when the answer hit you.

As soon as you had nodded you felt a rush through your veins. All of your nerves were alight and your skin felt like static. A golden yellow warmth flooded through you, paralyzingly, and your body shuddered to embrace it. it surged through you, from your chest to your arms, and lower to
your stomach. You felt dizzy and lightheaded but also completely content, excited, and satisfied.

It was a feeling unlike anything you’d ever experienced, and you wanted to be trapped in that bliss forever.

Then, suddenly, it left you. Pulled out of you in an instant, leaving you feeling even more empty than you had in the beginning. You didn’t want the feeling to leave. You wanted to hold onto it for as long as you could.

When you came to you were nearly doubled over, clutching your chest with one hand and gripping the couch with the other. Your face was undeniably flushed and you felt a heat settle in your core that you knew wasn’t there before.

You let out an undignified whine at the new empty feeling, body shaking in it’s attempt to calm down.

“Oh.” You hear Gaster say, a hint of giddy astonishment in his voice. You didn’t have the strength to do anything but close your eyes and focus in your breathing. “I had absolutely no idea that human Soul’s were this...affected by magic.”

You nod weakly at him. It seems as though he’d finally realized what he was doing to you and he sounded...almost enthralled about it. You felt like a mess. You felt hot and needy and empty at the same time and he was still holding your Soul, gently clutching it. The situation wasn’t dangerous at all. It was one of the most intimate things you’d ever experienced in your life and the thought made you feel hotter.

“Oh, Sans. So nice of you to join us.”

You snapped your head up immediately, eyeing the balcony where Sans was standing. His eyes were dark and his smile was dangerous. He tilted his head at the both of you.

“w h a t  t h e  h e l l  d o  y o u  t h i n k  y o u ‘ r e  d o i n g?”

“S-sans just hold on~” You go to stand up off the couch, but your legs give out underneath you when you put pressure on them. Sans is there instantly to catch you, holding you up with one arm around your waist. You can’t look him in the face and your voice is breathy when you talk. “It’s...I can explain.”

He ignored you, but kept his hold on you, glaring at Gaster. “what the hell did i say?”

“I did not experiment on her, as per your wishes.” He sounded nervous. You were nervous too.

“She asked me for my assistance, I obliged. It was completely consensual between both parties.”

“He’s right, don’t get mad.” You nodded “I...asked for his help. I wanted to...to find out why I feel so...empty.”

There was a brief silence and you felt Sans grip on your side tighten, and then release. You fell to the ground and looked between the two skeletons.

“give it back to her.” Sans said in a flat tone. Gaster nodded and let your Soul float back to you, disappearing as soon as it settled in your hands.

“I’m sorry…” You say, to no one in particular but mostly to Sans.
“you couldn’t wait for me?”

You feel an anger rising in your chest and it fuels you to stand up. “No! I couldn’t have, because you wouldn’t have done anything to help me!” You say to his shocked face. You hear Frisk and Papyrus gasp from their spots on the second floor. “I don’t feel alright, alright? I feel like I don’t have a reason to live and that nothing’s going right even though everything is supposed to look like it’s okay!”

“She does have a point.” Gaster said, not helping anyone.

“you stay out of this.” Sans glared at Gaster before turning to you and taking your hand. You let him, but you leave it limp in his grip. “listen, angel, you’re wrong. i want to help you. i want you to be happy, but this? going behind my back like this isn’t going to help anybody.”

You rip your hand out of his hold and feel an anger towards him that you hadn’t felt before. “Since when did I need your permission to do anything?! I can make my own choices. I don’t need to be sheltered by you. You just don’t want me going anywhere near Gaster because you don’t trust him!”

“and how am I supposed to trust him when he doesn’t listen to me?” He counters, a bit loudly.

“I asked for his help! I wanted to see what was wrong with my Soul so he offered to take a look inside it and I let him.” You say, taking a step forward.

As soon as you’d finished your sentence all anger at you from his direction faded, and was replaced with a furrowed brow as he looked at you, and then to Gaster. You watched a series of dots connect in his head and his expression turned sour, grin shifting up dangerously.

“you manipulative son of a bitch.”

Before anybody could react Sans had pinned Gaster to the opposite wall, absolutely crackling with magic. Yells spouted from nearly every member of the house as the taller skeleton was slammed against the wallpaper. But he wasn’t upset or scared about it.

He was grinning.

“Sans what the hell are you doing?!” You ask him, grabbing his shoulder. You felt the sparkling blue of his magic send sharp static up your hand.

“monsters can’t see inside souls.” He said darkly. You looked between him and Gaster at his place on the wall.

“What?”

“monsters don’t have the ability to see inside other souls, because souls don’t have an ‘inside’.” He starts. “souls are exactly what they appear to be on the outside, always have been always will be. he lied to you when he offered to look inside your soul.”

You look back at Papyrus, to judge whether or not he was telling the truth, but the look of certainty on his face just made you even more confused.

“He...didn’t look inside my Soul?”

“no.” Sans narrowed his eyes at Gaster. “he marked you.”
Your eyes went wide “He what?!”

“It was a simple fix, Brother.” Gaster’s voice was strained when he spoke, weighted down by the blue pressure being put on him. “Her soul was devoid of a reason to live. I, in my generosity, gave her one.”

“you lied to her and pushed your own agenda onto her!” he yelled back. “you didn’t give her her own reason to live. you took her for yourself.”

Gaster rolled his eyes. “Well, I didn’t see you doing anything about it.”

Sans pulled him off the wall and slammed him back into it.

“Wait, wait wait.” You say, stepping between them. “What is going on. What did he do to me exactly, i’m still confused.”

Papyrus cleared his throat, stepping forward from his place at the stairs. He seemed upset at the situation, but stood valiantly at Sans’s side. “THIS IS SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE EXPLAINED WITHOUT THE STRESS OF...DANGER. BROTHER, IF I MAY.”

“go for it.” Sans said, not breaking eye contact with Gaster.

Papyrus pulled you aside as Frisk walked up to you, also curious. “THERE IS A THING IN THE MONSTER WORLD CALLED ‘MARKING’” He starts, “WHEN TWO MONSTERS HAVE SHARED A STRONG ENOUGH BOND FOR A LONG ENOUGH PERIOD OF TIME, THEY WILL GIVE EACH OTHER A TRACE OF THEIR MAGIC TO HOLD IN THEIR SOUL, TO SIGNIFY THAT THEY BELONG TOGETHER. IT IS SOMETHING THAT MUST BE DONE WITH THE CONSENT OF BOTH PARTIES, AND IT TIES THEM TOGETHER UNTIL DEATH. SOME MONSTERS, LIKE TORIEL AND ASGORE, HAVE THE ABILITY TO CREATE A NEW MONSTER FROM THAT SHARED MAGIC. IT WASN’T UNTIL...RECENTLY THAT WE DISCOVERED THAT...IT COULD BE DONE TO HUMANS.”

You furrowed your brow. “How recently?”

He looked to the side, and then back to you. “FIVE MINUTES AGO.”

You walked back over to Sans, standing behind him and glaring at Gaster. “So I just went through the monster equivalent of marriage?!”

“worse.” Sans growled. “you went through the monster equivalent of being branded.”

“Are you shitting me?!” You walked up to Gaster, furiously. “I trusted you, you piece of shit!”

“And I did nothing to betray that tr-”

He was cut off by Sans constricting his chest.

“i trusted you too.” he started, taking a step forward to join you. “i wanted to believe that you were gonna change, but you’re just as selfish as you’ve always been. you only think about yourself and what benefits you and you don’t realize how much you hurt everyone around you. you’re never going to change.”

Sans released his hold on the scientist and you watched him crumple to the floor, trying to regain control of his breathing.
“I only...wanted to help.” He said between breaths. “That’s all I ever wanted to do. I thought that...by giving her something to live for...that she’d be happy.”

“Yeah well, things don’t always go the way you want. You had your chances, gas. This is the third strike buddy, and you’re out.” Sans says, putting an arm around your waist. “I want you to leave this house, and I don’t wanna see you come back. If you come anywhere near me or anyone I care about, well…” His blue eye glowed dangerous at Gaster. “I’ve said it enough times...I don’t really feel like sayin’ it again.”

Gaster nodded, standing up and brushing himself off before pulling two small pieces of paper out of his labcoat. He walked over to the door and laid them face down on the side-table.

“Alphys wanted me to give these to Papyrus and Frisk. Use them, or don’t.” He said quickly, opening the door.

You watched him leave and a tense silence filled the air around the four of you before Sans turned to you.

“Are you okay?”

You nodded at him. “I’m fine. I just...I can’t believe he did that. I feel weird now. Is there any way to like, get rid of it? The marking?” You ask him. He shook his head.

Sans looks down at your chest. You can feel him staring at your Soul, even though it wasn’t pulled out. “Not that I know of. This is the first time I’ve seen a human get marked. I’ve never been marked by anyone. I don’t know what to do.”

“You could ask Alphys.” Frisk piped up next to you. You didn’t notice them standing there. “Or Toriel and Asgore.”

“Yeah, guess we could.” Sans says. You watch Papyrus walk over to the slips of paper on the table and inspect them, before letting out a loud excited noise.

“Oh my god.” He said, staring at the blank slips, which were not actually blank, but pink from where you were standing.

You raised an eyebrow and watched several beads of sweat appear on Sans’ forehead.

“What is it?” You asked Papyrus, walking up to inspect the pink slips.

They weren’t blank slips, or even slips at all. They were big pink passes with a large fancy ‘MTT’ printed on the front cover and a ‘Backstage VIP’ printed on the bottom, along with Frisk and Papyrus’ names. You plucked the ‘Frisk’ one from him, turning it around and reading off the text out loud.

“This day pass allows one ‘Frisk’ and an accompanied guest to join the wonderful Mettaton on his two year anniversary from his surface debut to spend a day of fun filled activities and gorgeous star treatment together. This pass will also act as a front row ticket to his two year anniversary concert held at Mount Ebott’s base immediately following the day. This pass cannot be refunded or traded for retail value and is absolutely priceless darling, so don’t even think of giving it to anyone else.” You look up at Frisk. “Holy shit, kid.”

“And there’s one for me too!” Papyrus said, holding out the pass in excitement. “Mettaton asked for me by name! Truly he must have been captivated by my stunning charisma and charming good looks from the last time
You handed off the pass to Frisk, who flipped it front and back. Sans rolled his eyes, but he seemed to have calmed down a little bit by his brother’s rejoicing.

“That’s...pretty special then.” You tell the two ticket holders. “Any idea who your plus one is gonna be?”

“YES. AND NO.” He said, putting his hand in his chin. “I WOULD BRING UNDYNE WITH ME, BUT SHE HAS STATED NUMEROUS TIMES THAT SHE DOES NOT LIKE METTATON, AND THAT SHE DOES NOT GET ALONG WITH HIM. I DO NOT WANT TO BRING HER TO SPEND THE DAY WITH HIM IF THERE IS A CHANCE SHE WILL ACCIDENTALLY BREAK HIM WITH HER AMAZING BRUTE STRENGTH. SO, I WILL SETTLE FOR THE OTHER PERSON I KNOW THAT HATES METTATON, TO A LESSER EXTENT.”

You tilted your head at him and raised an eyebrow before Sans answered for you.

“he’s talking about me.” He said, stepping forward. “sure bro, i’ll go with you’

“You don’t like Mettaton?” You ask him. He shrugs.

“he’s not the type of person i like to be around. but he makes papyrus happy, so i’ll go to see my bro be happy.” Sans said, smiling at Papyrus.

“IT WILL BE GREAT! A WHOLE DAY TOGETHER WITH MY FAVORITE SEXY RECTANGLE. WOWIE!”

You smiled to and turned to Frisk. “So, guess that means you’ll be bringing Toriel with you, right?”

They looked at the card and thought for a second, before shaking their head.

“Toriel’s always busy, she doesn’t have the time.” They said, not elaborating. “I wanna go with you.”

You felt a pulling at your heart and smiled. They said that they wanted to spend more time with you, and you said that you’d let them. Spending a whole day together might be exactly what the kid needs to get their mind off of their situation.

“Sure munchkin, i’ll go with you.” You tell them, smiling at Sans. “Guess i’ll be seeing you there?”

“like one big happy family.” He says, jokingly. “hopefully he’ll pay for lunch.”

“Oh, that’s right! The pizza.” You say, turning to Papyrus. “We completely forgot to order it.”

He saluted at you. “FEAR NOT. I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, WILL SEE TO IT THAT WE WILL ALL HAVE A PIZZA OF OUR OWN TONIGHT, AND THAT WE CAN WATCH METTATON’S MOVIE SPECIALS WHILE EATING IT. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE OPPORTUNE TIME!”

Frisk tugged on his unsaluted glove. “Phone’s in the kitchen.”

“YES! TO THE KITCHEN!”
He disappears through the kitchen threshold with Frisk trodding behind him. You sigh a small breath of relief, happy at their combined enthusiasm.

“this doesn’t fix anything.”

You turn to Sans next to you and his smile seemed to have drooped.

“giving us those passes doesn’t mean anything. i still never want to see him again.”

You wrap an arm around his shoulder. “I know it doesn’t fix anything. What he did was...wrong. But you and I will work together and we’ll fix it ourselves.”

He wraps his arms around your waist and you rest your forehead on his. “i’m gonna do everything i can to get his mark off of you. no slacking off.”

“I’m glad to see you so motivated. But don’t be motivated by hate, okay?” You ask him, looking him in the eyes. He nods.

“guess i’ll just be motivated by love then.” he said, smirking at you. You kissed between his eyes and lingered there for a second or two.

“Sounds like a plan.” You tell him, releasing your hold on him and taking a step back, pulling him towards the kitchen. “Now let’s go and make sure that they order regular pizzas for us.”

You’d get rid of Gaster’s mark together.

And when it was gone...well…

Maybe you’ll find something else to take it’s place.

Chapter End Notes

Alternate title: Everybody hates Gaster.

If you at any point yelled at the screen, you have to leave a comment about it. It's the rules.
Heroes Might Be Lonely, But They Are Never Fighting Alone

Chapter Notes

I'm pulling this chapter short due to...a lot of planning. I promise Mettaton will be in the next chapter, so stick around for that. It'll be great, trust me.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You all needed a break. That was an immutable and undeniable fact.

After the drama between you and Gaster, you’d been feeling off. Waves of depression and anxiety seemed to be your constant companion in the aftermath of the ‘marking’ and you’d been feeling a bit sick. Part of you wanted to see Gaster again but you assured yourself that it was only to punch him in the face for staking a claim on you. The other half of you assured you that it was just an unfortunate side effect of whatever ‘markings’ were supposed to do.

One thing was for sure. You didn’t feel like yourself, and you definitely weren’t happy with your situation.

So really, the Mettaton passes were probably exactly what you needed.

You didn’t realize that the two year anniversary concert was going to be such a big deal though. It wasn’t just Mettaton’s two year anniversary, but all of the monster’s two year anniversary. It was the two year anniversary of the day every single monster was saved from the Underground, and the celebration didn’t just last for a day. The celebration was going to go on for an entire week.

You had absolutely no idea about any of this until Papyrus excitedly explained it to you on the bus.

“LAST YEAR WE HAD A PARTY, BUT IT ONLY LASTED FOR A DAY.” He told you excitedly as Frisk nodded beside him. “METTATON HELD A CONCERT THEN TOO, BUT IT WASN’T AS BIG AS THE ONE HE’LL BE HOLDING TONIGHT, PROBABLY.”

“I think I remember that.” You tell him, “I was busy working, but Catty had taken the day off with Bratty to go to the concert. They raved about it for a month afterwards.”

“IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST NIGHTS OF MY LIFE.” Papyrus happily explained. “FRISK HELPED ME GET BACKSTAGE AFTER THE CONCERT TO MEET HIM. IT WAS EVERYTHING I COULD HAVE DREAMED IT WOULD BE.”

“he wouldn’t shut up about it for a month either.” Sans gave helpfully from his spot next to you.

You remembered Mettaton, vaguely. You remembered his ‘showbiz’ personality and flamboyant nature, and all the times he tried to kill you with falling bombs and miniature versions of himself. You remembered having a lot of fun doing that, though, and his long realization after you defeated him was nice to listen to.

You were still kind of nervous about meeting him though. He’d turned into a pretty big celebrity since all of the monsters left the underground, bigger than he was when he was trapped. You didn’t exactly know what was going to happen and what ’spending the day with him’ entailed, but Frisk was excited and their excitement was infectious.
The initial meeting, you’d found out, was to take place at the newly renovated MTT resort in the next city over. Of course, Mettaton had made multiple resorts in his time on the surface, spanning the globe with one on every continent, but having one in the next city over was reassuring. He was still close to Mt Ebott and still kept to his roots, and that thought made you smile when the four of you stepped off the bus in front of it.

It definitely expanded since the first resort, you’d give it that. The building was bigger, that was the first thing you noticed. The second thing that hit you as different was the decor of the lobby. The square Mettaton statue you’d remembered being in the original one was gone, replaced by a bigger metal looking one of Mettaton in his EX body singing into a microphone. The microphone cord wrapped around his body with enough room to form a sort of globe around him. It looked pretty nice.

Of course, you weren’t the only one admiring the scenery. Papyrus and Frisk were happily running around the lobby, taking in all of the colors and decorations. The walls were a pale pink and the linings between the white tiles were gold. You wondered silently if Mettaton was the one in charge of the decorating and exactly how much he learned from the surface, but all thoughts were thrown out the window when Alphys walked in through one of the large hallways leading off to the elevators. She looked a bit worn out, but smiled when she saw your tiny entourage.

“Oh! You’re all on time!” She said, clapping her hands together. “Good! We’ve got uh, a lot of stuff to do.”

Papyrus was the first to approach her. “THE GREAT PAPYRUS WOULD NEVER BE LATE TO SUCH AN IMPORTANT MEETING. SANS, ON THE OTHER HAND, ALMOST DID NOT MAKE IT HERE.”

Alphys looked at Sans and he shrugged. “wasn’t really feelin’ up to it, to be honest. but there was a metta-ton of pressure put on me.”

You and Frisk snrk’d and Alphys rolled her eyes.

Papyrus put a hand to his face “ALPHYS, PLEASE DIRECT ME TO MY IDOL BEFORE HE THINKS OF ANOTHER ONE.”

She stepped back from the hallway. “G-go past the black door, at the end of this hallway. The Staff Only door. Its...not locked. Mettaton’s room is...pretty obvious.”

“EXCELLENT.” He said, puffing out his chest and turning to you and Frisk. “THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE. THE DAY WILL BE OVER BEFORE WE KNOW IT!”

You watched Frisk tail him eagerly and turned to Sans. “Catch up with is when you can, alright?”

He nods and lets you go off after the other two. Alphys gives him a surprised look once you’re all past the door.

“Y–you’re not going with them?”

He shook his head. “nah. actually, if you’re not too busy with prep, there’s something I wanna talk to you about.”
“He what?!?!?!”

Several patrons of the restaurant had looked over in their direction at the outburst, but quickly turned back to their meals. Alphys covered her mouth and whisper yelled a second time.

“H-he what?”

“he marked her, alphys.” Sans said, some venom in his voice. “and i don’t know how to get it off her. figured i’d come to you since you could probably solve it with science.”

Alphys looked down, slightly flustered. “W-well I mean..y-yes. i could. i mean...p-probably. b-but a marking...th-that’s a big deal. And she let him?”

“she didn’t know what he was doing.” He grumbled back, clenching his fist on the table. “he lied to her and she believed him. he messed with her soul and neither of us know how to fix it.”

“Have you t-tried...asking him to remove it?” She offered, helpfully.

“no.” Sans shot back, a bit harsher than she anticipated. “i told him to leave immediately after. haven’t seen him in a week.”

Alphys nodded. “Well, he’s taking care of Flowey today. S-so I can do tests and preparation f-for the concert...and other things. Maybe I c-could-”

“if he comes anywhere near her again, i’ll kill him alphys.” He cut her off, lights dimming from his eyes. They were there, just dull.

Alphys frowned angrily at him. “I know you’re mad, b-but killing him isn’t going to help anyone.” She started, squaring her shoulders and pushing her glasses back up her nose. “If it’s possible that Gaster can remove the mark from Angel, then shouldn’t you ask him to?”

Sans tightened his smile and looked off to the side, purposefully ignoring her suggestion. She sighed and crossed her arms, leaning back in her chair.

“Listen, Sans, you and I have been friends for...for a very long time. You know that I’d do anything I could to help you.” She started, her stutter all but gone in the atmosphere of the moment. “I don’t know how to unmark a monster. Undyne and I...haven’t r-really gotten to that point in our relationship. But logically...it stands to reason that Gaster should be able to uh...undo it. I mean...the only thing I could think of that c-could...take something out of a Soul would be, um. The Determination Extraction Machine.”

“no.” Sans objected, looking her right in the eyes. “that’s way too dangerous. she could die.”

“I w-would tweak it, of course.” Alphys countered “I’d do a lot of...modifying. Changing it s-so that it doesn’t uh...pull the Determination out of a host. J-just...monster magic? I guess?”

Sans smile shifted in uncertainty as he stared down at the table. “it’s never been tested with a living human before.”

“N-no. It hasn’t.” Alphys looked down too. “But it’s the only thing I have that c-can pull anything out of a Soul. I d-don’t really have any other options...aside from that...and asking Gaster to pull it out of her.”

“we really don’t have that many options, huh…” He sighed, looking off into the restaurant at the other patrons. “maybe. i dunno.”
“You could always, talk to Toriel and Asgore?” She offered. “They had Asriel...they could probably help you. Or...at least tell you about uh, the complexities of how markings work?”

He nodded. “yeah...yeah. I’ll do that before I decide anything. I’ll see if I can talk to them this week, while everyone’s preparing.”

“It’s going to be a pretty crazy week.” She observed, looking around at the mix of monsters and humans in the cafe. The atmosphere was calm, but happy, and she smiled. “Looks like I’ve got a lot of work to do before this Saturday.”

Sans stood up from his chair, pushing it back. “We’ve all got a lotta work to do before Saturday. Just make sure you don’t get lost in the TV following that Aang kid.”

Alphys gripped the table. “No, Sans, you don’t understand. Avatar The Last Airbender is the greatest thing I’ve ever seen. It’s so good.”

He smirked at her “Better than mew mew?”

“It’s...close.” She mumbled, not rising from her chair. “By the way...does Frisk know? About the-”

“Nah.” Sans shrugged “tori’s gonna break the news to ‘em tomorrow probably. I mean...the kid’s sharp. they probably already know something’s up.”

“Well...it is kind of a big deal. A birthday party slash official ambassador coronation” Alphys said, standing up from her chair “It’ll probably be really formal. Oh j-jeez, I’ll have to get a fancy dress...I d-don’t even know where I’d look for one.”

“I’m sure Mettaton’ll be happy to help you with that.” He said, gesturing towards the door with a nod of his head “But right now you’ve got a lotta maintenance to do, right? you should probably get on that.”

“Y-yeah. I...really need to get going.” She said, walking past him. “I’ll...do what I can. For Angel. And...I know you d-don’t like it but...I’ll talk to Gaster. See if he c-can...or, has the ability to uh...fix it.”

Sans grimaced, but nodded anyway. “Thanks. knowing you’re helping puts me at ease, a bit.”

She shook her head as they crossed the threshold into the lobby. “It’s not a problem. What are friends for?”

“Saving each other, apparently.” Sans answered with a shrug. “Good luck.”

“You too.” She nodded at him before scurrying out the front door of the hotel, out of his sight. He turned towards the long hallway in the back, locking eyes with the black ‘Staff Only’ door at the very back. He walked down towards it and paused in front of it, taking a deep breath.

With the way things were turning out, he’d need all the luck he could get.

Chapter End Notes

BY THE WAY LOOK AT THIS BEAUTIFUL ART THAT WREXIE DID FOR MY
STORY


It's from waaaay back in chapter 7 but YO ITS SO GOOD.

Comment and Kudos as always my friends. And uh...art would be....beautiful. Totally beautiful.
Devils Don't Ask Favors From God

Chapter Summary

Admiration is the furthest thing from understanding.

Chapter Notes

Hope you guys like angst

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Gaster wasn’t saying much today.

Normally, if it were any other day, Flowey would have reveled in the silence from the skeletal scientist. But today he was alone, running his tests on the flower while Alphys was out preparing for the two year anniversary thing that he didn’t even care about.

Well...he did care. A little. He was a monster too, shouldn’t he get a chance to party?

So Alphys wasn’t there, big deal. He could handle the bag of bones on any normal day.

Unfortunately, this wasn’t looking like a normal day.

“Hey, what gives?” The flower questioned him as he stood in front of one of the various machines surrounding the room. “You look pissed off.”

“I am not ‘pissed off’.” Gaster quipped back, not moving from the machine. There was a screen on it that looked vaguely like a radar.

“Yeah you are.” Flowey snarked back with a grin. “You look real mad. Mad and upset. What’d you fuck up this time?”

Gaster side eyed him. “The misdemeanors of my life are none of your concern.”

“You fucked something up! I knew it!” Flowey laughed. “What’d you do this time huh? Empty threats at your brother? Tried to hit on his girlfriend? Accidentally set something on fire? C’mon, I don’t get much to talk about down here.”

“I would prefer if my private life and my public life were kept separate, thank you very much. I do not need a Soul-less plant with little time left to live as a confidant.” Gaster adjusted one of the dials on the machine and the radar turned blue.

“Alright, sheesh. Don’t tell me.” Flowey said, shrugging. “But who else do you have to talk to, huh? I mean, i’m stuck down here and offering to listen. I bet that’s more than what you’re getting right now.”

The scientist didn’t budge. “You know nothing of my situation.”
Flowey crossed his leaves. “I know you’re mad and if you keep working while upset, you’re going to mess something else up. Like me.”

Gaster took a deep breath and brought a hand up to pinch the bridge of his nose. “...You bring up a valid point. If I keep going with my frustrations running high, I am more likely to make a mistake in my haste...” He turned around, walking towards Flowey and stopping in front of his setup. “Fine. If you are offering to listen, I will accept your offer.”

“Oh, this oughta be good.” Flowey settled in his spot with smug smile on his face.

Gaster cleared his throat. “I will preface what I am about to tell you by stating that at the time, I was completely assured of my reasoning and was only doing what I thought, in my mind, would lead to the best solution for the problem at hand.”

“So you leapt before you looked, yeah yeah.” Flowey shooed him off with one leaf “Get to the good part.”

He watched Gaster fix his glasses, for the millionth time since he’s known him. “You are no doubt aware of the situation that has arisen in our dear Angel and her transparent Soul.”

“Yeah, you wouldn’t shut up about it for a whole day.” Flowey rolled his eyes.

Gaster frowned. “Yes, well...I did something in an attempt to...solve the problem. In my mind, it seemed the best solution for the situation at hand. In other’s minds...it did not.” He said, looking down. “I was banned from my home and have not spoken to anyone in her circle aside from Alphys since.”

Flowey raised an eyebrow. “That’s pretty harsh. What did you even do that was so bad?”

Gaster looked to the side, avoiding his eyes. “I...may have marked her in an attempt to fill the void in her Soul.”

“You WHAT?!” The flower gaped at him in shock, and then split a wicked grin, laughing at him. “Ohmygod. I can’t believe you. You really are an idiot! And she let you?! How the hell did you pull that off?!”

The skeleton scientist hesitated before answering, yellow tints forming on his cheeks in his frustration. “...I may have also lied to her about it.”

Flowey grinned, covering his mouth with a leaf in a way that was supposed to be sly. “That’s fucked up. That’s really fucked up. Lying to someone to put a mark on them? That’s the lowest of the low. You’re like, a predator or something.”

“I am not a predator.” Gaster snapped at him. “I was merely doing what I thought was the correct course of action to take.”

“But it wasn’t the right course of anything!” Flowey taunted him. “You fucked up, real bad. I mean, You’ve always been kind of an ‘experiment first ask questions later’ kinda guy, but this? This is a whole new level of bad. I’m surprised Sans didn’t kill you!”

“He tried, and failed. And it was not an experiment.” Gaster argued. “She is not an experiment. There was an emptiness inside her that, as her penultimate creator, I felt obligated to fill.”
Flowey grimaced. “That sounds really predatory. They’re gonna want to take it off of her, you know.”

The scientist adjusted his glasses and tweaked the monitor that was hooked up to Flowey’s pad, ignoring him. He tried again.

“Do you even know how? To take it off of her?” Flowey grinned. “Or are you just gonna keep it on her like some sick lovestruck sadist?”

“I am not a sadist!” Gaster snapped again, looming over him.

“Well you sure do seem to like putting people through a lot of unnecessary pain.” Flowey quipped back, his stalk growing thorns. “I mean, even this with me. You’re just looking for Asriel so you can bring him back to life. You don’t even care what happens to me as long as you can find your ‘sweet precious goat kid’. And do you really think that’ll make anyone happy?” He added, grimacing at the skeleton. “I mean, if Asriel is in me somewhere, then doesn’t that mean Chara’s in me too? Do you really wanna run the risk of bringing Asriel back to life when Chara could just as easily come back with him? Do you want to be responsible for bringing back a murderer and killing me in the process?”

“Enough!” Gaster slammed his hands down on the table, shaking the equipment that Flowey was hooked up to. “If you’re going to keep badgering me about the choices I make and refusing to yield to Alphys’s research, then perhaps it’s better off if you were terminated.”

Flowey stretched up to his face. “Well if we’re going by that logic, then maybe you should go back to that timeless space box you broke out of! And what’s the point anyway, bringing Asriel back?” He tilted his head, petals shifting. “Toriel and Asgore already have Frisk, and the kid doesn’t sap any of their energy or strength from them. Isn’t that a better option anyway? And even if you did pull Asriel out of me, do you really think that’ll make up for everything you’ve already done?”

“I have already told you once.” Gaster said, glaring down the flower in their stalemate. “Do not assume that you are the judge of whether or not I can redeem myself.”

“Maybe if you stopped acting and started listening and thinking instead, I wouldn’t judge you so much.”

Gaster scoffed, removing his hands from the table. “And who would I listen to, then. You?”

Flowey shrunk his stalk back down to his unassuming size. “Well who else do you have? Once everyone finds out what you did to Angel they’ll be out for you like a mob. What are you gonna do then?”

He watched Gaster retreat from the workbench, defeat evident in his face. The skeleton walked over to the workchair next to one of the tables and dropped himself in it. The flower could see the weight of Gaster’s actions on his shoulders.

He almost felt bad for the guy. Almost.

“I suppose, the correct thing to do in this situation would be to remove my mark from Angel’s Soul, once again returning it to its uninhabited state…” Gaster said, taking off his glasses and placing them on the table. He propped up his arm on the armrest of the chair and hug his head in his hand. “Which would be a viable option, if it were not for my aforementioned ban. I
“cannot even approach or speak to one of his friends without threat for reprimand.”

“Then why don’t you get someone else to do it?” Flowey questioned him.

Gaster shifted his head and looked off to the side, melancholy in his eyes. **“Because I have no one else...”**

Silence hung in the air between the two for a while. Flowey knew what that felt like.

“My brother is right...” Gaster sighed. **“I have been so headstrong in my reasonings that I did not consider the negative ramifications of my actions. My incessant need to find a solution to all problems presented to me is a cloud to my judgement. My demand to do things correctly in the most logical sense has severed what little emotional understanding and attachments I could have hoped to form in this world.”** He said, staring off in no particular direction. **“I really am the worst kind of monster...”**

Flowey’s petals drooped as he watched the downtrodden scientist sink further into his own guilt. It made him sick, having to watch this. It made him even sicker that he knew exactly what the brainiac was feeling. He sighed.

“This is really hitting you hard, huh doc?”

“It is.” Gaster answered. **“And here I thought myself above the feelings of guilt and self degradation.”**

“Nobody’s above feeling guilty.” Flowey told him, retracting his thorns. “Not you, not me, not even god himself.”

“I wonder. Would I still be having these feelings if I had accomplished my original goal?” Gaster mused, moving his hand up to the desk to grab a pencil and twirl it in his fingers. **“Or would I have looked back on my accomplishment and regretted resetting.”**

“Doesn’t matter.” Flowey answered for him. “We’re all stuck here anyway, why bother thinking of what could have been?”

Gaster scoffed, dropping the pencil. **“I suppose.”**

Another small silence filled the room, the beeps and clicks from the monitors and machines the only background to their thoughts.

“Why do you want to help her so badly anyway?” Flowey asked once he tired of the beeping. “Angel didn’t do anything for you. She didn’t even let you free. Why are you trying so hard for her when she didn’t do anything to deserve it?”

“On the contrary, Flowey, she has done everything.” Gaster said, standing up from his chair. “She has, in her way, given me the opportunity to walk this world once more. Directly or indirectly, her interference in this world, which I had initially been the cause of, has given me a chance to reclaim my life and make amends for my actions. I may have been the one to pull her into this story, but she has become the author of her own life, and has allowed me the pleasure of watching it unfold with my own eyes. She has become, in every sense of the word, a true Angel to me. And for that, I am indebted to her.”

“You’ve got a crush on her.”
Gaster sputtered at the accusation, cheeks tinting gold at the flower’s bold statement.

“I most certainly do not.”

“You DO! Hah! As if things couldn’t get any worse!” Flowey cackled. “No wonder the mark even went through! You’ve got the hots for the human! What is this like, frankenstein falling in love with his monster? Or would it be the other way around?”

“You will hold your tongue this instant!” Gaster said, stomping over to leer down at the flower.

He continued to laugh. “Oh man, this is rich! This situation’s as gold as your face! You’re like a schoolkid picking on the girl you like to hide the fact that you like her!” Flowey said, smiling up at him. “Does Sans know? Oh man, he’s going to kill you.”

Gaster huffed at him, cheeks still yellow “He will do no such thing, because this information will not leave this room.”

Flowey smirked at him “And now you can’t even go near her.”

“I cannot go near her, no. And I cannot make amends for what I did wrong.” Gaster said, anger falling into guilt. He wasn’t used to having so much emotion in one place. Flowey calmed down, laughter falling into chuckles. He took a breath to regain his composure, still smiling.

“Gee, it’s too bad you don’t have anyone that they trust that could talk to them for you.” Flowey said, moving a petal up to his mouth. “If you had that, well, maybe there’s a chance they might give you one more shot.”

Gaster narrowed his eyes at him. “What are you implying?”

Flowey looked around the room and sighed. “Listen genius, You wanna make amends for how badly you fucked up with Angel, but you can’t go anywhere near her. And me? I don’t wanna be stuck down here in this musty ass basement lab having tests run on me that’ll probably kill me. You get where i’m going here?”

“You wish to make a deal.” Gaster gathered. “A chance at redemption for me, at the cost of your freedom and an end to this project.”

Flowey winked at him. “Bingo. You get me out of this place, and I’ll put in a good word for you with the others. See if I can convince them to letting you near her to try to unmark her. And all you have to do is let me go.”

Flowey extended a leaf towards him, grin etched into his face. Gaster looked at it for a second and considered his options heavily.

If he let the flower go he would lose the little trust he had left in Alphys, if it still existed at all, the project would be ruined, and there would be no chance to save Asriel. On the other hand, he would be able to secure one more chance at proving to Sans that he had no more ill intent than their youngest brother. If he did not release Flowey and they ended up finding Chara in the confines of Flowey’s immeasurable void, he would be jeopardizing the safety of the world by risking a mass murderer’s essence to run free. But if they did find Asriel within him, there was no guarantee that he could be saved in the first place.

Gaster tightened his brow with resolve, took a deep breath, and shook.
And now you all love Gaster again. Or not.

He fucked up. He needs a lot of help.
Chapter Summary

My legend dates back to the 12th Century thank you very much.

Chapter Notes

I legitimately couldn't come up with a title for this chapter, and then Excalibur happened. Thank you Soul Eater.

Sidenote: Holy shit I hit 35000 hits. I'm,,,so happy

The dressing room was, for lack of a better word, very Mettaton.

The outside of the door was a mural of his rectangular body, the yellow and red squares forming their signature M on the fake cover screen and a ‘Guests Only’ sign hanging from the dial-shaped doorknob. You, Frisk, and Papyrus approached it, the smallest of your trio knocking curtly as angry mumbling could be heard from the other side. With no notice or warning the door flew open, two very irate humans in business suits stepping out of it with Mettaton following them. You took note that he was in his EX body and remembered Papyrus saying something about Alphys completing it.

“And if I see either of you two again, I’ll have security kick you out!” The robot diva yelled back at them.

One of them turned around and you could see the agelines on his face all too clearly. “You’re going to regret not taking up our offer.”

Mettaton scoffed. “Please, darling. As if I haven’t had hundreds more!” He called after them, watching them leave. He huffed, crossing his arms. “Honestly, if it’s not one thing it’s another with them.”

“Hi Mettaton!” Frisk beamed excitedly up at the robot, who finally realized that he had company.

“Frisk, darling!” He squealed, equally as excited, and lifted the kid up, wrapping them in a face-smooshing hug. “It’s been far too long! I’m so glad you got my passes! I was afraid Alphys would have forgotten them in all of the commotion.” He said, putting them down and turning to Papyrus. “And it’s been even longer since I’ve seen you.”

The skeleton puffed out his chest valiantly and you could see the faintest tint of scarlet on his cheeks. “IT HAS BEEN ALMOST ONE YEAR EXACTLY.” He said “I HAVE BEEN KEEPING TRACK.”

Mettaton chuckled. “Of course you have darling, you were looking forward to it. Though I can’t
blame you, i’m worth the wait. Even though it was a year ago, it still feels like just yesterday…” He turned to you and opened his arms in a grand gesture “And you must be the fabled Angel I’ve been hearing so much about! You must be Frisk’s plus one. It’s an absolute pleasure to meet you”

You were frozen in your spot. “You’ve...heard of me?”

He put a hand on his chest. “Alphys hasn’t stopped talking about you for months! I’ve heard your whole story. A tragic tale of a heroine on her road to redemption, fighting through evil and coming out on top. A human with no family to call her own and a past full of lies, drama, and heartache in a quest for love and her happy ever after.” He said, wrapping an arm around your shoulder in what you wanted to say was sympathy. “You’re quite the impressive survivor darling. I’d be lying if I told you I haven’t been thinking about making a movie based off of your tale. Of course, I’d need to get your approval and we’d have to have a meeting with your lawyers to get it all down on paper…”

“I’d prefer if you didn’t try to monopolize off of my suffering, thanks.” You said, eyeing his arm around your shoulder. He removed it immediately and smiled at you in understanding.

“Of course. I have hundreds of other projects I have in mind anyway. But please do come in, all of you. We’ve got a big day ahead of us.” He said, ushering you al into the fitting room.

The dressing room was also very Mettaton.

It was twice the size of what a normal dressing room would be, or so you guessed. You’d never been inside a dressing room before. The walls were pale pink in their decor and the furniture scattered around the room was a mix of neon pink and black that borderlined gaudy and stylish at the same time. He walked over to his mirror, which was also shaped like his old body, and sat down in front of it.

“Take a seat and get comfortable darlings.” He said, crossing his legs and pulling out a box of Qtips and rubbing alcohol from one of the drawers. “I’ll just be a minute.”

You took a seat on the bright pink couch and admired the decorations on the wall. It was surrounded with countless pictures of Mettaton with his fans, from all sides of the globe apparently. Frisk and Papyrus walked over to one of the tables ladled with various Mettaton merchandise.

“WOWIE. THERE’S MORE STUFF HERE THAN IN MY ROOM.” Papyrus said excitedly, picking up a Mettaton EX shaped action figure. Frisk wandered away from the table to look at the pictures on the wall.

“Take whatever you want, Papyrus dear. I have far too much of everything.” Mettaton said, dipping a Qtip into the alcohol and cleaning out his facial vents with it.

Frisk plucked down one of the pictures of Mettaton in front of a big white flag with a red dot on it. He was posing dramatically with a large group of highschoolers, who were also posing.

“You went to Japan?” Frisk asked him, walking over and handing him the picture.

“Oh, yes! It was wonderful!” He said, plucking the picture out of their hands and smiling at it. “All of the younger humans there absolutely adored me! The merchandise they made for me there is so strange. I received so many drawings and gifts from the teenagers and college students there, it was really almost overwhelming. I even learned a few new poses from the academy students there. They call them ‘Jojo Poses’, but really I think they were just copying off of me.”
Frisk walked over to sit down next to you, leaving Mettaton to clean his face while Papyrus was pointedly deciding which pieces of merchandise he wanted to keep and which ones he already had.

“So...what was all that about.” You ask him from your spot on the couch. “With those guys outside?”

Mettaton scowled into the mirror. “Those vultures. They wanted me to do a charity showcase for them at the end of the week to promote their company, but I won’t do it.” He said leaning in to the glass. “Besides, I have something more important to do at the end of the week.”

Papyrus stopped deliberating and looked over at him. “YOU...TURNED DOWN CHARITY?”

The tone of his voice must have hit something in Mettaton’s heart and he stopped cleaning his face, immediately standing up to turn to Papyrus. “Oh darling no. I would never turn down charity, ever. Just them.”

“Who were they?” Frisk piped up from their spot on the couch.

Mettaton took his seat again, crossing one leg over the other. “Those detestable human beings work for a company called Dynacorp. You’ve probably heard of it.”

You nod. “Yeah, I’ve heard of them but I don’t know what they do.”

“They’re a private contracting company.” He answers for you, placing both his hands on one knee. “They work with machine parts and weapons for this country’s military. They also are the lead backers of Ronald Chump’s presidential campaign and are notorious for having little to no care for Monster rights. Last year they dumped high-grade military waste down into Mt Ebott and caused a world of problems for all of the residents of Waterfall. And they have the nerve to come and ask me for a charity show.” He said, huffing angrily and crossing his arms. “They’re absolute fiends and I refuse to have any part in their agenda.”

“They SOUND HORRIBLE.” Papyrus said, crossing his own arms. “HOWEVER, I AM VERY RELIEVED THAT YOU WILL HAVE NO PART IN THEIR NEFARIOUS SCHEMING.”

The robot stood up, walking over and taking Papyrus’s hands in his own. “Of course I wouldn’t, darling. I would never want to do anything that was detrimental to the happiness of my fans.” he said, moving a hand up to Papyrus’s cheek “Especially my monsters.”

You watched Papyrus’s face turn bright orange as he stuttered at the contact and side eyed Frisk, who was smirking right back at you and nodding. After all this time Papyrus still had a huge crush on the TV star, and Mettaton seemed to accept that, from where you were sitting.

Or maybe Mettaton was just being Mettaton. You couldn’t really tell.

A knock on the door pulled you out of your thoughts, the four of you turning towards it. It opened and an orange cat/bear like monster stepped through it. He had on a stage mic headset and a button down long sleeved shirt rolled up to his elbows, accompanied by grey jeans and red shoes. He moved his clipboard under his arm as he pushed the door open.

“Hey uh...M-mettaton. There’s this guy out front that says he’s supposed to be back here?” The monster said nervously, tail twitching behind him “I told him that this area was for staff only, and I don’t wanna get in trouble or anything…”

“Hi Burgerpants!” Frisk waved from their seat on the couch.
Burgerpants lit up. “Frisk! Little buddy!”

The two words hit you hard in the chest as you watched Frisk hop off the couch and walk over to him. It took you a second to register that it was indeed Burgerpants standing there in what was apparently a uniform that you’d see on any other stage manager. He looked a lot more professional then when you remember him.

“You look good!” Frisk told them, mirroring your thoughts. He smirked, putting a hand to his chin.

“I’ve been promoted, little buddy.” He said, flashing Frisk a grin. “You can call me Directorpants now. Or Kyle. Either works.”

“Kylepants!” Frisk offered with a grin. Burgerpants ruffled his hair.

“Kylepants works too. Anyway.” He said, turning back to Mettaton “I don’t want there to be an issue or anything but this guy’s pretty persistent.”

“Is he a five foot tall Skeleton wearing a blue hoodie with a horrible sense of humor?” Mettaton asked him. You could see the sweat on Burgerpants’ head as he pulled his head into his shoulders, his neck all but disappearing in his nervousness.

“Y-yeah. Is he...a friend of yours?”

Frisk looked around Burgerpants and smiled “Hi Sans.”

“yo.” Sans said, terrifying the poor 21 year old director into almost dropping his clipboard. He stepped inside. “sorry i’m late. I had to talk to a lizard about a thing. Mettaton.”

“Sans.” Mettaton regarded him cordially and looked around him to Burgerpants. “Don’t you have stage setup you should be doing?”

Burgerpants shuffled half out of view “Right. Yeah. Even though the show isn’t for another seven hours…”

“I believe in you Directorpants.” Frisk said encouragingly. The kids words seemed to encourage the nervous orange monster and he straightened up.

“As long as someone does, that’s all I need little buddy.” He said, flashing them a thumbs up before closing the dressing room door. Papyrus stomped over to Sans, the Mettaton action figure still in his hand.

“WHERE WERE YOU?” He asked him, concerned. “YOU DID NOT GET LOST, DID YOU?”

Sans eyes the doll in his hand, smirking. “nah. i just figured you’d wanna get a headstart.” He replied, pointing to the doll for emphasis.

Papyrus gave an irritated grumble before turning to Mettaton. “METTATON. DO YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE ANY METTATON BRAND DUCT TAPE I COULD USE?”

Mettaton’s smile turned positively cheshire as he looked between Papyrus and Sans. “Why, as a matter of fact…”

Sans grinned apprehensively, beads of sweat appearing on his own skull as he looked at you and Frisk in a silent plea for help. You cleared your throat.

“So! Mettaton!” You say, interrupting whatever kind of atmosphere the room was filled with.
“What uh...what exactly are we going to be doing today?”

He beamed at you, Sans all but forgotten as he put his hands together. “Oh, i’m so glad you asked! The media has been an absolute nightmare recently. Interviews and movie premieres have run me absolutely ragged. I had to have Alphys here to do some touch ups simply because my workload has been unbearable.” He said, walking over to Frisk and leaning on them. “And with tonight’s performance kicking off Monster Week, well, i’m more stressed than anything. Honestly, I just want a day to relax with a few friends and take my mind off of things.”

Sans meandered over to plop down next to you, slinging one arm around your shoulder. You unconsciously leaned into him in response. “what about napstablook and shyren?”

“They’re busy preparing for tonight and don’t have the time, unfortunately.” He said, eyeing the two of you and grinning. “Though, you look like you’ve been just as busy yourself.”

Sans grinned back, wrapping his arm around your waist and pulling you into him. You blushed at the odd display of dominance and looked down, embarrassed. “busier than you.”

Mettaton gave him a sly smile, slowly walking over to Papyrus without breaking eye contact with Sans. “Well well well, aren’t we smug.” He said, taking one of Papyrus’ hands in his own as he maneuvered around him, bringing an arm around his torso in a similar display. “I’ll have you know, I’ve been just as busy myself. But then again, I can always take the time to satisfy my adoring fans. Isn’t that right Papyrus darling?”

Sans grip on your side tightened and you squeaked. You couldn’t tell who was redder, you or Papyrus. You could hear his bones rattling from your spot on the couch and you could tell he was struggling to think of something to say. The air between the two was very tense as a silent battle was fought with their eyes. Neither of them looked like they were going to lose.

“You guys are being weird.” Frisk said, successfully breaking the atmosphere. “Can we go get lunch?”

“Brilliant idea darling!” Mettaton said, releasing Papyrus. Sans didn’t let up on you. “I mean, personally I don’t need to eat, but if you’re hungry then by all means. Though, we’ll have to make a quick stop on the way.”

“A stop where?” You asked, thankful that the competitive air was gone. Mettaton tsk’d at you.

“Why, at one of my department stores, of course.” He said, walking over and pulling you up from the couch, out of Sans’ grasp. “Your wardrobe, darling, needs a serious upgrade.”

You look down at yourself and raise an eyebrow. “What’s wrong with my clothes?”

He dropped your hands. “Oh, nothing, if you were planning on spending the day lounging in front of your tv watching one of my movies.” He said, moving a hand to his chest as he whisked out towards the door. “But you’re going to be spending the day with me, Angel darling, and I can’t have you walking around in that. Now, how good are you in heels?”

Chapter End Notes
SHOPPING!

And more Comments and Kudos. I revel in them.
To Be Perfect Is To Be Unable To Improve Any Further

Chapter Summary

Everyone looks better in a new change of clothes.

Chapter Notes

Here’s your obligatory shopping montage chapter. I’m going to be dropping a lot of fashion terminology in here so, prepare yourselves and google what you don’t understand. There’s pictures of literally every outfit in the notes at the end of this chapter, along with some other goodies.

I also slipped in something a little self indulgent so, I hope you like her.

Edit: 2100 Kudos I am crying ohmygod.

You can’t remember the last time you went clothing shopping at any place that wasn’t Goodwill or a thrift shop. You’d always made it a point that if you would never buy anything at full price if you could find it cheaper somewhere else, and you’d been pretty proud of your secondhand clothing collection. You remembered getting a few of them in the past year too, which meant even more to you. Not to mention that your constantly busy work schedule way back before you met Sans didn’t leave very much time and money for you to spend on shopping days.

So needless to say, Mettaton’s boutique pretty much blew you away when you got there.

You rode to the place by limousine, in classic Mettaton fashion, and marveled with the rest of your friends over the fact that you were being driven around in a fucking limo.

The place itself didn’t seem very big on the outside, probably around the size of a Macy’s or a JC Penny, but it was fancy. The outside was adorned with a large picture of Mettaton over bright red and gold awnings that led to the entrance. The thought that it reminded you of the MTT hotel popped into your mind when you approached it, and quickly popped out once you stepped inside.

It was probably the biggest clothing store you’d ever seen. The sales floor was so big you almost couldn’t see the other wall over the racks of bright and colorful clothing. Some of the racks even stretched up to the ceiling. You gawked at them and wondered who in the world could be tall enough to wear half of these clothes.

Oh. Right. Monsters.

“Impressive, isn’t it?” Mettaton commented as you stared at the store. “Of course, this is just one of my many clothing chains. You know I opened up a store in Spain? They love eccentric bright colors there.” He said, clapping his hands together.
“I’ve never seen this many clothes before in my entire life.” You tell him, walking over to a rack with bright flowery...you wanted to say poncho’s but honestly they could have been anything.

Mettaton walked up behind you. “And this is just the floor for monsters, darling. The human clothing is upstairs.” He said, turning and walking to the center of the store to where the escalators to the second floor were located. Your group followed and a quick sweep of the place showed you that there was nobody else in the store shopping. There was nobody else in the store at all, so it seemed.

“Uh, Mettaton?” You pipe up as you step on the escalator. “Where’s all the people that are supposed to be here?”

“Emptied out.” He said, crossing his arms and looking down at the four of you. “I called ahead and politely asked them to close the store down so we could shop to our heart’s content~” He said with a wink. “Though, there are some staff members here and they are getting paid for their efforts today, so don’t worry so much.”

“WOWIE. A WHOLE STORE ALL TO OURSELVES.” Papyrus nearly shouted once you arrived on the second floor “I'M GOING TO BUY ALL OF THE CROP TOPS THEY HAVE.”

“Oh no you’re not.” Mettaton said, walking forward to allow all of you off of the escalator. He turned to the store and cupped a hand up to his face. “Chi darling, are you here?”

Within seconds you watch a small purple blur shoot out from around a corner, flying towards your group and stopping in front of you. Upon closer inspection, the purple blur isn’t actually a blur, but a small two-foot tall monster who was hovering several feet off the ground. Her skin was smooth and grey with a round white patch on her face, accented by a pair of silver rectangular frames in front of a set of young and kind fuchsia eyes. Her hat was a brilliant shade of violet, embossed with a yin/yang-esque diamond design with two W-clipped flaps on either side of her head. Her dress was the same beautiful color and had a high cowl collar and flowy sleeves. Both garments came down to points in their centers. Mettaton turned to you all and gestured to the tiny floating monster.

“This is Chizuzu.” He said plainly. She curtsied in midair. “She is the store’s General Manager.”

She opened her arms in a welcoming gesture. “Welcome to the Metta-Boutique! I was rather concerned when Mettaton called and asked me to close the store today, but once I found out he was bringing his friends here I knew I wanted to be the one to say hello and invite you all in.” Her voice was gentle and soft, but you could hear a powerful sureness behind her words and crisp, curt syllables.

“you’re from the capital.” Sans stated, to everyone’s surprise.

Chizuzu blushed, bringing a hand up to grip her collar. “It’s my accent, isn’t it? It is quite strong…”

“Isn’t she just precious?” Mettaton said, clasping his hands together. “I found her on one of my trips to the Capital last year. She was in charge of a store where she was selling her own handmade outfits for the smaller monsters and her designs were just to die for! I had to have her come and work for me. Anyway, Chi darling.” He unclasped his hands, putting all of his weight on one of his hips and gesturing to Frisk and Sans. “You’re an expert with small sizes. I want you to take these two here and dazzle me. One set of formal wear each, and something stylish and casual for our skeleton friend here, can you do that for me?”

“Absolutely!” She chirped, floating over to the two. “I’ll need to take both of your measurements,
if you don’t mind coming with me.”

Sans sidewayed Mettaton, and then you and Papyrus. “and them?”

Mettaton walked around behind both you and the taller skeleton, wrapping his arms around you both and pulling you into him. “These two are coming with me, darling. I’ve got so much planned for them, especially your Angel here~. And you’re not allowed to see either of them until they’re both done.”

Sans grumbled and gave you a look, which you returned sympathetically.

“Nothing’s going to happen.” You reassure him. “We’re just shopping. Go with the nice monster lady and get some new clothes.”

He huffed, but obliged, walking off after giving Mettaton a stern ‘if you try anything’ look as he followed the petit purple monster down the aisles. Frisk was several steps ahead of him easily keeping up with her.

“You’re really pretty.” They told her. She blushed and gripped the bottom of her dress.

“O-oh. Thank you, very much. I don’t...often get compliments from humans.” She said, leading them over to one of the dressing rooms. “Both of you are very good looking as well. But, as an MTT employee, it’s my job to make you look even better! Now, Mettaton said formal clothes so I’ll ask for reference’s sake. What’s the occasion?”

“we’ve got a pretty big party this saturday.” Sans said, grinning. “you probably know what it is.”

Chizuzu beamed, clasping her own hands together. Sans swore he could see sparkles in her eyes. “The coronation party! Yes of course I know about it! It’s said to be the event of the year. Oh! I’m so glad you came to me for this! I’ll make sure to make you both look wonderful!”

Frisk looked up at Sans. “What’s a ‘coronation’?”

“it’s a big ceremony where tori and asgore are gonna officially announce that you’re their kid, and crown you as ambassador at the same time. there’ll be a huge cake and we’ll all sing happy birthday afterwards.” He answered, shrugging. Frisk’s eyes lit up.

“I’m gonna get a crown?!”

Sans shrugged “probably.”

Frisk clenched their fists in excitement at the idea of officially being announced a member of Toriel and Asgore’s family. “This is gonna be the best birthday ever!”

When they turned back to Chizuzu her face was beet red and she was stuck in her hover.

“Oh...oh my. I didn’t realize. Oh, how could I have missed it. You’re Frisk!”

Frisk nodded, proud of their status. “Yup! And this is Sans.”

“sup.” Sans nodded in her direction and she drifted down about a foot, pulling her collar up just far enough to peek over.

“I had no idea...I was meeting with such important clients today. Oh gosh. It’s....it’s such an honour, really.”
“You don’t have to be shy.” Frisk said, walking up to her and smiling. “We’re not that important. We’re just us.”

Chizuzu dropped her collar, taking Frisk’s hands in her own. “Oh no, you’re much more than just you!” She said, face still pink. “You’re the reason all of us can be up here. The one who made it possible for *me* to be here, and to have this job! Without you I would have never been able to travel to the surface and become a designer. Making your wardrobes is the very least I could do for all of the opportunity you’ve given me!”

“the kid’s right. we’re not that big a deal.” Sans said, leaning against the dressing room counter. Chizuzu shook her head, flying behind the counter and coming back with a roll of measuring tape.

“Oh, no. I insist. On my designer’s credit.” She said, unwinding it and beaming. “Please, allow me to make you two my best work yet!”

“You said something about formal wear?” You asked Mettaton as he whisked you in the opposite direction of Frisk and Sans. He tsk’d.

“Oh yes. You’re going to need them for the Coronation party this weekend.” He said, pulling you and Papyrus to a different dressing room on the other side of the showroom floor. “It’s going to be a very formal affair. Suit and tie more than likely. I haven’t been given the official dress code list, but you’ll definitely need something absolutely beautiful for it~”

“WE HAVE BEEN PLANNING FOR IT FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS.” Papyrus offered from his spot next to Mettaton. His metallic arm was still wrapped around his waist and you were getting pretty sure that he wasn’t doing that to annoy Sans anymore. “SANS AND I HAVE BEEN IN CHARGE OF THE GUEST LIST, ALPHYS HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF PROGRAMMING, UNDYNE IS IN CHARGE OF FOOD, AND METTATON AND NAPSTABLOOK WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THE MUSIC!”

“I don’t think it’s a very good idea to put Undyne in charge of the food.” You offer. “She burned her house down once, remember?”

“She WILL NOT BE IN CHARGE OF FOOD ALONE.” He re-assures you, knowing full well the danger of cooking with Undyne from experience. “TORIEL WILL BE HELPING HER, AND I ALSO THINK THERE MIGHT BE CATERING PROBABLY.”

You internally sigh in relief. Knowing that there was going to be good, edible food at this big shindig put you at ease. You wouldn’t starve.

Mettaton released Papyrus’s waist. “Yes, and that’s not until this weekend, so you all have plenty of time to worry about what you’re going to wear until then.” He offers, bringing a hand up to his mouth. “Of course, you won’t be worrying at all. My best designer is right across the room. As soon as we get your measurements you’re all going to look Fa-bu-lous~”

You smile at him. “That’s really generous of you Mettaton. You don’t have to go through all this trouble though.”

“Nonsense darling, you’re all friends of mine.” He said, extending his arms out in a sweeping gesture. “And I will have absolutely nothing less than the best for my friends. Besides, tonight
you’ll be front row at my concert, and the camera loves to shine on the front row, when it’s not on me or my musical guest.”

“So you want us to look good so you’ll look good.” You bluntly rephrase for him.

“Now you’re thinking like a star, darling.” He said, winking at you. At least, you think it was a wink, you could only see his one eye. “I’ll have to take your measurements first. Hold still.”

You didn’t have the time to react as you heard a loud shutter sound go off, Mettaton closing his eyes immediately after.

“Hm. 32-26-36. My you really are tiny underneath those baggy clothes. Really. honey, you should dress more to your body type. Your hips are to die for! If course, they’re not as great as mine, but then again I was crafted to be perfect.” He said, switching over to Papyrus as another shutter sounded. “And you, 41-0-39. Well, I expected the zero, but you’re around a Men’s Large so you shouldn’t be too difficult to find something for. Both of you, wait here.”

He didn’t give you a chance to reply a he whisked off, out of sight through the aisles of the store. You turn to Papyrus, sitting down in one of the waiting chairs.

“He’s really enthusiastic.” You say, putting both your hands on your lap. He joins you in seconds, sitting down in the seat next to you

“HE IS EXCITED ABOUT THIS WEEKEND, LIKE EVERYONE IS.” He said, smiling.

You shifted. “This is so weird. Having clothes picked out for me by a celebrity. By a robot celebrity.”

He put a hand on your back in a comforting gesture. “I AM POSITIVE THAT METTATON WILL NOT DISAPPOINT US. IN FACT, I AM POSITIVE HE WILL MAKE US BOTH LOOK GREAT!”

“Thank god I did my makeup today...” You say, sighing towards the empty store. Papyrus knit his brows in concern. 

“YOU DON’T LOOK VERY EXCITED.” He notes, taking his hand off of your back. You shake your head and apologize.

“Sorry. My mind’s just been reeling from everything that’s happened recently.” You tell him. “It’s kind of hard not to think about it all the time now. My Soul, Gaster marking me, preparing for this big week that I totally forgot about but still feel partially responsible for. It’s a lot to think about.”

He gave you a look of concern and then crossed his arms. “YES. IT IS A LOT TO THINK ABOUT. AND IT IS ALL VERY IMPORTANT STUFF TO THINK ABOUT. BUT I THINK THAT FOR TODAY YOU SHOULD STOP THINKING ABOUT IT ALL. YOU’RE JUST GOING TO GET SAD.”

“It’s kind of hard not to think about it.” You mumble. He shifts his mouth into a frown,

“IF IT PUTS YOU AT EASE, I, TOO, HAVE A LOT TO THINK ABOUT ALL THE TIME.” He says, lacing his fingers together in his chair. You look up at him and quirk an eyebrow.

“Really?”

“YES, REALLY.” He says, leaning back in his chair. “I AM THE ONLY PERSON IN MY
CURRENT FAMILY WHO DOES NOT HAVE ANY MEMORY OF THEIR CHILDHOOD. I DO NOT REMEMBER ANYTHING FROM BEFORE I LIVED IN SNOWDIN, AND, IT IS BOTHERING ME A LOT MORE THAN IT PROBABLY SHOULD.” He told you. “IT IS SOMETHING I THINK ABOUT EVERY DAY, WHEN I SEE SANS’ PHOTO ALBUM IN THE DRAWER IN THE LIVING ROOM. I AM SURE I HAD A HAPPY LIFE, AND I OFTEN WONDER HOW MANY FRIENDS I HAD IN THE OTHER WORLD, BUT THAT IS SOMETHING I DO NOT HAVE THE CHANCE TO FIND AN ANSWER TO ANYMORE.”

You felt for him, deep in your heart. You knew exactly what he felt like, you’ve had that feeling way too many times yourself.

“Papyrus, i’m so sorry…” You tell him, but he cuts you off.

“There is nothing to be sorry for.” He says, shaking his head. “Because even though I do not remember what happened to me in the past, I can still get up every day and know that I am working towards a bright future, and then the feelings stop being so bad. I get to see Sans, and Frisk, and Undyne and Alphys and her Majesty, and you. So really, why do I want to think about what could have been, instead of thinking about what already is and working towards a happy tomorrow?”

You stared at him. You knew Papyrus was good at pep talk speeches but you’d clearly underestimated him. You smiled at him and nodded.

“Thanks Papyrus. I really needed to hear that.” You say, rubbing your eyes. “I feel a bit better now.”

“Good.” He said, crossing his arms. “What are friends for, if not to encourage each other’s growth and happiness.”

“Probably horrible friends.” You agree with him. “Well, then I guess I’ll just have to encourage your growth just as much as you do mine, huh?”

Papyrus looked down at you, smirking. “I don’t think that’s a very good idea. If you encourage my growth any more, I’m going to hit my head on our kitchen doorframe.”

You nudge him and laugh. “You’re such a dork. Both of you.”

Before he could reply Mettaton whisked around the corner, arms absolutely overflowing with clothes and accessories.

“Alright darlings.” He said, winking at you both. “I’ve learned enough about human fashion that I’m confident these looks will work. Let’s get started~”

You’d come to realize that you’d been severely underestimating everyone around you in terms of abilities lately.

It took both you and Papyrus an entire half hour of changing until Mettaton was satisfied with
either of your looks. He was incredibly picky, so it seemed, and was almost hovering over Papyrus once he stepped out in his ‘final’ change.

You don’t blame him though, he looked pretty good.

His final choice of clothing consisted of a blue and orange gingham button down collared shirt fitted over a black undershirt, and under a brown wool lined orange parka that went down past his hips. A pair of dark navy skinny jeans sat on his lower half, accompanied by orange and black sneakers that looked a lot like Air Jordans to you, but probably weren’t. A black beanie fitted on his head completed the look, and you couldn’t help but stare a bit.

Without the adorably obnoxious set of armor on him, Papyrus was actually…pretty attractive.

Of course, you weren’t the only one to think so.

“Oh yes darling~” Mettaton said, ogling the skeleton as he stepped out of the changing closet “Gorgeous. Flawless! Why, you’re an absolute dreamboat, honey. Now that you’re out of that ridiculous armor.”

“I LIKE MY RIDICULOUS ARMOR.” Papyrus said, walking over to the mirror to inspect himself. Mettaton joined him, practically hanging off of his shoulder once he was in his own view.

“Yes, and you look wonderful in it.” He said, turning Papyrus’s head to look at him “But this is fashion, Papyrus, and you look so much more delicious in this~”

Papyrus stuttered and blushed, looking to the side nervously. “Y-YOU THINK?”

“Oh, I know.” He said, slipping his arm around Papyrus’s and leaning into him. “Do you know how many people would kill to have you on their arm in that? I’d be lying if I said I didn’t want to eat you right here~”

“You look really good, Paps.” You tell him, walking up behind them and peeking around to see. Damn these tall ass skeletons and robots. “It fits you really well.”

“OF COURSE IT DOES. I AM VERY GREAT, AFTER ALL.” He said, putting his hand on his chest. “THERE IS NO ARTICLE OF CLOTHING THAT DOESN’T LOOK AMAZING ON ME.”

“And you’ve got the confidence to boot.” Mettaton said, letting go of him. “Now, be a dear and go get your armor so we can put it all back in the limo for later. You won’t be taking that outfit off for the rest of the day.”

“YESSIRREE” Papyrus said with a mock salute as he walked back into the mens side of the dressing rooms. You side eyed Mettaton with a smirk.

“You know, you don’t have to keep teasing him like that when Sans isn’t around.”

You watch his cheeks tint the slightest bit of pink as he turns away from you, putting a hand up to his cheek. “I don’t know what you’re talking about, darling. I’m simply being Friendly.”

You raised an eyebrow “You said you would eat him.”

“Don’t you have clothes you should be changing into?” He said, waving you off towards the Womens side “I know for a fact I left an outfit in there for you.”
“Alright, fine.” You rolled your eyes and stepped in to get changed, eyeing the clothes hanging up apprehensively. The blue dress that stared at you on the hanger was cute, but the white fancy looking undergarments sitting on the dressing bench looked even cuter.

You couldn't believe that Mettaton picked out fancy underwear for you.

Wait, no, you absolutely could believe it.

You took a breath and stripped, putting on the white bra and underwear in place of your own. You didn't even bother looking at yourself in the mirror until the entire rest of the outfit was on. You weren't ashamed of your body, you just didn't care.

The final outfit he picked for you was, admittedly, worth being waved off for, and when you stepped in front of the three-way mirror with it all on you almost couldn’t recognize yourself.

The dress he picked out for you was a beautiful shade of bright blue, with a jewel cut top and an A-line skirt that reached down to your knees. You had on black over-the-knee socks with bows on the sides and brown lace-up ankle boots with a comfortable heel. On top of it all was a large white knit cardigan jacket that also fell past your hips, accompanied by a white beret fitted snugly in the middle of your head. You turned a bit in the mirror, getting a view from all sides. You almost couldn't believe how good it looked on you.

“It’s so cute…” You mumble, picking at the beret as Mettaton and Papyrus peeked their head in from around the corner.

“Oh my, don’t you look adorable.” Mettaton complimented, sauntering over to you. “Just like one of those cafe girls you see in slice of life movies.”

“I need to take a picture of this.” You say immediately, walking back into the stall and grabbing your phone. “This feels so weird. I look so cute.”

“OH! CAN I BE IN THE PICTURE TOO?” Papyrus slides in beside you as you correct yourself in front of the large mirror.

“Sure, but I think my arms might be too short to get you in frame.” You tell him before Mettaton grabs your phone out of your hands.

“Allow me.” He said, turning it to a front camera and extending his arm to act as a selfie stick. He used his other one to pull the both of you into him. “Smile, darlings!”

You put two peace signs up by your face for integrity as Papyrus puffed his chest out. Peace signs are cute, right? You grab your phone back down from Mettaton and decide on two things. One: You’re really short compared to the both of them and B: You look really cute.

You set it as your lockscreen and are ushered out by Mettaton, both heading to the other side of the store. The three of you are greeted by Frisk, smiling happily at you from one of the waiting seats. They didn’t have a fancy change of clothes on.

“You two look really good!” They said, hopping off of their chair to circle you and Papyrus, inspecting your new clothes.

“NATURALLY.” Papyrus said, grabbing the lapels of his jacket and flapping them in a very ‘pop your collar’ manner. “METTATON IS NOTHING IF NOT A WONDERFUL STYLIST.”

“Oh, you flatter me.” The robot said, waiving his hand. “Of course, none of these looks wouldn’t
have been possible without my designer, who appears to be absent.”

“Sans is still changing?” You ask Frisk. They nod at you.

As if on cue, Chizuzu floated out from the changing room hallway, looking pleased with herself.

“I think I’ve finally got it!” She said, clasping her hands together. “It took a few tries, but I’m positive this time is a winner.”

“well, at least it’s comfortable.”

You watch Sans walk out of the hallway and your jaw almost drops.

He has on a dark blue leather wool hoodie with skull and crossbone designs on the sleeves, baggy black pants, and white Converse shoes. The large blocky letters on his shirt were obscured by the jacket, which he promptly stuck his pockets in.

It was still him, he just looked...better. More stylish.

You felt your face heat up as you took him in. He didn’t look any different, but at the same time he looked a thousand times different, and you approved.

Of course, you weren’t the only one approving. His eyes widened when he saw you in your outfit, and you watched his face tint blue as he tried to absorb your own wardrobe makeover. Papyrus was the first to speak.

“SANS! YOU LOOK MUCH LESS LIKE A MESS THAN YOU NORMALLY DO.” He said enthusiastically. Sans shook his head, knocked out of his daze.

“gee, thanks for the vote of confidence, bro.”

“He means it in a nice way.” You say, walking over and pulling at one of the sleeves to look at the design. “You look good. Really good. What does your shirt say?”

He grinned what you’ve affectionately come to name as his ‘little shit grin’ and opened his jacket to show you. In big black letters the words “BONE DADDY” were plastered across his chest. You narrowed your eyes at him and fight back a frustrated smile.

“You would.”

“i had an opportunity and i took it.” He said, putting his hands back in the jacket pockets.

“Don’t you ever expect me to call you that. Ever.” You tell him.

“yeah no, it’d be really weird.” He agreed.

Mettaton clapped his hands together. “Chi dear, do me a favor and ring all of these up on my tab. We’ll be walking out with them, obviously.”

“Yes, absolutely. Oh! wait…” You watched her fly back into the dressing room, coming out with a shopping bag in her hands and handing them to Sans. “Your old clothes are in here.”

He took them from her with a nod and you turned to Mettaton. “What about the formal clothes?”

He made a noise that sounded like a release of steam. “Oh no no, those are far too important to be gotten here. They need to be custom fit and designed before this weekend. Chizuzu will handle all
of it and get it to each of you before the big day.” He said, gesturing to her.

She smiled at all of you. “I’ll make sure that everything will be absolutely perfect!”

“I don’t doubt you at all, darling.” Mettaton said before ushering everyone out towards the escalators. “Now, we’ve got a lot to do today and you still haven’t eaten yet, so let’s get out of here so the real fun can begin~”

Chapter End Notes

Casually shoves the first OC I ever made into this story. Look at my beautiful Keronian child. She's a monster now. It's official.

Chizuzu looks like this, for anyone who couldn't get enough out of her description:
http://hanari-san.tumblr.com/post/137622530390

Now, for the outfits. I'll preface this by saying that I am a seamstress and a designer myself, so I was very self indulgent here.

Angel and Sans Outfit:
http://40.media.tumblr.com/5b67c66c0c809f901315576c27adb8c6/tumblr_o1bt2i2pQJ1qi47ogo1_1280.png

Papyrus outfit:
https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/d2/d4/dc/d2d4dca3ca59fdced43d43c8e62f45fb.jpg

I think it all looks pretty good, don't you? Sidenote: I'm a filthy PapyTon shipper.
You're all welcome.

Also tell me what you think of Chizuzu she is my precious child.
"Loneliness" Is No Longer Part Of My Vocabulary

Chapter Summary

They say that we should love ourselves first, before other people learn to love us, but it's not as easy as it seems. Sometimes, we need someone to accept us and love us first, then we would learn to see ourselves through that person's eyes and learn to love ourselves.

Chapter Notes

I hope you guys like fluff and romance because that's exactly what you're getting. It's been a while since I've written cute shit.

Sidenote: I'm really glad you guys like Chi. She's my precious child and I'm so happy she got such good reception.

The day was a blur.

You were thankful, though, that even though it was a blur, it was very low key.

The shopping trip was extravagant, you'd admit, but the Cafe that Mettaton took you all to was very quaint and out of the way. The movie set he gave you all a tour of afterward was also on a very low scale.

“It’s an Indie film, darling.” He clarified at one point during the tour. “Cult films and all. It’s a very niche market but oh, the fans are so loyal and dedicated~”

It wasn’t until you got to the stadium at around 7 that you realize how calm your day had been, comparatively.

The line out the stadium door went down the block and around the corner, monsters of every kind dotting the pavement as you pulled up to what looked like the outside of a huge movie premiere. The limo stopped in front of a large red carpet leading into the building and you could see cameras and several important looking news casters in front of the carpet.

A wave of nervousness shot through you as you shrunk back into your seat, subconsciously grabbing onto Sans’ jacket. It was a red carpet premiere, and you were the ones walking in on the red carpet.

You squeezed Sans’ sleeve harder.

“Are you ready darlings?” Mettaton addressed you all, uncrossing his legs and gesturing to the door. “It’s almost showtime~”

“WE ARE GOING TO GO IN ON A RED CARPET?!” Papyrus asked excitedly, looking out the
limo windows with Frisk. Mettaton smiled.

“Well of course, darling. You’re with me! And it is my show.”

“I’M GOING TO WALK OUT ON A RED CARPET WITH METTATON.” Papyrus stated. He turned around and you swear you could see actual stars in his eyes. “THIS IS THE BEST DAY OF MY ENTIRE LIFE.”

“Uh...Is there an option for people who don’t want to go out on the red carpet?” You say, raising your hand halfway. “Like uh...me?”

“and me.” Sans added, looking apprehensively at the limo door. Mettaton sighed.

“Well...I suppose if you’re really against it.” he put his chin in his hands. “I’ll ask the driver to pull around and drop you both off out back. Though I can’t imagine why you wouldn’t want to walk in like this.”

“I guess we’re just not as glamorous as you.” You suggest as you watch Frisk eagerly hop out of the limo and wave to the very loud crowd and cameras.

“Clearly not. Come, Papyrus darling. Our audience awaits.” Mettaton said, following Frisk out the door and posing dramatically for the cameras. Papyrus shuffled his hand around in his new jacket’s pocket and pulled out his pink pass and lanyard, handing it to you.

“NEITHER OF YOU HAVE A PASS TO GET IN, SO YOU CAN USE MINE.” He told you. “I WILL BE WITH METTATON, SO I DON’T NEED IT.”

You take it from him and hang it around your neck. “Thanks Papyrus. We’ll be right behind you.”

He gave you a thumbs up and exited the limo, closing the door behind him. You and Sans watch through the window as Mettaton links his arm around Papyrus’s, waving to the camera. Sans grumbles.

“really don’t like him hanging all over paps like that.” He said, glaring at them. You pat his hand.

“He’s not gonna hurt him, he’s just being a showboat. Like always.” You reassure him. “I think he might even like your brother.”

“that’s even worse.” He said as the Limo started up, driving away from the crowd. You watched it recede and sighed. It was quiet, for the first time all day. Actually, really quiet. You closed your eyes and took a breath, thankful for the small moment of peace, but you were pulled out of it by an arm wrapping around you and settling on your waist.

“y’know.” Sans started, pulling you into him. “i didn’t get a chance to say it earlier, since my jaw was on the floor, but uh...you look really good in that dress.”

You lean into him and put a hand on his chest. “You don’t look so bad yourself, mister.”

“really?” He raised an eyebrow at you, smirking. “i think i look bad to the bone.”

“You’re an idiot.” You say affectionately, kissing him on his cheek.

He moved his head to meet you and return it in his own way, gently grabbing your chin to look you in the eyes. “yeah, but i’m your idiot.”

“The best idiot i could ask for.” You kiss him again, wrapping your arms around his neck to deepen
it. The world around you was quiet, for the first time all day. It was just you and Sans and you just wanted to enjoy the temporary bre-okay that’s his tongue on your neck.

“Sans.” You say, stroking a your thumb along the back of his head.

He moved to kiss under your chin, leaning back and pulling you with him. “hm?”

You let yourself be pulled until you were laying on top of him, arms still around his neck. “Sans we’re in the back of a limo.”

“is that so? i had no idea.” He said, a smug smirk on his face as he propped himself up with one arm. The other was busy holding you against him. “is there anything else you’d like to point out while we’re in this limo?”

“Well, the limo is starting to stop.” You say, running a finger down his shirt as both of you feel the vehicle slow to a pause. Part of you wonders how it can fit so nicely on him without dipping at the stomach, but the ‘monsters and magic’ reminder pops into your head. You check a glance out the window and find yourself in a small parking lot, very close to what you assumed was the back entrance to the building. “And I can see the back door from here.”

“really? cause all i see is an angel.” He said in a low tone, grinning up at you with half lidded eyes and a look that’s so adoring you blush. You would have chastised him about the cheesy line but in that moment it wasn’t so cheesy. In that moment, he meant it.

“You’re so dumb.” You tell him in a quick voice, putting your head on his shoulder to hide how hot you felt, and how red you probably were. “So, so dumb. That was illegal. Go to jail.”

“who’s gonna handcuff me, you?” He quipped into your ear. “kinky.”

You could feel his shit eating smirk as your face grew hotter. He knew exactly what he was doing to you.

“Sans, as much as I love you, we are in the back of a limo in a parking lot. This isn’t the ideal place for this.” You remind him, face still buried in his shoulder. You could feel the mettaton pass poking into your stomach as an aggravating reminder of why you were in the limo in the first place.

“ten minutes.”

You pull your head up from his shoulder and look at him. He’s smiling at you, but there’s a faint pleading in his eyes.

“i just need ten minutes. to enjoy this.” He moved his hand from your waist to brush your hair behind your ear, resting it on your cheek. “today was great, and the night’s not over, but i just want this moment with you for ten minutes before we jump back into the chaos. i need ten minutes to breathe.”

You move your hand up to cover his, running your thumb over it. “Well...the limo driver’s probably going to get suspicious...” You say, leaning your face into his hand and locking eyes with him. You give him a soft smile and kiss the center of his carpus. “You’ve got me for ten minutes.”

He smiled and laid back down on the limo seat, which was just wide enough to accommodate his frame. You sidled up until your head rested comfortably on his shoulder. Both of you stay there, peacefully, his arm around your waist and one of his legs dangling off the seat onto the floor. Both of you take a deep breath to enjoy each other’s company in the silence. It really has been such a long time since you’ve had the chance to really step back and take a breath. You needed ten
minutes just as much as Sans did.

You only got to really enjoy it for about five of those ten minutes before he spoke up.

“hey.”

“How?”

“I talked to alphys.”

You hummed in response, looking up at him. “What’d she say?”

“She’ll do it.” He answered. “She’ll help us get the mark off of you.”

You sit up, propping yourself up on his chest. “Does she know how to do it?”

“No.” He confesses, looking to the side. “She doesn’t have any idea about markings. She says she can use the determination extraction machine she has to pull Gaster’s magic out of you. I don’t know if it’s going to work, and it’s kinda dangerous…”

“But she’ll figure something out?” You finish for him. “I believe in her. She’ll come up with a solution somehow. She always does.” You tell him. His face didn’t look very convinced.

“I’m just worried about you.” He confirms. “I’m worried that you’re gonna get hurt.”

You shake your head. “I’m not gonna get hurt Sans.”

“You don’t know that.” He said, shifting up to lean back on one arm. You prop yours up on his chest to look him in the eyes. “I’m not really good at uh...expressing myself, so I haven’t really been able to tell you how much you mean to me...but if anything happened to you I’d be devastated.”

You look down, blushing. He hasn’t been this forward with you in a very long time. “Well...I don’t think much worse can happen to me than what already has…”

“I don’t want to take that chance.” He said seriously. “I’ve been kinda...distant...since we first started dating. Like...actually dating. I haven’t been putting my all into this, ‘cause I was afraid that you’d end up, I dunno, getting hurt. You’d already been through so much, I didn’t wanna be another burden on you. But when Gaster marked you the other day I just felt so furious that I wasn’t there to stop him-”

“No, no don’t do that.” You cup his cheek with a hand. “What happened wasn’t your fault. If anything it was mine for being so naive. Don’t you dare blame yourself.”

“It should have been me.”

You pause at this, raising an eyebrow at him. He didn’t seem to grasp what he’d said for a minute and you watched his face tint blue in realization, smile widening nervously as it normally does whenever he’s surprised.

“What?”

It took him a second to recompose himself, and he looked you dead in the eyes.

“The one who should have marked you first...should have been me.”
Your brain took a minute to process his words and once it clicked you quickly felt like you were on fire.

“O-oh….ohmygod.”

He blushed too, flustered. “i mean, i would have told you about it. eventually. about monster markings and uh, i wouldn’t have lied to you about it like an ass. and i would have asked your permission first.”

“Yeah no uh...wow.” You nod, pointedly avoiding his eyes and moving your hand from his face to his shoulder. You remembered what it felt like, when Gaster marked you, and the sensation of pure bliss that coursed through you before the sting of betrayal set in. The thought of doing that with Sans, having his magic in your Soul….

You shifted your legs uncomfortably.

“it’s funny.” He started, and you finally look at him. “never in my life did i ever think about it. about finding someone i cared about enough that i wanted to share a part of myself with them. i didn’t think that something like that would happen to me. then again, i’ve always been kind of a lazy pessimist.” he brought up the hand he was leaning on to wrap around the back of your head, pulling you towards him until your foreheads were touching. “but with you...i see so much. i see a future. a good one. one that i wanna work towards having. i don’t want to distance myself or be lazy about it anymore. i just want to work towards being happy with you.”

You felt tears prick at the corners of your eyes at the sincerity of his words. You have a comeback somewhere, you know it, but it’s gone in an instant and the only thing you can do is wrap your arms around his neck and kiss him. He kisses you back and before you know it you’re making out carelessly in the back of a car like horny teenagers and it’s stupid and perfect at the same time. When you finally pull away from each other you’re giggling like an idiot and he’s grinning at you like an equally lovestruck idiot.

“I love you. Ohmygod I love you.” You tell him, gripping his jacket as happy tears spill down your face.

“i love you too.” he said, nuzzling your cheek with his mouth. “which is why uh, with your permission, when this is all said and done, could i…?”

“Yes.” You blurt. You don’t know how he’s going to finish that sentence, but at the same time you do. “Yes, absolutely.”

He kissed your jaw. “you didn’t let me finish.”

You kissed his forehead back. “I don’t care, the answer is yes.”

“i could have asked to set something on fire...”

“You already did that once.”

“...not saying that you’re not already hot enough...”

“Ohmygod, you’re so dumb.”

“...but i’m pretty sure i could get you hott-”

You’re both startled when a loud ringing sounds from Sans’ pocket, interrupting him and shocking
you so bad you jumped. He reached into his pants to pull his phone out and slightly glare at it, before easing out.

“it’s papyrus. he’s asking why we’re not inside yet.”

“Well, we’ve been out here for a while.”

“i really don’t want to go inside.” He said, repocketing his phone. You smile at him, moving back until you’re completely off of him.

“Yeah, but Frisk is still in there too. And if we don’t go in then Mettaton’s going to be alone with Papyrus all night. Unsupervis-”

“let’s go.”

You laughed as he rushed out the Limo door into the night, and followed him out.

Chapter End Notes

I’m a horrible sap and you should totally comment and tell me i’m a horrible sap.
Absolutely none of the songs from the concert keep themselves in your brain when you got home. Granted, you didn’t even know that Mettaton could sing, or that he did anything other than act, but the fact that everyone around you seemed to know the lyrics to the music and you had absolutely no idea what to say kind of put you out of place. Although, Sans didn’t know the lyrics either, so having him there put you a little at ease. You still enjoyed the performance. You had to hand it to him, as much of a ham Mettaton was he knew how to put on a good show.

“It was certainly something.” You tell him during your ride back. He insisted on driving all four of you back home, since you’d originally taken the bus.

“It was more than just something.” Mettaton said from his spot across from you. He had an arm draped around Papyrus’s shoulder and you’d been holding Sans’ hand for the duration of the trip to prevent him from saying anything. “It was absolutely beautiful~”

“It was so much fun!” Frisk said, pumping their fist into the air. They seemed to be the only one without anyone to grab onto. “The camera people were so cool! They asked so many questions.”

“Too many questions, if you ask me.” Mettaton added, leaning on Papyrus in his complaint. “I know they’re getting paid to fawn over me, but would it kill them to ease up just a bit.”

Sans squeezed your hand. “cause you’d know all about easing up, huh?”

“You offend me, Sans.” Mettaton replied, bringing up a hand to his chest in feigned shock. “I’m one of the most easy going people I’ve ever met in my life, isn’t that right Papyrus darling?”

It took Papyrus a second or two to gather himself for a reply. “WELL, UM. I HAVEN’T REALLY BEEN AROUND YOU LONG ENOUGH TO JUDGE, WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN BE EASYGOING OR NOT.”

Mettaton smiled coyly at him, after a glance to Sans. “Well then, I guess you’ll just have to spend some more time with me in the future then, hmm?”

You watched Papyrus excitedly grab Mettaton’s hand and you felt Sans’ grip on your side tighten.
“W-WOW. REALLY? YOU WOULD WANT THAT?”

“Why, of course I would!” Mettaton said, eyeing Sans carefully. “That is, if your brother doesn’t mind me stealing you once in a while.”

“well, theft is illegal.” Sans said, smile tense as he leaned back in his seat. “I might call the cops on you.”

You nudged his side and he grunted. “Papyrus can make his own decisions.” You say in lieu of Sans’ dry humor “He’s an adult, he can spend time with whoever he wants.”

“I CAN?” He asked you. You nod affirmatively and he beams. “THAT’S RIGHT, I CAN. METTATON, IT WOULD BE AN HONOR TO SPEND TIME WITH YOU. WHEN YOU’RE NOT BUSY DOING ALL OF THE STUFF THAT YOU DO, THAT IS.”

“Can I spend more time with you too?” Frisk piped up from their seat. You almost forgot they were there. “I don’t get to see you anymore.”

Mettaton blushed, for the effect you guessed. “My my, aren’t you both quite the attention hogs~. I’ll make sure to poke some holes in my schedule, in the meantime…” Mettaton paused, looking out the window as the limo slowed to a stop. You checked out the window and realized that you had finally made it home.

“thank god.” Sans mumbled beside you as the door to the limo opened, courtesy of the driver who you realize you hadn’t even seen this whole trip. You all filed out one by one into the street, Mettaton following you to pick Frisk up in a hug.

“Oh, I had the most wonderful time today!” He said, air-kissing the kid affectionately on both cheeks. “I’m so glad I got to have this day off.”

“This was a day off?” You ask him as he lets Frisk back down on the ground.

“Wasn’t it obvious?” He quirked his brow and moved to Papyrus, taking both his hands. “Papyrus darling, it was a pleasure to see you again. I wouldn’t have asked for anyone else to be seen on the red carpet with. Well...except Blooky, of course, but he’s not the red carpet type.”

You could see Papyrus’s blush from your spot on the sidewalk. “Y-YES. IT WAS A GREAT PLEASURE! AND, IF YOU ARE EVER IN NEED OF MY MAGNIFICENT PRESENCE, AT ANY POINT, FOR ANY REASON, YOU CAN FEEL FREE TO, *AHEM*, ‘STEAL ME’, WHENEVER YOU FEEL LIKE IT.”

You didn’t know if it was real or practiced when Mettaton blushed in return. “Oh yes, well. I’ll certainly think about your offer. Often.” He said, releasing Papyrus’s hands and turning to you. “And Angel darling, it was wonderful to meet you. Truly an experience. I can see why Alphys speaks so fondly of you. I would kiss your cheek but I’m fairly certain I’ve already overstepped my boundaries.”

“y’don’t say.” Sans said from beside you. This time it was Frisk’s turn to nudge him.

Mettaton smirked, walking back to the limo “Keep your ears open for a knock sometime this week. Your party clothes should all be done before the big day this Saturday. I’ll send Chi your addresses so, expect her to stop by.”

“We will, thanks Mettaton.” You tell him. “And thanks for today. We all really needed it.”
He winked at you all and stopped in front of the limo door. “You’d be surprised to hear me say it, but I really needed it too.” He said, climbing into the car. “Farewell my beauties! Until we meet again~”

The four of you watched the limo drive off and turn a corner and you felt your shoulders relax. Mettaton was great, but everything about him put you on edge and you couldn’t explain why.

“So Sans, why were you being such a jerk to Mettaton?” Frisk crossed their arms, half-smirking.

“YES SANS, WHY WERE YOU BEING SUCH A JERK TO METTATON?” Papyrus parroted, also crossing his arms. Beads of sweat formed on Sans’ forehead and he looked to you for help. You put up your arms and gave him a ‘you dug this grave now lie in it’ look.

“wow! it sure is pretty late, huh.” He said, tugging at his shirt collar. “i think it’s about time you took frisk home, huh bro? i mean, tori’s probably worried sick about ‘em...”

Papyrus narrowed his eyes at him. “HM. YOU HAVE A GOOD POINT. BUT THIS CONVERSATION IS NOT OVER.” He said, pulling his car keys from his pocket. Part of you wondered if he’d had those with him the whole time. “COME, FRISK. WE CAN TALK ABOUT SANS BEHIND HIS BACK ON THE DRIVE OVER.”

“Okay!” They chirped, following Papyrus and climbing into his car. You watched the two of them pull out of the driveway and speed off down the street, turning a corner and leaving you and Sans to stand in the silence of the night. You side eye him.

“Smooth.”

“the smoothest.” He agrees, wrapping both arms around your waist. “and getting smoother every second.”

You roll your eyes, putting one hand on his chest and one over his shoulder. “I’m gonna have to be the judge of that.”

He pulled you closer. “and your verdict?”

“There’s a severe lack of evidence.” You tell him, kissing his jawbone. “It’s also freezing out and we should go inside.”

“right. hold on.”

Within an instant you were teleported inside your bedroom, the sudden warmth of the house flooding through you. You gripped his jacket collar, trying to keep yourself steady. It had been a very long time since he teleported you both and you’d forgotten how dissociating it felt. He held you until you got your bearings.

“you okay?”

You nod. “Yeah, yeah. It’s just been a while. I’m good.”

“alright. just making sure.” He said, blushing. “then uh, you wouldn’t mind if we picked up where we left off? in the limo?”

“Look at you, being so forward.” You tease him. “What’s gotten into you today? You normally don’t initiate...anything.”
He shrugged “guess i just needed a good kick to realize how much i cared about you. plus, those
clothes really do look good on you.” he leaned in, lowering his eyelids as the white pinpricks
dimmed just enough to be noticeable. “though, they’d look even better on the floor.”

You felt a surge in your gut and fire at your cheeks as you looked down. His gaze on you was too
intense. “O-oh. Okay. “ You mutter quickly. “Just um...these shoes are lace ups, gimme a second.”

You detach from him and move to the bed, struggling with the tight knots of both laces and inching
your feet out of the boots. Sans took the opportunity to remove his own shoes, slipping his feet out
of them with no resistance. When you went to pull down your socks, he stopped you.

“no, wait. leave those on.” He told you, kicking his shoes to the side. You listen and stop.

“Why?”

He walked over to you and pulled you up off the bed. You were significantly more his height
without the boots and you felt very small in his arms.

“because i want to do it.”

You smile and kiss him as he runs his hands down your back, hefting you up and holding you just
high enough to switch your positions so you could straddle him as he sat down on the bed. You
don’t break the kiss when his hands move up to shrug off your cardigan, or when you push off his
own jacket. You do break it when you get another glance at his shirt, pausing to make a face at it
as you spread your hands across his chest.

“...I still can’t believe you bought that.”

He smirked at you “you mean, you can believe i bought it, you just wish I didn’t.”

“Take it off.”

“If you insist.”

You lean away so he can heft the shirt up and off, throwing it to the side with his shoes. You took
the opportunity to splay your hands out on his chest. You see him shirtless all the time, but it was
always casual, comfortable. Neither of you had really gotten very intimate since the first time.
Whether it was due to Sans’ lack of need or your own disinterest, one way or another you’d hadn’t
really gotten to do anything sexy together.

Until now.

“enjoying the view?” He ran his hands down your legs, slowly pulling off your OTK’s as he went.
You hummed and kissed the center of his ribcage.

“I don’t get to enjoy this very often.” You murmur into his bones. “It never really registered how
much bigger than me you are.”

He added your socks to the floor pile, smirking at you. “you’ve got an inch on me.”

“You know what I mean.” You curl your fingers around several of his ribs and leave a trail of slow
kisses up the center of his sternum. You’d learned a lot more about the names of the bones in the
human body thanks to him. “I just feel so small compared to you.”

“you are small.” He ran his hands back up your legs, under your dress. “that’s not a bad th-...those
aren’t your normal underwear.”

You blush hard, looking to the side. You completely forgot. “Yeah! About that! Uh...Mettaton kind of bought me new...everything. I didn’t know I’d be wearing them out of the store so, they still have the tags on them…”

“show me.”

You grab the bottom of your dress, tugging it up and off of you before tossing it to the side with everything else. Your underwear was absolutely not your regular underwear. It was a matching set of creamy white coloured undergarments that were just lacy enough to be fancy, but not enough to be considered real lingerie. The lace carried around the bands of both, but they still had enough fabric to cover everything. You silently thanked Mettaton for the modesty.

They did still have the tags on them, though.

“They’re really nice.” You say, running your hand over the lacy side of your underwear. Sans grabs your hips and leans back to look at you.

“They’re adorable.”

“I don’t really see myself wearing them very often.” You say, cheeks heating up under his gaze. He moves in to kiss you, running his hands up your sides until they slip under the lace of your bra. He dropped his voice low.

“i don’t see you wearing them at all in five seconds.”

You shuddered as he pushed up your bra with his thumbs, rubbing your nipples and moving his mouth to your neck to leave small bites on the sides. You took the opportunity to reach around yourself to unclasp it and slide it off as he played with your breasts, still fascinated by them. You rolled your eyes.

“Having fun?”

“yes.” He squeezed them both for emphasis and you chucked the fancy bra away. “they’re like squishy stress bags.”

You flush and put your arms on his shoulders, suppressing a stupid grin. “Please don’t call my boobs squishy stress bags.”

He smirked at you “flesh melons?”

“You are the actual worst.” You put your head on his shoulder, holding back mortified giggles. “Nobody calls them that!”

“okay, how about jiggle globes?”

“I hate you.” You mutter into his clavicle, kissing it.

“can i call them cute?”

“Sure.” You kiss his neck. “Why not.” Another kiss. “Better than ‘flesh melons.'” You dart out your tongue and run it from the top of his spine to the base of his skull and he shudders, his hands gripping the sides of your chest. You wanted to enjoy this. You wanted to enjoy him and his touch, the feeling of his bones beneath your hands as you wrap your arms around his chest to run your
nails gently down his scapula and the way he arched into you when you did it. You wanted to enjoy the way his hands ran down your sides, gripping your hips as he ground his still fully clothed lower-half against the fabric of your underwear. You wanted to savor the feeling of his tongue on your neck and the way he bit down at the soft tissue above your clavicle, not hard enough to break any skin but hard enough to shock you into a moan. You wanted to bask in the feeling settling deep in your gut as he moved his hand down over your underwear, rubbing you through the fabric and whispering how much he loved the feeling of you against him in your ear in a low voice that made you gasp.

You wanted to take the choked moan you pulled out of him when you gripped your hand around the base of his spine to your grave.

“Ya doin’ alright there, champ?” You tease him, widening your straddle on him as your thighs strained to hold you up.

He chuckled hoarsely, the lights around the edge of his eyes bright, but fuzzy. “hah….could ask you...the same thing. you’re soaked and shaking.”

“Shit happen-ah!” You gasp as he moves the fabric of your underwear aside, stroking your entrance with his finger.

“so wet.” He teases you and you roll your hips into his hand. You used his shoulders to ground yourself as he ran two fingers up your slit, curling one as it reached your clitoris. “a guy could drown down here.”

“D-do that again.” You beg, bringing your head down to kiss his neck again “Please do that again.”

He does and you shudder, eyes rolling back involuntarily for a second. He chuckles and you want to keep that chuckle in your brain forever. “wet and needy, and all for me.” He teased you as you whimpered into his neck, rolling your hips slowly in time with his fingers. You wanted to get back at him, grab his spine again and stroke it or something, but his next mumbled words catch you completely of guard and you pause, moving your head away from his neck to look him incredulously in the eyes.

“You can what?”

He stops moving his hand, sweat beading on his face as he looks to the side, grin shifting nervously.

“uh...i can make a dick? if you want?” His face flushed. “i mean, it wouldn’t do anything for me, ‘cause monsters don’t work like that, but i can make one. for you, if you want me to.”

You blush, equally as embarrassed, and move a few strands of hair out of your face. “Wow...um...i mean, of course you can, you can make a tongue. I’ve just...I don’t know. I’ve never done anything...really...penetrative? Aside from that one time with your tongue, but that didn’t really count I don’t think? I’m not sure…”

“we don’t have to.” He quickly amended, concerned. “i just...thought i’d throw the option out there. just in case.”

“I mean...we can try?” You move your hands to the bottom of his ribs, curling your fingers around them as you look down. “I’m not really sure how much I’ll enjoy it but...we can give it a shot.”

“you sure?” he asked, cupping your face with one hand and pulling the other one out of your underwear.
You smirked at him. “Show me your boner, Sans.”

His smile and eyes widen at your brilliantly placed line. You’re both proud of you in that moment and you both giggle like twelve year olds as he rewards you with a kiss. He wipes his sticky hand on the mattress and scoots back so he can lean his back against the wall.

“Okay, it’s nothing phenomenal…” he starts, rubbing the back of his head and blushing. “I’ve been doing research, just in case, and uh. getting measurements? just in case? so I know what will and what won’t hurt you, since this is your first time.”

“Are you gonna make it over your jeans?” You ask him, eyeing the black denim. He shrugs.

“I mean, I can.” There’s slightly more sweat on his head now.

“You’ll ruin the fabric.”

He smirked at you “you already got them wet.”

You roll your eyes at him. “Take them off and Get on with it.”

He does take them of, kicking down the denim until it was also on the floor. His eyes switch and flicker, white pupils fading into black as his left eye glows blue. A soft glow started over his crotch before expanding, forming what you’d place was a pretty average sized dick. It was pretty impressive, for magic standards. There was just one thing.

“It’s blue.” You snort, and then burst into a fit of giggles. “Ohmygod, it’s blue!”

His entire face flushes to match the new appendage. “Hey, it’s not very nice to laugh at a dude’s dick y’know.”

You dial back your giggles and lean in to kiss him apologetically. He purposefully avoids your mouth. “I’m so sorry. I didn’t mean to. It’s just...Sans, your dick is blue.”

He brings his hand up to grasp the back of your skull, twining his fingers in your hair and smirking. “D’you want me to make it orange? or green?”

You pepper his face with kisses. “No. No. God no. Blue is fine. Let’s do this, c’mon.”

He kisses you deeply as you slip your soaked panties off and chuck them aside, maneuvering yourself on top of him until the head of his dick was at your entrance. You took a deep breath.

“You’ll tell me if it hurts, right?” He puts his hands on your hips to steady them.

You nod. “Yeah. And if I say to stop, we’ll stop, right?”

“Of course.”

You both take a second to nod at each other, and then slowly sink yourself onto him.

The first thing you noted was that it didn’t hurt, it was just...different. Different than the time with his tongue.

You shuddered out a shaky breath as he passed the ring of your hymen and you slid down enough to feel his pelvis on your thighs. It took you a second once he finally filled you and you made a face, shifting. He watched you with concern.
“are you alright?” He sat up and you used his shoulders to brace yourself. “does it hurt?”

You shook your head. “No...nno it doesn’t hurt it’s just. Weird.” You open your eyes and look down at his chest. “And this doesn’t affect you at all?”

“i can sorta feel it, but it’s purely aesthetic.” He assured you, rubbing circles in your back with one hand. “d’you...want me to make it like, thinner? or something?”

“No, no don’t worry about that.” You say, taking a breath. “I’m gonna move, okay?”

He nods and you slowly lift your hips up and roll them down, an awkward noise coming from your mouth as your head falls forward and hits his chest. You make a face and shudder.

“Nope. I don’t like this feeling. Get it out.” You say quickly, gripping the top of his ribs with your nails. He listens immediately and within a millisecond it’s gone and you sigh in relief. He wraps his arms around you.

“are you okay? did i do something wrong?”

You shake your head quickly and kiss his neck. “No, no it wasn’t you, hun. You didn’t do anything wrong. I just...don’t like that feeling. I don’t want to do that again.”

“no penetration. got it.” He said, pulling back and running his hands up and down your arms. You were still shaking. “do you wanna stop completely?”

“Mm-mhm.” You shake your head again and look him in the eyes. “We don’t get to do this often, or at all. I want to have this night with you, and I want it to be special. I just don’t want...that.”

He kissed your forehead. “then we don’t have to do that. is there anything else you want to do?”

You take a deep breath, calming yourself. “How...how do monsters do it? Like...get off completely?”

“it’s a soul thing.” He says, running his hands gently down your sides to your hips. “we pull our souls out and kinda just, mess with them. normally it’s a mutual marking but uh...you can’t really mark me so...”

“Can I see it?” You ask him, putting your hands on his chest. “Your Soul?”

“yeah, hold on.” He gently pushed you away from him to leave room between the two of you, moving his hand up to his chest. You watched him take a deep breath as his chest glowed a bright blue, and then sucked in your own breath when he pulled out a cyan colored heart out of seemingly nowhere. You remembered that bright blue color.

It was the color of Patience.

“It’s so pretty.” You mutter half-aware as you reach your hands up to it. He lets you take it. It’s softer than yours was and had the same kind of give on the outside that a person’s skin would have if you pressed your fingers into it.

“yeah, it’s pretty alright.” He winks at you and you smile at the joke. It was more than ‘pretty alright’, but you’d show him instead of tell him.

“Can I...?”

He put his arms behind his head and leaned against the wall. “knock yourself out.”
The words throw you back and suddenly you feel the same as you did when you’d had your first ‘intimate’ moment, in your house, staring at his hand. The nostalgia of the sentence hit you hard and you pull in the soul to kiss the surface deeply. He apparently wasn’t expecting it and choked out a strained gasp when it hit your lips. His face quickly flushed and he had moved a hand down to grip the bedspread, sweating.

“jesus. easy there, angel.” He grinned at you. “you’re gonna give me a heart attack.”

“S-sorry. It’s just…” You trail off, gazing down at the bright heart. “I love you so much, and I don’t know how to show it, but your heart is in my hands and I want to make you feel it so badly.”

It must have been something in the way that you said it, because his expression softened as he looked to the side, blue tinting his cheeks.

“i’m a sturdy guy. i can handle a little rough housing.”

You grip the heart, gently. “You sure?”

“yeah, like i said.” He looked up at you his eyes dim and his eyelids lowered “knock yourself out.”

You swallowed and nodded, your eyes going back to the cyan heart in your hands. This time you were gentler, kissing it carefully in the center, and then to the sides. Small noises escaped Sans’ throat each time your lips touched it and you decided you wanted more of that. You moved one hand to his spine, trailing down it and stroking the base as you darted your tongue out to lick along the side of his Soul. This was a good move on your part and you received a loud groan and a mumbled curse in response as he gripped the bedspread harder. This was the kind of intimacy you wanted. The kind that made him feel just as good as he made you feel. You rolled your hips against his and licked a long line up the center of the heart, pointedly looking at him with your own half-lidded eyes to get the point across that you wanted this. You wanted him to know how much you cared and how much you regret not being able to show him most of the time. His eyes widened at you and he let out a moan as you lewdly sucked on one of the round edges of the heart.

This was by far the weirdest thing you’ve ever done in bed, but the noises he was making were the hottest he’d ever made and you didn’t want that to go away.

“fuck...angel....keep at it....” He bucked his hips up as you hummed around it and you swore for an instant that his pupils turned into actual hearts when you dipped your hand down to rub the sides of his pelvis. You pulled your mouth off of his Soul with a pop.

“Am I doing good?” You ask, half sarcastically, as you continue to rub circles in his Ilium with your thumb. He’s shaking under you and you don’t know if he’s close to anything or not.

He barely manages a nod. “great...really great...g-god, i love you…”

You smile and gently kiss his Soul again, cupping it with both hands. A thought occurs to you and you move in to kiss him, which he sloppily returns.

“I want you to do something for me.” You whisper against his lips, he nods.

“yeah...sure. anything.”

“I want you to pull out my Soul.”

His eyes widen at you as he tries to fix his breathing. “what?”
You look him dead in the eyes “I know...I know you can’t ‘mark’ me, or anything but...I want to feel it. I want to feel your magic on my Soul. When Gaster did it it felt great but...I didn’t care about him as much as you. I want to feel you. Can I do that? Please?”

It takes him a second to solidify his own resolve and he nods, gently pushing your hands holding his Soul down so he could hover one of his own over your chest. Within seconds your Soul is on display for you both, clear as crystal, but now with a faint golden glow outlining the edges of it. Remnants from Gaster’s magic. Sans frowns at it.

“he did a half-assed job.” He growled. “it’s not even marked correctly.”

You bring his Soul up in front of him and kiss him. “Show me how it’s done, then.”

He takes your Soul in his hands and you shiver, already feeling the sparks of magic coming off of his hands. “this is going to be a lot more intense than whatever it was you felt with gaster.” He started, “but nowhere near as intense as a real marking. you have to hold on to mine though.”

You nod as he pulls his legs out from underneath him, crossing them. You pull yours under you and kneel.

The thought that you’re both sitting naked on your bed, holding each other’s Souls, finds itself in the back of your head and you realize that this is probably the weirdest intimate thing you’ve ever done.

“ready?” He raises an eyebrow at you and you take a deep breath, nodding.

You weren’t ready.

The feeling that flooded through you was a thousand times more intense than anything you felt before, and you gripped his Soul as if it were a lifeline. A surge of heat filled your chest and pulsed down through the rest of your body. The warmth flooded out from somewhere deep inside you, but it was more than just warmth. It was love, and you’d never felt anything as strong. You could feel his magic tingling through you, static on your skin, his feelings behind it, his unspoken worries and fears about the future, his anger towards Gaster, and you could feel how much he cared about you and how much he loved you and wanted you and it was so overwhelming you blacked out.

You were disoriented when you finally came back to reality, your eyes shooting open immediately as you realized that you were alive. Why you thought you had died was beyond you, but you know for a fact that you had gone to heaven for at least ten entire seconds. You pushed yourself up off the mattress, having fallen over in your blackout. You shifted your legs and made a noise. You’d also apparently climaxed without any memory of it. Damn.

The first thing that registers when you get your bearings is that it’s still dark. Checking the clock you realize you’d been out for about an hour.

The second thing that registers when you push yourself up is that both of your Souls are gone, and Sans is leaning against the wall with dark eye sockets.

The third thing that registers is that his eyes were dark at all.
“Sans.” You move over to him, mildly panicked, and shake his shoulder. “Sans?”

When he doesn’t move you get a little more panicked, grabbing both his shoulders and shaking them. “Oi. Bonehead! Wake up!”

It takes a lot longer than you’d have liked for his eyes to blink back into his head, refocusing themselves as he groggily sat all the way up.

“What year is it?”

“201Z.” You remind him. “The year you never scare me like that ever again.”

“What?” he said, rubbing his head and finally coming back to reality himself. He blinked at you. “Oh. Oh holy shit. I passed out?”

“We both did.” You climb off the bed, walking over to the dresser to pull out a new pair of underwear. “You scared the crap out of me. I thought you were dead.”

He sat there in what you assumed was mild disbelief, rubbing his head. You walked over to the clothing pile and fished out his ‘Bone Daddy’ shirt, quickly pulling it on over yourself. It was long enough to cover what mattered. You turn towards the bedroom door, opening it and checking the hallway. It was still quiet in the house so either Papyrus was asleep, which wasn’t likely, or he just wasn’t there. You turn back to Sans.

“I’m gonna give you a minute. I need to clean up. Please be here when I get back”

“Yeah...yeah alright.” He nodded, half-dazed, as you left.

It took you all of five minutes to fix yourself in the bathroom. When you came back you were only partly surprised to find Sans under the blankets in what looked like sleep. You rolled your eyes and closed the bedroom door behind you, walking over to join him under the blankets only to be immediately pulled into his arms.

“That was amazing you know.” He opens one eye to look at you. “I don’t know if you know how amazing that was.”

You move closer to snuggle against him and realize that he’d put on a pair of shorts in your absence. “I was only kind of conscious, but it was amazing.”

Both of your voices are sleepy and out of it, but you’re awake enough when he leans in to kiss you. That feeling doesn’t last forever, though, as both of you drift off with whispered ‘I love you’s’ on your lips.

Chapter End Notes

Shoutout to all sex-repulsed people and people who just don't like dicks. I myself am Ace and am not a huge fan of them, so I thought it would be nice to have a fic where the person just...doesn't like it for once and they stop. As an homage for everyone who's had a less than desireable first time or just isn't all that into penetrative sex. Alternatives are always viable.

Comment and Kudos as always. I really do appreciate them.
It Is Better To Be Hated For What You Are, Than Loved For What You Are Not

Chapter Summary

They say that we should love ourselves first, before other people learn to love us, but it’s not as easy as it seems. Sometimes, we need someone to accept us and love us first, then we would learn to see ourselves through that person's eyes and learn to love ourselves.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Light.

That’s all that danced in front of you.

Swirls and sparks of yellow and blue swam in your vision. It was all you could see, all you knew. They took on shapes in your eyes. Stars, hearts, circles, shapes of friends and...enemies?

Did you have any enemies? You weren’t sure. You had a lot of friends, you thought. Or, you used to.

Used to. Why did you used to have friends. You know you have friends. But they’re all far away now. Gone.

No, they’re not gone. You see them every day. In your mind they’re always there, but they’re out of your reach. You can’t see them anymore. You’re not sure if you had them in the first place.

The lights swirled around you, battling, clashing with each other in a tesla coil cage that you couldn’t escape from even if you wanted to.

Did you want to, though? Escape this? You said you wanted this, you remember. You’d made a promise that you intended to keep, even if nobody wanted you to keep it. Even if nobody wanted to see you.

But what was the promise? Did you even make a promise? You made a promise to be happy and to stop searching. You had the fear that if you found what you were looking for then you wouldn’t be happy anymore.

But what were you looking for? What did you think you would find? You didn’t know. You didn’t know you didn’t know you didn’t know and the lights wouldn’t stop shining in your eyes and you wanted to knock them away and fall back into the darkness that you crawled out of but you were scared.

You were so scared of losing that light.

It took you so long to find it, but it wasn’t yours to have.

No, it wasn’t yours. It would never be yours.
You couldn’t have it anymore.

Sparks erupted in front of you and you felt your entire being burst into bright flames that licked your skin but didn’t burn and you heard a noise that sounded like screaming but it wasn’t coming from you. It wasn’t coming from anywhere but it was loud, and getting louder and you couldn’t block it out and you felt yourself being pulled apart until you were staring at your own reflection, flaming and crying because you were in pain, but you weren’t in pain. You didn’t feel anything.

You didn’t want to feel anything anymore.

You jolted awake sharply to the sound of your phone going off, volume louder than you remember setting it to. You grumbled and pulled yourself from Sans’ grip, groggily walking over to the clothing pile you’d made the night prior to grab it from your cardigan pocket. The battery was really low and you were too tired to register the caller ID.

“Mnnnn...H’lo?”

A calm reassuring voice answered you

“Oh! I’m so sorry my child, did I wake you from your slumber?”

You smiled and yawned, walking back over to sit on the bed. Sans opened one eye at you and you nodded your head to the phone. “Hi Toriel. Yeah, you did. ‘s everything alright?”

“Oh yes, everything’s fine. I was just wondering what Sans’ and Papyrus’ availability is today?”

“I dunno, lemme check.” You say, moving the phone away from your ear and turning to Sans. “Hey babe, are you available?”

He sluggishly wrapped his arms around your waist, not bothering to move his body off of the mattress. “i’m very clearly taken.”

You roll your eyes and put the phone back to your ear. “He’s free. I think Papyrus is free too. What’s up?”

“Well, I was wondering if you could bring the boys over so we can go over the guest list and seating arrangements for the coronation this Saturday.”

“Yeah sure, i’ll drag ’em out there.” You say, looking down at Sans’s. He was already halfway back to sleep. “What time?”

You could hear her fidgeting with something on the other end.

“Well, I wouldn’t want to pull you away from any much needed rest…”

You half-grimaced. You had a feeling she knew.

“But if you could get here as soon as possible so that it can be put out of the way, that would be wonderful.”

“Right. Yeah. I’ll see what I can do.” You say, moving one of Sans’ arms so you could lie back
down. He ended up replacing it over your chest, barely conscious. “Wait, don’t you have like, work today? It’s Tuesday.”

“All schools that house monster children have off this week for the celebration!”

Her voice was too cheery for you right now. “Right. We’ll be there in like...within two hours.”

“I look forward to your arrival!”

“Yeah. Bye Toriel.” You hung up and dropped the phone back on the floor, putting your arm over your face. “Ugh. Did I sound rude?”

“you sounded tired.”

“Being tired’s no excuse to be rude.” You take your hand off your face and pat his arm. “C’mon, get up. My chest hurts and we’ve got work to do.”

“there’s always work to do.” He pulled you closer. “can’t we have a day off.”

“Yesterday was a day off.”

“yesterday was mettaton’s day off.”

You roll your eyes at him. “I’ll yell for Papyrus, don’t make me.”

“you wouldn’t.”

You smirked and sucked in a breath as a joke to yell, but immediately stopped as a bony hand covered your face to silence you. You stifled giggles and watched Sans sit up, halfheartedly glaring at you.

“you said two hours.”

“I said two hours.”

“I’m not sitting next to a Temmie.” You say. "Like, I love them, don't get me wrong, but I don't think I can handle talking to one for six hours."

Two hours later you found yourself sitting on the couch in Toriel’s home, sandwiched between her and Sans as the three of you stared at the seating chart spread out on the coffee table. Papyrus and Frisk had immediately whisked themselves off to Frisk’s room to play with action figures the moment you arrived, leaving the ‘adults’ to deliberate over the what and who of the festivities the upcoming weekend.

“no, you’re sitting next to me.” Sans said, looking over his own list. It was covered in various names of monsters “there’s gonna be a lot of human officials at this thing. i’m not sure how well they’re going to go over with these other ambassador guys.”

Toriel brought a hand to her mouth in worry. “I wouldn’t want to exclude anyone…”

“We can invite Bob.” You offer. “He’s...relatively calmer than a lot of other Temmies.”
“I’m cool with Bob,” Sans said, writing Bob’s name down on one of the lines next to the table numbers. “so we’ve got Bob, woshua, napstablook, and shyren for the waterfall table. should we put down lemon bread?”

“Lemon Bread?” You raise an eyebrow at him. Wasn’t Undyne in charge of food?

“Lemon Bread is Shyren’s sister.” Toriel clarified, taking in your confused face. "She was one of the ‘fallen’ monsters that Alphys brought back to life when she was working for Asgore. She ran experiments back when we were all still living Underground. I am surprised you were not aware of them, considering how long you were apparently there.”

You looked down. “I didn’t know about that. I never came across those things when I was running around. I didn’t even know Alphys had another lab until we went down to it on halloween.” You tell them both, fidgeting. “Alphys told me that she did something horrible that she was trying to make up for, but I didn’t know anything about any experiments or any dead monsters. I didn’t know she could bring them back to life.”

“She couldn’t.” Sans answered you, putting his name list down. “not entirely. at one point, before you got to the underground, she was in charge of finding a way to break the barrier. you remember when i told you about the determination extraction machine yesterday?” He asked you. You nodded and he took it as a signal to continue. “Yeah. she used that machine to take the ‘determination’ out of the human souls that asgore had already collected and put them into monsters, to see if she could use the power of both soul types to create a monster with enough willpower to break the barrier.”

“But, as you have seen, the experiments failed.” Toriel continued for him. “The injected monsters came back to life, yes, but soon came to lose their physical forms, some combining with each other into to form multi-minded amalgams. But, in the end, she ended up hiding the truth from monsterkind and was stripped of her Royal Scientist title once we all reached the surface.”

You thought for a second. You had no idea that Alphys had gone through so much. Was all of that something that Frisk ended up finding out in your stead?

There was still so much you didn’t know about the Monsters. It made you feel even more out of place. You feel like you should have known something about it. You didn’t think you were entitled to it, but you went through so much trouble.

To find out that you weren’t able to find out something this important about your friends…

It made you feel even more disconnected than you already were.

You turned to Sans. “You said that Alphys can use that machine to get Gaster’s magic out of my Soul, right?”

“She’s going to try,” He assured you, putting a hand on your knee. “if she modifies it enough. i don’t think she knows anything about removing marks.”

“And why exactly is Gaster’s magic inside you?” Toriel’s voice was firm behind you and you flinched at the intensity of it. That’s right. You still hadn’t told her about the entire ordeal. You turned to her and saw her arms cross, the expression on her face reminiscent of a mother catching their child in a lie. It wasn’t entirely off the mark, but if she thought you and Gaster had a thing behind Sans’ back and was going to chastise you for it, you didn’t want any part in it.

“Uh…” You stutter. You didn’t want to be the one to tell her. She was nice, but the look on her
face terrified you. You leaned back at her glare as it swept over you and Sans.

“gaster lied to her and put a mark on her soul to try to give her a ‘reason’.” Sans told her. Your hero. “alphys agreed to help us get it out of her.”

Her shoulders seemed to sag in relief at the news, but she didn’t relax completely. “Oh. That is...horrible. What a villainous thing to do.” She said, her anger now directed at the absent doctor. “I cannot believe he would take advantage of your kindness and put something that important on you. I’m going to give him a good lecture the next time I see him, and a wop or two.”

“Toriel no, it’s cool.” You held up a hand to her. “You don’t have to do anything. Sans told him to leave and he did, and we’re gonna pull the mark off of me in no time. Besides, he seemed to feel really bad about it anyway so, he probably already knows how badly he messed up—”

“he doesn’t.” Sans cut you off, some anger in his voice. “he doesn’t understand the consequences of his actions. he never has. if he stays around he’ll just end up doing more stupid crap and putting more people in danger. he’s better off just leaving and never coming back.” he crossed his arms, leaning back into the couch. “...anyway. that’s something i wanted to talk to you about too, tori.”

She tilted her head. “Gaster?”

“no. the mark.” He said leaving forward to put his elbows on his knees. “i wanted to ask you how you and asgore took your marks off of each other once you divorced. so that we can figure out the safest way to pull gaster’s mark out of angel.”

You watched Toriel’s cheeks turn pink as she sheepishly turned her head to the side. “Yes, well...about that particular thing. Asgore and I...never unmarked each other.”

“You what? Really?” You asked her, now very interested. “But you left him?”

She nodded. “Yes. Back when were were still underground I did leave him, because of his cowardice and neglect for our people. I was disappointed in him, and made that point very clear. But...” She said, her shoulders completely relaxing. “As angry as I was at his actions, I realized that I could never truly hate him. Not really. I was angry, and he was a reckless fool...but he was my Gorey, and I still loved him. So, I never took my mark off of him. I couldn’t find it in me. Monster Markings are a very powerful kind of magic. Once you have one, your perception of that person begins to change. You start to understand them, and feel what they are feeling.” She explained to you, your whole body turned to her in interest. “While we were separated, I felt it. Every soul he took, every human he killed, all of the monsters he visited regularly. He was a cowardly king, but he was still loved by our people, and I could feel his love for me in my heart, even though we were hundreds of miles away. And I am sure he felt mine. All the times I was lonely I knew that he would be with me, and that he would feel me in his heart in his own sad times. That is what it’s like to become another monster’s mark. You are theirs, and they yours. It is a very special and important thing.” She said, putting a hand on your shoulder. “Even though his reason was wrong, and what he did was horrible, for him to go to the length to mark you...Gaster must have cared for you a great deal. I know that is not something you want to hear, considering your situation, but there is no monster in history that has ever left a malevolent mark. For him to want to share a piece of himself with you...for a monster to go to that extent, I believe he was willing to accept his consequences, if it meant that you would be happy in the end.”

“he was still skeevy.” Sans argued her. “he shouldn’t have lied to her. he shouldn’t have marked her at all. she wasn’t his to mark, regardless of whatever he thought. it doesn’t matter what his intentions are. he fucked up and he’s not going to do it again.”
“I feel bad for him.” You say, putting your hands together. “Everybody hates him now. I mean, he was already outcasted. He went through so much. I mean, we’ve all gone through so much, but the dude just came back to life basically. Shouldn’t we give him more credit? Or like... at least another shot?”

Sans grabbed his list again. “He screwed up his shot the second he walked out of that room and tried to erase everyone. Why are you defending him anyway? He’s never done anything other than hurt you.”

You huffed up. “Maybe I feel bad for him, alright? Maybe I feel like I kind of understand him? I was thrown out of a world I knew and pulled back into it too. I still don’t know anything about anyone nearly as much as I feel like I should. I didn’t even know Alphys was doing experiments, or that that’s why she was a scientist in the first place!” You stood up from the couch, fueled with a passion you hadn’t felt before “You’re here shitting on him because he messed up some things, but that’s just because he didn’t have anyone to help tell him otherwise. Since you started spending all of your time with Papyrus, he didn’t have a moral compass and became desperate. Maybe you should feel bad for him too, since everything he’s ever done is because he just wanted you to love him again!”

Sans stood up too, also jarred by your words. A strange look passed over his face before it settled on confusion. “You’re talking about things you don’t understand. How the hell could you possibly know any of that?”

“His mark is resonating inside her.” Toriel said, also standing up to tower over the both of you. “She is channeling his feelings in her words, as he exists inside her soul. He speaks the truth through her.”

He raised an eyebrow. “Oh yeah? Well, if he can hear me, tell him that none of this would have happened if he didn’t leave in the first place.”

“Tell him yourself, at the party.” You said, sitting down. You still felt fire coursing through you. It was uncomfortable and hot and you didn’t like it. “I’m not going to be your messenger girl. You and him need to sit down and have a conversation about all of this and make up, and you can do it when you see him again, because you’re going to see him again whether you like it or not. I’m gonna make sure of it.” You said, grabbing the seating chart and writing Gaster’s name down at the table you were sitting at, next to Sans. “I’m sick of this fight. I’m sick of being in the middle of it. You two are going to be brothers again, and if I’m going to be the one to bring you together then so be it. And when all this is sorted out we can figure out what to do with me, but right now you two need to hug and make up because I’m sick of everyone being angry all the time.” You say, dropping the paper and pen down on the table pointedly. The two monsters looked at you, speechlessly, before Sans sat down next to you, clearly upset with your decision but not moving to say anything against it.

“Fine.” He huffed, putting his head in one of his hands. “But don’t say I didn’t warn you.”

Toriel looked between the two of you, uncomfortable in the wake of the excitement. “Why don’t I go make the three of us a cup of tea and we can continue working on the seating arrangements?”

When neither of you replied she smiled and walked out towards the kitchen. After a minute of brooding silence you sighed, breaking it.

“Sorry.” You say, not looking at him. “I didn’t mean to get mad at you.”

“S’okay.” He said, also not looking at you. “Marks make people do dumb shit, apparently.”
You frowned. “That last part wasn’t the mark talking.” You tell him facing him and looking him in the eyes. He purposefully avoided yours. “I want you and Gaster to make up. That’s a personal thing. I don’t want anybody to keep fighting the way you two are. You’ve got some bad blood, but that doesn’t mean it has to be bad for the rest of your lives. I want all of my friends to be happy, and if I have to be the glue that keeps everything together then so help me i’ll be it.”

He turned to you at that, locking eyes. “you don’t have to do that. put all that burden on yourself. that’s too much for one human to take on.”

“You’ll have to take the burden too.” You say, taking his hand in yours. “If I can’t do it by myself, then lend me a hand. I want you to be happy too, more than anyone, but if you keep fighting like this you’re never going to find it. And don’t give me that bull about never being happy because that’s a load of crap and you know it.” He looked down at your words but you brought his head right back up with your other hand. “You said that you’re happy with me.”

It took him a second to reply and when he did he moved his hand over yours and you could feel him start to shake. “i am. fuck, i am.” he agreed, gripping your hand in his. “i’m happy with you, and papyrus, and tori and the kid. i’m happy with all of this, but not him. i’m not happy with him and i’m not happy with myself.” he turned his head to nuzzle it into the palm of your hand. “but i wanna be. i want to be happy more than i’ve ever been.”

“Then listen to me.” You lower your voice and move closer to him until you’re less than a foot apart. “Make up with Gaster. become brothers again. After that things will fall into place and we can all be happy. I know it.”

“i don’t want to.” he protests. “he doesn’t deserve it.”

“Maybe he doesn’t. but you have to try.” You say, putting your forehead on his. “For me.”

He sighed in defeat and smiled. “yeah. yeah okay. for you.” He said, moving his hand to thread through your hair. “but if he screws up again i’m not holding back.”

“Don’t do anything reckless.” You warn him.

He grins at you. “i won’t make any promises.”

You smile at each other, contentedly, but are both snapped out of it by a voice.

“Jeez. Leave some room for Jesus you two.”

You both turn to the hallway where Frisk and Papyrus are standing, bashfully, the former holding a flower pot containing the yellow devil flower you were so used to ruining things for you. He grinned at you from his place.

“Sorry. Is this a bad time?”

Chapter End Notes

I apologize for my lack of presence with the story. Something happened a while ago and I was thrown into a huge depression that made me stop working on it for a while.

I’m alright now, and I’m determined to finish this story. There’s still a lot of chapters
left before everyone’s happy. Before I’m happy.

Though, if you want to help make me feel better, if you could leave a comment or a Kudos while you’re here I would really appreciate it.

Maybe I'll hit 40k hits. Seeing that would be awesome.
Chapter Summary

What people who've committed crimes need isn't punishment, but rather the knowledge of the pain of being forgiven.

Chapter Notes

I may have been putting out chapters less frequently, but when they're 4500 word chapters full of character development and conflict resolution then isn't it worth the wait?

Sorry about the wait. I'm still struggling a bit, but I'd love for you to comment and tell me what you think. And Kudos. As is tradition.

Frisk liked having Papyrus over. They liked Papyrus in general. He wasn’t too serious or overbearing, and he always talked about subjects that made Frisk happy. Even though 70% of the time it was about pasta and all the ways he’s figured out how to cook it, but Frisk liked that too. No matter what happened to them all Papyrus still had a huge love of spaghetti, and it was something that made Frisk smile. He was probably the person that changed the least after they all left the underground, and Frisk needed that.

Everybody changed, whether they wanted to or not. Having monsters come up from under the earth’s crust into a whole new world of sunlight and advanced industrial revolution is a huge culture shock. Frisk was fine with the changes, but some people changed more than others and it was weird to see happen over a long period of time.

Like Toriel. Toriel was different once she left. She was a lot more proper around Frisk and other monsters, and even humans. Cordial, was the word, Frisk found out. Of course she acted like a mom when it was just Frisk and her, and the kid loved that more than anything, but when she was around her friends, Asgore, even the newer human Angel, she was a lot more...professional. She’d been that way ever since she took up the mantle of Queen again. She likes to say she isn’t the queen anymore, because technically she’s not, but all the monsters know about her and they still refer to her as The Queen Of Monsters. Frisk likes to think that the title doesn’t bother their surrogate mom, but they can see otherwise. She takes it seriously. More serious than Frisk would like.

Asgore didn’t change much. Then again, Frisk didn’t see him everyday. Just occasionally on the weekends and during the week. They didn’t like the fact that Toriel and Asgore were living separately. Frisk wanted them to live together, so that they would stop missing each other all the time.

Undyne and Alphys didn’t change either. They were together all the time now, which was different, but it was a good different. A different that didn’t feel so different. Undyne was still
Frisk’s bestie, and they hung out all the time, which was great, and Alphys was still a shut-in nerd, which was also great. They complimented each other really well, Frisk thought.

The person that changed the most was Sans. Then again, Frisk didn’t really know what Sans was like before the Underground. He was always smiling, happy, helpful. Always eager to see them and took them out to eat, even if neither of them even ate anything. He was Frisk’s guide and friend, and even when he stood at the end of the hall, blocked by shadow and issuing his judgement, he was still happy to see Frisk go.

But ever since he got to the surface he was different. The first year was less noticeable, but he was tense. His happiness seemed a bit masked, as if he was constantly waiting for something to happen. Even now he still seemed like he was waiting for something. Frisk wanted to ask him about it, but they didn’t want to make whatever he was feeling worse. But part of Frisk wondered what on earth he could be waiting for now. They wanted to bring it up with Papyrus, ask what Sans had been like before he came to this universe, but Papyrus didn’t remember.

Even so, the taller skeleton was the one that changed the least out of all of them and that made Frisk happy. They were able to be themselves around Papyrus and didn’t have to think of all of the ‘important’ things that got everyone else down all the time.

Even though something really important was happening in a couple of days.

“Do you think there’s gonna be a cake?” They asked him, spread out on their bed.

“OF COURSE THERE WILL BE A CAKE.” Papyrus assured them, making a grand gesture with his hands. “IT WILL BE TWELVE LAYERS TALL AND EACH LAYER WILL BE A DIFFERENT FLAVOR.”

Frisk smiled at him, sitting up. “Is one of them gonna be spaghetti flavor?”

Papyrus crossed his arms and nodded. “I HAVE BEEN VERY VIGILANT WITH QUEEN TORIEL ABOUT HAVING ONE OF THE LAYERS BE SPAGHETTI FLAVORED, BUT SHE INSISTS THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PUT SPAGHETTI IN A CAKE. I WILL PROVE TO HER OTHERWISE, AND MAKE MY OWN CAKE IF I HAVE TO.”

Frisk giggled at that. If Papyrus had it his way, the cake wouldn’t be a cake at all, but just layer after layer of different kinds of spaghetti. They thought for a moment of what kind would be on top, but decided that they didn’t really know enough about pasta to hazard a guess. There was definitely more than 12 types of noodles in the world right? Papyrus would probably know the answer to that.

"Do you think everyone's gonna be there?" Frisk said, falling back down onto their bed. "All the Woshuas and Vulkins?"

"IT IS HARD TO SAY." Papyrus answered, flopping down on the bed next to them. His head rested against the wall as his legs fell off the edge at the knees, shoes hitting the floor. "TECHNICALLY WE CANNOT INVITE ALL OF MONSTERKIND TO THE PARTY. WE WOULD NOT HAVE ENOUGH ROOM FOR EVERYONE IN THE DINING HALL. PLUS, THERE WOULD BE A LOT OF HUMANS THERE TOO."

"Other humans?" Frisk asked. "What kind of other humans?"

"OFFICIAL ONES." Papyrus answered him, crossing his arms. "PEOPLE LIKE WORLD LEADERS AND I THINK THE PRESIDENT, ACCORDING TO TORIEL. IT IS GOING TO BE
Frisk made a noise at that. They didn't want the party to be really official. It was supposed to be their birthday, and whatever a coronation was, but having so many important human adults there was going to be nerve wracking. Papyrus must have picked up on their frustration, as he sat up and put a hand on their shoulder.

"DO NOT WORRY, FRISK. IT WILL BE ALRIGHT." He said with a smile. "I AM SURE IT WILL GO WELL AND FEEL MUCH LESS OFFICIAL ONCE YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS."

Frisk nodded, "Yeah. I know....do you think Gaster is going to be there?"

It was at that moment that Frisk noticed the visible change in Papyrus. He became rigid, tense, and immediately removed his hand from Frisk's shoulders. He seemed shocked, to the young human, and after it wore off he made a solemn face, looking to the side and letting his hand fall. The sad unsure expression left a nasty taste in the back of Frisk's mouth and they wished they hadn't said anything.

"NO." The skeleton said, the depressed conviction of the word falling from his mouth like a curse. "I AM SURE HE WILL NOT."

Frisk didn't like Papyrus like this. They frowned. "Do you think he should be?"

Papyrus took a deep breath, and Frisk counted five seconds before he spoke again.

"I DON'T KNOW."

He looked sad. Sad and tired. The same kind of look that Sans had when he thought nobody was looking.

They were wrong about Papyrus not changing.

"Hey, Papyrus." They started, curious to see where this change stemmed from. "What do you think of Gaster?"

The skeleton lowered his eyelids in a calm contemplation. It looked weird on him. "I THINK...HE CAN DO A LITTLE BETTER." He started. "I THINK HE IS TRYING VERY HARD TO BE...SOMETHING. EVEN IF HE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT THAT SOMETHING IS. I THINK HE IS DOING A LOT OF WRONG THINGS FOR REASONS HE BELIEVES ARE RIGHT, AND IS HURTING PEOPLE IN THE PROCESS. BUT." He pauses, holding up a finger. "I THINK THAT WITH HELP, HE WILL BE ABLE TO DO THE RIGHT THING FOR THE RIGHT REASON, EVENTUALLY. EVEN IF EVERYBODY HATES HIM NOW FOR WHAT HE DID TO ANGEL, I THINK THAT HE CAN STILL TURN THINGS AROUND. I'M SURE OF THAT."

Frisk smiled. Hearing Papyrus's unyielding trust in everyone around him was always a pick me up. They went to open their mouth to agree, but was interrupted.

"That's an awful lotta faith you're putting in the guy."

They both jumped, looking for the source of the extra voice until their eyes fell on the potted plant on the dresser, who wasn't a plant anymore, but a monster.

"Howdy." Flowey said, waving a leaf at them. "Looks like I popped in at just the right topic."
“You did w-what?!”

Alphys stared at the spot on the science table where Flowey was supposed to be, only to find it barren and lacking any Flowey to speak of.

“I let him go.” Gaster repeated himself, stressed.

“W-why would you do that?” Alphys said, walking up to the table to examine the unplugged wires. “The experiment-”

“Would have killed him.” Gaster finished for her, taking a step back from the table.

“We c-could have prevented that.” Alphys stuttered in a low voice. “Toriel…”

“Sent him to us with the intent of destroying him in a slim chance of finding her child again.” He finished again. “A chance that very well could have pulled the other one out of him as well.”

“They don’t both exist in him.” Alphys said, voice solidifying as she turned to face Gaster. “Neither of them exist in him, nothing does. I already know that. I’m the one who created him. The only thing that he has inside him is pure Determination.”

He furrowed his brow at her. “If we already knew the experiment was a failure, then why bother running it in the first place?”

“B-because!” Alphys stopped, frustrated. She balled her fists. “Because I could have shown Toriel that there were traces of Asriel in him, at the very least! I would have told her that Asriel’s ashes had clung onto him and turned into his spirit and….and convinced her to accept him without killing him! I had it all planned!”

Gaster took a step forward. “And you didn’t think to fill me in on this ‘master plan’ of yours, so I could have collaborated with you on it?”

“I d-didn’t trust you. I trust you even less now!” She yelled at him. Gaster had never seen her so upset. “You ruined everything!”

He frowned. “You don’t think that Flowey is capable of proving himself to her by his own devices?”

“That’s not the point!” Alphys said, gesturing to the machine behind her. “This...this w-was my last shot. My final chance to prove to Toriel that I’m...that I’m not a screw up. That I could go back to being a Royal Scientist and...and working on bigger projects to help her. Help my f-friends. But you ruined everything, and now she’s never going to trust me with anything again, all b-because you acted without thinking!”

Gaster’s face fell, the magnitude of the situation settling on him. He didn’t realize that she had so much riding on this project, and he felt horrible. He took a step forward and held a hand out.

“Alphys...I-”
She took a step back. “No. I d-don’t want to hear it. I just….I just want you out of my lab and out of my sight. I’m done.”

A heavy silence hung in the air before either of them moved again. The first person to push against it was Gaster, turning to leave.

“W-wait.”

He stopped, looking back at Alphys who reached behind the machine to pull out a small jar. She popped the cap off of it.

“I promised Sans that I would h-help him get your mark off of Angel.” She said, voice tense and controlled. “I’m g-going to need a sample of your magic to do that.”

He narrowed his eyes at her. “And what, exactly, are you planning to do to her?”

“That’s none of your business.” She said, tilting her head down. The tint of the screens in her room bounced off of her glasses and bleached out her eyes. It was an unsettling sight.

With poise, what little he had left, Gaster walked over to her and carefully materialized a very small bone in the jar. Just big enough to fit comfortably inside.

“If you hurt her in any way with whatever you are planning...” Gaster warned her.

She capped the jar and stuffed it in one of the pockets of her labcoat, turning towards the opposite exit. “I can’t do much worse than what you’ve already done.”

He watched the automatic door close behind her, a heavy pit in the bottom of his stomach as he followed her lead out the door behind him.

"Flowey!" Frisk jumped off their bed, whisking the pot off of the dresser. "Toriel said you're supposed to be in a lab with Alphys."

Flowey looked to Papyrus, half nervously. "Yeah uh, about that. You see, your buddy Gaster? He let me go."

Papyrus crossed his arms. "THAT IS INCREDIBLY IRRESPONSIBLE OF HIM."

"No, no, hear me out!" He said, holding up a leaf. "I couldn't stay down there, alright? They wanted to kill me!"

"Kill you?" Frisk tilted their head. "Why would they want to kill you?"

Flowey scoffed. "Because they want to find Asriel and pull him outta me."

Frisk flinched at this. They didn't know the experiments would have killed him.

"THAT MAKES SENSE." Papyrus said, nodding. Frisk didn't understand. It didn't make sense at all. "BUT WHY WOULD HE LET YOU GO?"

"Because I told him I didn't want to die." Flowey said adamantly. "I'm...different, alright? I know
the circumstances of my birth. I'm a flower brought to live by sheer Determination and I've got the ashes of both Chara and Asriel all over and inside me. So odds are, if they find Asriel, they find Chara too. I asked him if he really wanted to let that kind of evil back into this world."

"AND HE SAID NO." Papyrus said, looking somewhat happier. "AND HE LET YOU GO BECAUSE HE WANTED TO DO THE RIGHT THING."

"Exactly." Flowey shifted in the pot. "I mean, I'm not totally evil, I don't think. I dunno. I haven't really had a chance to think about what I was until...well. Recently. But I told the guy that if he let me go that I'd try to see if I could get you guys to forgive him, or something."

"THAT IS...A NOBLE PURSUIT." Papyrus told him, smiling. "WOWIE. YOU SOUND LIKE YOU’RE TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF!"

Flowey narrowed his eyes at him. "Was that a fucking pun."

Frisk flicked Flowey on one of his petals, only for him to recoil in pain. "Language, Flowey."

"Ow, jeez alright." He rubbed the spot. "That hurts y’know. I can feel that."

"You’re up to something again." Frisk said, no hesitation. They knew Flowey. He wouldn’t have convinced Gaster to let him go without an ulterior motive. "What is it?"

"I’m not up to anything! I swear!” Flowey said, looking at Papyrus. "Listen big guy, your brother messed up yeah? And he wants to make up for it alright? He’s probably getting kicked out of Alphys’s lab as we speak. I mean, I don’t really care much for him. He’s kind of an asshole with a superiority complex but hey, he gave me a second chance. I owe him one too."

Papyrus contemplated this for a second. "...AM NOT THE ONE TO MAKE THAT CALL. IF I WERE TO BE COMPLETELY HONEST, I WOULD WELCOME HIM BACK HAPPILY AND GIVE HIM A SECOND CHANCE, BUT SANS WAS THE ONE WHO BANISHED HIM. IF ANYONE IS GOING TO MAKE A VERDICT LIKE THAT, IT IS HIM. HE TECHNICALLY PAYS FOR THE HOUSE ANYWAY."

Flowey frowned. He didn’t like that answer, by the looks of it. "Fine, i’ll talk to him. Where is the smiley trash bag anyway?"

"In the living room, talking with Toriel and Angel about seats.” Frisk told him. He huffed.

“Well, what are we waiting for?” Flowey said, crossing his petals. “Take me out there so I can get this over with."

Frisk didn’t like the way he was bossing them both around, but they did it anyway, leaving the bedroom with Papyrus in tow to head for the living room.

“Can’t you pop in there by yourself?” They asked, holding the Floweypot close to their chest.

“It’s a connection thing.” He replied, looking straight ahead. “I can’t teleport through the ground if i’m not directly touching it somehow. It's a stupid loophole.”

When they entered the living room Toriel wasn’t there. Sans and Angel were, and they were close. Really close. They looked like they were about to kiss.

“Jeez, leave some room for Jesus you two.” Flowey mocked them from his spot.
They both jumped and turned to the hallway, Angel looking sheepish and Sans looking...angry. Flowey was apparently loving this.

“Sorry, is this a bad time?”

You wanted to say ‘Yes Flowey, this is a bad time. Every time I see your smug little flowery face is a bad time.’, but you curb yourself and blush instead.

Sans takes the jab at him for you. “aren’t you supposed to be getting your soul sucked out?” He questioned, a little irate. Seems he was just as done with Flowey’s bullshit as you were.

The flower shrugged, still smiling smugly. “Can’t suck what you don’t have bone-bag. But you’d know all about that, don’t ya?”

Your eyebrows shot up and the noise you made in reaction could only be described as a mortified whine. You grabbed onto the shoulder of Sans’ jacket and buried your face into it. It was a dick joke. The little shit was cracking fun at both of you, the ass.

Sans wasn’t having any of it and he grinned maliciously. “i dunno, you sure do seem to suck a lot more than i do.”

The resulting scolding cries of ‘SANS!’ and ‘Flowey!’ from Papyrus and Frisk respectively was enough to make you snort into Sans’ shoulder.

“I’m going to die.” You mumble into the fabric. “I’m going to die of embarrassment right here and now.”

Sans turned to look back at you. “i’d hope not. that’d suck the most.”

A loud ceramic crash shook all of you out of your bantering. You looked towards the kitchen and saw the source of the noise. Toriel stood shocked in the doorway, broken teacups and spilt tea littering the ground in front of her. Her eyes were on Flowey and Flowey alone.

“You…” She said, unmoving. “You’re here.”

“You gave me a death sentence, lady.”

She regained herself, straightening her back and stepping over the mess. “You are supposed to be with Alphys.”

“And you’re supposed to be a compassionate mother.” He said, rage in his voice. “I mean, did you even stop and think about what I wanted when you made that ‘decree’?” He put up his petals and air quoted with them. “That you thought you’d find Asriel inside me? Well I got news for you lady, he ain’t here.”

Everyone around you was silent, including you, when she continued. “You agreed to the experiment. I would have thought-”

“You would’ve thought what?” Flowey wasn’t giving her any headway. “You would’ve thought that I’d be fine and dandy with it? Knowing that I’d get killed in the process, even if it did or didn’t work? Nobody would be okay with that!”
Toriel narrowed her eyes at the flower. “Who let you go?”

“Gaster. If it matters.” He said, crossing his arms and looking at Sans, in an attempt to drive a message through. “He let me go because he didn’t want me to die. Because he wanted to do the right thing. I told him that I’d vouch for him once I was free. Well, here I am. Vouching for him. Because as much as I hate the guy, I owe him one. And you.” He turned back to Toriel. “You didn’t even care. All you see in me is Asriel, every time you look at me. I can see it in your eyes. You say you care about all the monsters you ‘rule over’, but you don’t give a shit about me. You don’t care about Flowey the flower, only what’s inside him. Well I’m telling you right now lady, there’s nothing inside me but pure Determination and the combined ashes of a goat kid and a serial killer.”

“You will not speak ill of my children.” Toriel took another step forward.

Flowey barked a laugh. “Lady, you don’t even know the half of what your kids tried to do. You know they made a plan to murder all the monsters? Including you? Especially Chara. Boy, what a psychopath. That time they put flowers in that pie for Asgore? They did that on purpose. Kid was a menace, and I’ve got that inside me too.” Flowey said, putting a petal against his stalk for emphasis. “You can defend ‘em all you want, but that kid was more of a monster than any of us. And they wanted you dead from the beginning. As far as I’m concerned, we’re all better off with them locked inside me. At least there’s some of Asriel holding them back. So tell me, do you really want both of your kids back, when one of them’s nothing but a murderer?” He said, turning his head to look at the child holding him. “And what about Frisk, huh? You’re not happy with them as your child anymore? Did you even stop to think about how they’d feel about it?”

Frisk’s face changed at that, to something sadder, as they looked down. The atmosphere of the room sunk as you looked between the kid and the flower and their surrogate mom.

“I...” Toriel started, putting a hand up to her mouth. She was taken aback at the words, eyebrows tapering up in regret and realization. “I didn’t…”

“Yeah. You didn’t think.” Flowey interrupted again. “Go ahead Frisk, tell her how you feel.”

Frisk looked like they were shaking, face scrunched up in frustration as they handed the flowerpot back to Papyrus so he could hold it. They took several steps forward and stood in front of Toriel, not looking at her.

“I don’t like it.” They started, hands balling beside them as they glared at the ground. “I don’t like that you’ve been working so hard to pull Asriel out of Flowey. I want Asriel to be here too, but i feel like you want him more than you want me, and that hurts.” They said, looking up. “And I’m all excited about my birthday party this weekend but you’re making it into this big official thing that’s way important and I don’t know if I even want it anymore. It doesn’t feel like it’s a birthday anymore. It feels like you just want me to be a sorta poster child for you instead of a actual child and I don’t feel like you love me anymore.”

The room went silent when Frisk stopped, tears dotting the sides of their eyes as they faced Toriel, shoulders hunched up in anger. Toriel had, at this point, developed tears of her own as she kneeled down to Frisk’s height.

“My child.” She started, moving Frisk’s head up to look at her when they didn’t do so themself. “I had no idea that my actions have been hurting you in this way. I thought...that If I had applied the right measures, that I could reclaim a family that was long lost to me. But now, between Flowey’s words and yours, I see that In that pursuit I have been neglecting the family I already had. I had no intention of making you feel any less loved than you are, and I do love you. Very much. Don’t you
ever doubt that, my child.” She said, moving a paw up from Frisk’s shoulder to wipe at their tears “And you are, and always will be, my child. Understand?”

Frisk nodded at her, sniffing once before leaning forward to grab her in a hug. Toriel smiled and hugged back, patting their back. It was a very sweet moment and personally, you’d been waiting for Frisk to speak up ever since they confronted you in the kitchen. It made you happy knowing that they got their situation acknowledged and solved.

“And once again, the day is saved.” Flowey said from his spot in Papyrus’s hands, effectively ruining the moment. “You’re all welcome.”

The two hugging separated, Toriel turning to Sans. “Right. Sans, could you do me a favor and take all of the human officials off of the guest list?”

“Welp.” Sans leaned forward, grabbing a pencil. “there goes half the room. i guess we can invite more temmies than just bob now.”

“And all of the dogs.” Papyrus butted in, walking over to look at the floorplan on the table. “Every single dog we know. Except for that one dog. You know which one I’m talking about. The very annoying one.”

“I know that dog. He left sticky stuff in my pocket once.” Frisk said, also walking over “It was gross.”

“Oh hey I remember that.” You tell them, making a hand gesture. “Yeah, the dog residue. And when you tried to do anything with it it just multiplied and got everywhere.”

“I threw a lot of it out.” Frisk said, smiling, glad that there was a shared connection between the two of you “I tried to eat it once but then more happened.”

You chuckled. “Yeah, I sold all mine to Temmie. Well, not all of them. I used it a lot and a few times it turned into this weird dog salad?”

Frisk’s eyes went wide as they leaned on the table. “It could turn into salad?”

“Yeah apparently.” You answer. “Stuff was weird, but Temmie bought it for like, 4g each sometime. Helped me buy that Mettaton steak once.”

Frisk looked down in serious contemplation. “I should have used it more.”

“Yeah probably.” You say, shrugging. You look at Sans, who fixed you with a very strange look. You realized quickly that everyone that wasn’t you or Frisk was giving you the same look, and that none of them had any idea of what you were talking about.

“You two are really freaky, you know that?” Flowey spoke up. You shrug.

“Yeah. We are.” You say back, smiling at Frisk and taking the pencil from Sans “So. Who’re we gonna get to fill these seats.”

Chapter End Notes

Everyone makes Toriel out to be the ‘perfect flawless goatmom’ but honestly? Flawless
characters aren't interesting characters. There's nothing more boring than a perfect heroine. I hope that with this chapter I could bring to life that Toriel is just as flawed as anyone else, but can still be a good character and a good person even with those flaws, as long as she realizes she has them and she learns from them.

I also hope that all the Flowey hate subsides a little bit. I have plans for this flower. Don't hate him just yet. Also: Gaster faces the ramifications of his actions. Is this his final straw?

These characters need depth and so help me if I'm the one to give it to them. Tell me how I did.
I'm not highly aware, I'm highly self-aware

Chapter Summary

Don't be distracted by the what-if's, should-have's, and if-only's. The one thing you choose for yourself - that is the truth of your universe.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It had been about two months since Sans had settled down in Snowdin, his brother becoming a local favourite amongst the villagers and himself becoming notorious at Grillbys. He'd done a lot in that time, he liked to think. He made friends with the quiet bartender, the local Royal Guard, the people of the town, and that one lady behind the door way out in the woods.

He liked her, he decided. She was nice, and she appreciated his jokes more than his brother did. Outwardly at least. He knew that Papyrus loved his beautifully timed puns deep down, but he rarely ever admitted it out loud. He was grateful when the younger brother would shoot out a couple jokes of his own. It made him really happy, knowing that even after the whole...incident...that Papyrus had kept a sense of humor. It was one of Sans’ favourite things about his younger brother.

Though, he would have liked for him to remember his entire childhood too, but he’d been learning to take what he could get.

Every time he brought it up in casual conversation Papyrus would look at him strangely, like he was speaking another language. Every time he mentioned doing something with Papyrus as a kid he shook his head and said he didn’t remember doing that. It hurt him inside, knowing that Papyrus had changed because of him. Or, because of something. He wasn’t sure what, but he would get to the bottom of it. He was a monster, he had time.

The people of Snowdin had been more than accepting of the two newcomers. Everybody loved Papyrus, and Sans had solidified himself as the town goof, so things went well. And when the prospect of work came up, Undyne had been gracious enough to give him a job as a sentry. Granted, she only came to the town twice since he’d been there, mainly to check up on the Royal Guard Dogs, but when she’d learned about Sans’ teleportation ability (completely by accident, but that’s another story) she’d given him multiple jobs as a sentry around the two posts outside Snowdin. Within a week he’d been moved out more towards Hotland. It was an easy job. Nothing really happened in the Underground to warrant having a sentry anyway. All he did was take naps, eat stolen Grillbys condiments out of packets, and crack jokes with that lady that lived behind the door out in the woods. He liked doing that the most. Everything else in the town was predictable, set, small things that he’d written in code. This world he’d created to get back at Gaster, it was fixed. Controllable. Easily observable. The sentry job was something that would have happened eventually, he figured. It gave him an excuse to observe the world he’d made at his leisure, look for clues and work on fixing that broken machine behind his house that Papyrus, for some reason, hadn’t found out about yet.

It worried him at first, the fact that there was already a house all made up for him and his brother. He didn’t program any place for him to live here. Then again, he didn’t plan on staying very long.
He would find Gaster, make a new portal, and get back home as soon as he could. At least, that was his original plan. Now he found himself thinking that the world he created was...not so bad after all. It wasn’t terribly big. There were plenty of other places aside from Snowdin, Waterfall, Hotland, and the Capital, but he was content with just walking around those four. It was all he needed really, and the people were nice, albeit predictable after a while.

But she was different, the woman behind the door. He hadn’t programmed her, and that’s why she was so refreshing.

And she’d said something so troubling it hadn’t left his mind. She talked about a human, and if one ever came through the doors she asked that he protect them.

He didn’t know what to think of it, really. Since he’d been there he learned that the entirety of monsterkind was waiting for a human to pass by so that their king, Asgore, could take their soul and free them all. He felt a kind of melancholy sadness for the monsters in that respect. Sure, living in the Underground kinda sucked. There was no daylight, something that Sans was finding it hard to get accustomed to, and it was difficult talking to other monsters without dropping that he was from an entirely other universe, or that he was partially responsible for creating theirs. Would they even believe him? Probably not. Then again, nobody really seemed to care enough to ask.

But her...she cared. She cared more than anybody else in that podunk little town, and that meant something to him.

She was kind. Most of the monsters he met were nice, but there was a difference between ‘nice’ and ‘kind’. She sounded older than him, with a wiseness to her voice that said she had a life once, before those doors. He’d asked her about it once, on the third day he talked to her.

“so.” He started, leaning up against the cold stone. At least, he assumed it was cold. He couldn’t feel it. “is there something I can call you, other than ‘old lady from the ruins who likes bad jokes’?”

There was a pause between them, long enough for him to suspect that she wasn’t even there.

“There are several things I was called once, very long ago.” She told him. There was a sort of melancholy to her voice in her answer but it was gone when she spoke again. “Right now, I suppose you can just call me a friend.”

“a friend, huh?” He said, sliding down the doors and smiling up at the sky. “hey, why did the skeleton want a friend?”

There was a short pause before she answered. “I do not know, why?”

He grinned “because he was feeling lonely.”

The camaraderie in their laughter was something only they understood at the time, and a warmth settled in him that reminded him of the sun.

But now, standing at the end of the walkway and staring down at that door, he didn’t feel so great. He felt uneasy. He wasn’t very good at keeping promises, and he was sure that no human would ever venture their way down there anyway. But even if one did, he didn’t trust himself enough, didn’t think he was ready for that kind of responsibility.

He found all thoughts shucked out of his head as he watched the door slowly open. He hid behind the trees. According to the monsters in Snowdin, that door hasn’t opened for hundreds of years, and with good reason. It wasn’t supposed to open. He never programmed the door to open. That’s
not how it worked. He looked out from behind the trees to see what had caused this…anomaly.

She was small. That was the first thing that Sans took note of when the kid stepped through the door. She looked tattered, rough and banged up some with torn jeans, black sneakers, and a black and white striped shirt. Her short tawny hair fell in front of her face and hung at the sides of her head just below her chin, framing it. The long bangs nearly covering one eye did nothing to help her look any less nervous than she appeared. Her pale skin was almost as white as the snow on the ground around her and the brown bandage on her cheek only made her look whiter.

She couldn’t have been more than 12.

He watched her start down the path, holding a large stick close to her body as one would a bat used to ward off intruders. She jumped over a branch along her way. If this was the human Toriel told him about, she must be something pretty special. Special enough to change his programming. It wouldn’t be that bad if he messed with her a little, right? He didn’t think so, as he raised a hand and effortlessly snapped the branch she’d just jumped over with his magic. She reacted predictably and jumped, checking behind herself for a split second before speeding up down the walkway. She was scared, as she should be, he thought. The world was a dangerous place, and the people here wanted to kill her. They would kill a little girl for their freedom.

It was too morbid. He couldn’t have that.

He followed her through the trees and watched her sprint before stopping in front of the poorly constructed gate his brother had set up at the bridge. He figured now would be a better time than ever to make himself known. He moseyed his ass down the path and stopped behind her.

“h u m a n.” he started, tilting his head as the little girl stiffened, terrified. What had that lady told her? What had she seen in those ruins? Why was she here in the first place? He wanted to ask her, but he made a promise. A promise to protect her, for that lady’s sake. He would be a good guy, this time. He’d ask her to turn around and shake his hand, introduce himself, what normal people would do. But before he could utter is next sentence, she’d already turned around, eyes wide with something he couldn’t quite place. It could have been wonder or fear, but there was something else behind it. He held out his hand anyway and smirked as the whoopie cushion sounded on contact. The kid looked shocked, but not as shocked as he expected her to and it worried him. Had she already seen that joke before? There was no way.

But he’d figure that out eventually. This kid was his new priority.

He’d lost count of how many times he’d seen her there, and at this point he didn’t care anymore. Last time she killed everyone, so it was hard for him to muster any shits to give. He gave his whole spiel, watched her through Snowdin, watched her leave through Waterfall and into Hotland, and this time she seemed more determined than ever to get to the end. Why was she so determined this time? Because she knew. She knew what she did and the guilt showed on her face with every monster she encountered, going back and forth and spending more time there than she ever had before. He heard her whisper apologies to the ruins door when she crossed through it, tell the camera behind the bush that she was going to fix it this time. She knew that she’d killed everyone, every single living creature, his brother, Undyne, Mettaton.

Him.
He wanted to believe her, that she’d fix what she’d done, but he couldn’t. He was getting tired of watching her run through the underground, and she knew about him. She knew everything now.

“You can’t understand how this feels.” He reasoned as she continued her onslaught, her steel metal blade swiping at nothing but air. “knowing that one day, without any warning... it’s all going to be reset.”

He dodged again. She was becoming predictable, just like everyone else. But then again, he was starting to become predictable too. At this point, what’s the use.

“look, I gave up trying to go back a while ago.” He tried to reason with her, but she wasn’t hearing any of it. Her body moved viciously, slicing the empty space next to him as he dodged the knife. Her eyes were red and filled with Determination. They hadn’t ever been red before. “and getting to the surface doesn’t really appear anymore, either.” He continued, dodging another slice and sending a barrage of bones her way. She jumped through them easily, as she had many times before. He caught her with one and she stumbled, taking a knee at the damage and he loomed over her.

“cause even if we do...we’re just going to end up back here without any memory of it.” He leaned down as his eye flashed menacingly. “right?”

He was getting tired. Tired of this song and dance and seeing her face at those doors.

He jolted out of bed at Papyrus’s voice, panting heavily and sweating all over.

It was a dream. Was it a dream? It couldn’t be, could it? Did the timeline reset again? Fuck. He jumped out of bed, opening his door and staring at his brother, who was sitting casually on the couch, watching TV. He paid him no mind as he rushed out the front door, ignoring Papyrus’s calls after him.

He was sick of this. She’d gone ahead and killed everyone two resets ago, and the last one looked like it was going to be for good. She said she was sorry. The kid cried over it for god’s sake. But at the end of it all she reset again, going right back to the old ways. He’d honestly lost count of how many times she’d reset, but he was getting sick of it. He tried being nice, tried being harsh, and now he was fed up. He wasn’t going to have any more resets. No more having to watch and wait as she did whatever she wanted to as she ran around. He was done with it. He’d kill her at the start and make sure nothing ever reset ever again. He wasn’t above killing her, not this time. not after everything she put them through. Nobody remembered it, but he did, and he was damn sure Flowey did, so he waited. He waited for at least an hour before the doors opened. He was ready for her this time. He’d put an end to it as soon as she reached the bridge.

At least, that’s what he planned on doing until he saw who walked through the door. It was a different kid, a smaller one, with dark brown hair and yellowish skin. He couldn’t place what gender they were, but they were absolutely not the girl he’d come to know and low-key despise. Their sweater was a colorful array of blue and pink and their blue shorts were dirt and grass-ridden.

It wasn’t her, but someone else, and he wasn’t prepared for that.

He watched this new kid apprehensively walk down the path. He didn’t understand. What had changed to swap out the other girl for this scrawny tike. He was planning on killing them but...if
this kid was truly someone else, he couldn’t do that. He couldn’t murder an innocent child.
He put on his game face and grinned. Maybe this time would be different.

He didn’t sleep anymore, but he was fine with it. He’d learned how to deal with insomnia like a pro, as he always did. He didn’t suffer from nightmares anymore, he just didn’t have them. He didn’t have much of anything when he rested, just a deep dark void. He contemplated on it for a few seconds as he poured himself a cup of coffee. It was three in the morning and the house was quiet. Papyrus had grasped the concept of sleep quite some time ago and had promptly knocked out shortly after his bedtime story. Angel, thankfully, had a normal sleep schedule and hadn’t shown any signs of nightmare relapsing in the past several hours. He figured stepping out for five minutes to make himself something to drink wouldn’t be too debilitating. Or would it? He frowned.

So many things had happened since she came back into his life. It almost hurt to think about it. His emotions towards her had changed so much since he first saw her, scared and alone standing in front of the giant ruins door with nothing but a stick and a bandaid to her person. Sometimes when he looked at her he could still see that nervous little kid, and it threw him off.

He loved her. God did he love her. He didn’t plan on it in the beginning, when he first saw her aboveground. He almost didn’t recognize her until he got a closer look, and even then he couldn’t believe it.

The first thing he felt was anger. Anger that she still somehow existed, and didn’t remember anything. Anger at ‘Chara’ for lingering still in this day and age, now that they were free. Why didn’t she remember anything? Remember him? It pissed him off but he didn’t show it. He couldn’t. What would he say? Hey you don’t remember me but you tried to kill me fifty times once. He wouldn’t do that.

The second thing he felt was doubt. Maybe she was just pretending she didn’t know him? Maybe she was playing some elaborate prank and was lying as a coping method to distance herself from them? That doubt soon turned right back to anger, though, as the mere prospect of her lying to prevent any repercussions infuriated him. She doesn’t deserve to get away scot free, not after everything she did.

The third thing he felt was curiosity. What if she really didn’t remember any of them? Why didn’t she remember anything? Even when he invited all of his friends to visit her restaurant, she didn’t recognize a single face at the table. It was genuine, her obliviousness, and it worried him. What kind of thing went wrong along the way for her to get amnesia like that? It reminded him of Papyrus and his own faults.

That, of course, led to the fourth thing he felt. Pity. He wasn’t the kind of guy to feel pity for anyone else really. Sure he felt bad about stuff sometimes, but he tried really hard not to let anything get to him, but with her he felt awful. And when she had regained her memories through a convoluted string of manipulation (That nobody found out about until later on), his pity only grew. She had felt such guilt over her actions that she had discovered a way to rewrite the entire world, his world, so that she wouldn’t even exist. It was some pretty heavy stuff.

His pity soon turned into defensive solidarity. She tried so hard to fix her mistakes that she’d given up everything she knew for a future she wasn’t even aware she would have. He understood that
well enough. He did the exact same thing. He promised to himself that he’d watch over her, help steer her in the direction she wanted. He’d help prevent her from making the same mistakes again, and help himself in the process. She’d be his reminder that they were still going. That there would be no more resets. Time would move forward as long as she continued to be there, and he held onto that lifeline hard for two months. He found himself relying on her, in more ways than one, and came to appreciate her in that time. They bonded like old friends. Even if nobody around them knew why, they knew, and that was enough. They were in this together.

And that closeness, of course, turned into admiration, and before he knew it he developed a protective caring for her. He wanted her to be happy, wanted them both to be happy. He came to love the person she became and started to cherish the time they spent together. It was a new world, a new day, and a new them, and he embraced it. Before he knew it he was smitten. He’d give his life to keep her happy, just as he would Papyrus.

But...those feelings alone weren’t enough for him. Even before he found her he’d worked behind everyone’s back to recreate that goddamned machine. He moved it to Alphys’ abandoned lab after they’d all reached the surface in the hopes that nobody would find it, and it went well enough. It ended up being found anyway, he realized in Flowey’s confrontation. The flowery devil was watching him the whole time down there as he built it, he came to find out. He’d played the villain card and spilled to Angel that it was almost complete, but thankfully left him out of it. He would have confronted him if he wasn’t so angry about being spied on. And then Undyne just had to trash it. All those months of work he spent rebuilding it only for it to get torn down into pieces anyway. He didn’t bother protesting, or bringing it up. It wasn’t worth the effort, and nobody had even questioned where it came from or who built it. It ended up being discarded and forgotten, just like Gaster had been. He figured it as a sign to stop trying, so he did just that.

But now, after everything that’s happened, he wasn’t sure what he felt about everything happening. He hoped that maybe 5 minutes of silence with a good cup of coffee would help straighten his mind out.

The Monster Week Monster Party was in three days. Asgore named it. They’d figured out the seating plans, booked the venue, hired Mettaton, gotten cameras, and had essentially turned it into a national holiday. Sans already did his job with the invitations. Now all they had to do was just wait for that little grey monster to bring them clothes and they were pretty much set. He wouldn’t do much dancing probably. He wouldn’t really do much of anything other than eat. He hoped the food was good. Maybe he could convince Grillby to cook him some food he could sneak in. He’d hide it in a bag in his empty stomach cavity or something.

He was jostled out of this thoughts by a loud thumping noise. It didn’t come from upstairs, he noted. It was a ground floor noise, and came from behind the wall. It only took him a second to teleport behind the house and find that the back door was opened, and someone was inside. He frowned. If he ended up finding a human burglar inside he was going to be pissed.

What he found, however, when he stepped through the doorway wasn’t human or a burglar.

It was Gaster, standing in front of the counter with a closed briefcase. The room was all but void of any furniture and it took the taller skeleton a second to realize that he wasn’t alone. He turned towards Sans, mild surprise on his face as he clicked the clasps on the briefcase closed.

“Er...hello, brother.” He said, nervously pulling at his collar. “It’s...nice to see you again.”
I figured it would be refreshing to have a chapter from Sans' perspective. I purposefully left out a lot of details back in chapter 18 to build up for this. You guys thought that Flowey made the machine huh? Nope! It was Sans all along. Flowey was just being a vague piece of shit because that's what he does. Tricked you guys huh? And heyo, Gaster's back. What's he up to I wonder? What's going to happen in the next chapter?

What's in the briefcase?? What's Gaster going to do next? Who knows??

(Me. I know. And I'd love to hear your comments about it.)
God Would Never Put Us Through All This Suffering If He Didn't Think We Could Bear It

Chapter Summary

Don't break anyone's heart, they only have one. Break their bones, they have 206.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“You probably weren't expecting to see me here.” Gaster started, pointedly avoiding Sans' gaze. “I'll be out of your hair in mere seconds.”

“i don’t have any hair.” He replied, shoving his hands in his pockets. An uncomfortable silence consumed the air around them for several seconds before they broke it.

“Sans, I-”
“listen gas-”

Gaster held a hand out “No, please. You first.”

The entire situation just radiated uncomfortable.

“listen, gaster.” Sans started, dropping his nickname to mirror the severity of the situation. “we need to talk.”

The taller skeleton’s shoulders dropped. “Yes...I expected that we would have to eventually. May I?”

Sans nodded, leaning up against the wall. “the floor’s yours.”

Gaster nodded, taking a deep breath. “I...have made many mistakes. That is quite possibly the understatement of the century, I know. I have caused countless people misfortune in the pursuit of something that, looking back on it now, was always unobtainable. The quest for power, knowledge, admiration...what I ended up losing in the search for those things was a high price that I find myself currently reluctant to pay. And though I am used to being alone, I have not until now experienced loneliness. It’s very unpleasant.” He adjusted his glasses, placing one hand on the shiny metal briefcase. Sans eyes it warily, but let him continue.

“I know how much you hate to hear me ramble so I’ll get straight to the point.”He started, taking a step back from the counter. “I'm...sorry. From the bottom of my very Soul. And no, I’m not apologizing because I was caught doing horrible things. I’m not that shallow.” He said, avoiding Sans’s eyes. “I have, through my trials and many errors, come to realize that this world is more than just finding solutions to issues, and that my method of finding those solutions only create more problems to be solved. I have learned that it is not a person’s actions that define them, but the character and conviction behind those actions, and mine, admittedly, have been...skewed. I did not think that I would grow to care about anything in
this world other than finding the absolute truth of it, but it seems as though in my attempt to find the truth I ended up becoming more of a monster than I already was.”

“you fucked up.” Sans said, pulling his hands out of his pockets and crossing his arms. “a lot.”

“I did.” Gaster agreed. “And I know that no merit of apology is going to be enough to mend the scars I’ve left. I see now that my actions and methods of working on my own are only going to hurt people, people I’ve grown to care about. They hurt you and Papyrus, they hurt Angel, they hurt Alphys. The only one I managed to do any good for is your flower friend, and even then there was a consequence to pay.”

Sans nodded. “you let flowey go. why?”

“Because I wanted to do the right thing for someone, for once.” He said, conviction in his voice. “He’s not a particularly nice someone, but if he remembers me as a helpful acquaintance instead of a traitorous nuisance, I’ll accept it.”

Sans watched Gaster’s face, judging it. He was used to Gaster’s way of working, his schemes and plots and ideas, and whether or not he was up to something. He scanned his face and saw no malice or second agenda in his words. He’d twist his own as a test and see where it led. “he said you asked him to vouch for you.”

Gaster looked mildly offended. “He offered, I did not ask him to do anything. He offered me a deal and I took it. Though, looking back on it...I wonder if I really did the right thing.”

“you did.” Sans said, stepping forward. “he popped in to vouch for you and ended up resolving a huge issue that’s been bugging the kid for a while, along with some other things.”

Gaster looked slightly concerned. “Did he mention anything specifically?”

Sans raised a browbone at him. “nothing other than that you let him go because you didn’t want him to die.”

The taller skeleton looked relieved, exhaling a controlled breath. “Yes, well. That is the truth. Though, his freedom at the cost of the only somewhat positive relationship I had left is a bit...painful.” He said, looking down in remorse. “I find myself growing fond of your friends and their quirks. It’s such a shame I will not be around to appreciate them more.”

Sans frowned at the sentence. “what do you mean ‘you won’t be around.’”

Sans watched his brother sigh dejectedly. “I’m leaving. It’s very simple. I’ve come to terms with the fact that the circumstances surrounding my chances of becoming accepted by the small group of people that I’ve started to care about are a lost cause. That’s why I’m here...to pick up the last of my things.” He said, eyeing the briefcase. “It isn’t much but, it’s mine. I suppose that counts for something.”

Sans narrowed his eyes at his brother. “what’s in the briefcase, gas?”

“Papers.” He answered him. “Old schematics for some things I never finished and that blueprint you had saved up until now. It was, technically, originally mine. I figured you wouldn’t mind parting with it considering you had no use for it.”
Sans didn’t care about any blueprints, he cared about Gaster more.

“After all, this…is what you wanted. Right?” Gaster asked, a melancholic sadness to his voice. “For me to leave your friends alone and never come back? I believe you even threatened my life.”

“i was angry.” Sans admitted, taking a step forward. “you did something shitty.”

“And now, I am paying for it. Voluntarily.” Gaster said, pulling the briefcase off of the counter and standing up just a bit straighter. “Besides. There is little reason to try to redeem myself in the eyes of people who no longer believe in me.”

“papyrus believes in you.” Sans told him, staring at him with as much determination he could muster. This is hard. Talking about feelings is hard. Why is it so hard.

Gaster smiled softly at him. “Papyrus believes in everyone.”

“yeah, so if he still believes in you then you’re not such a lost cause after all, right?” Sans said with conviction. He didn’t want Gaster to leave, but he couldn’t tell him that. He wanted to but...his own pride stopped him. He was the one who told him to leave. “i mean, you’d have to be a really shitty person for papyrus to give up on you.”

“Yes, well, Papyrus told a murderer that he believed in them while they were actively killing him. As genuinely benevolent as our little brother is, his sense of judgement is a bit skewed.” The taller skeleton said, side-eyeing Sans. “If I recall correctly, I was the one given that particular attribute.”

“yeah and look where it landed you.” Sans spat before he could stop himself, his own bitterness overthrowing the part of him that wanted to make amends. He cursed the instant it left his mouth. “shit, sorry. i didn’t mean that. I got some of that judgement too.”

“Yes, well, Papyrus told a murderer that he believed in them while they were actively killing him. As genuinely benevolent as our little brother is, his sense of judgement is a bit skewed.” The taller skeleton said, side-eyeing Sans. “If I recall correctly, I was the one given that particular attribute.”

“you don’t say.” Sans said, uncrossing his arms and putting his hands in his jacket pockets. “and uh, how long are you willing to sit through that ‘comeuppance’?”

“As long as it takes to set in.” Gaster said. Sans was unsure of who what was supposed to set in for.

That was his cue. “good, because i’ve got a lot on my chest and you’re gonna hear every word of it.”

Gaster seemed shocked at this. He probably wanted to get out of there as soon as he could.

Not happening.

“i don’t hate you, first of all.” Sans started, taking a final step forward so that he was only two feet from his brother now. “so if that’s something you’re worrying about, chuck it out the window.”

He could see the visible swell of relief in Gaster’s frame at that. A tiny smile played at the older
brother’s lips. “This room doesn’t have any windows.”

The thought that their usual roles had reversed for the conversation struck Sans immediately. He almost wanted to comment at it, but it was his turn to talk now and Gaster was going to listen. “you’re a piece of shit, you know that?” He continued. “i mean, nobody’s perfect, but you’ve successfully managed to singlehandedly fuck up every single thing you’ve ever set out to do in this world. i don’t even know how that’s possible, but you did it somehow and you brought me and everyone else i care about down with you.” He told him, hoping the words would sink in. It looks like they sunk in long before this encounter, but he wanted them to stick like gorilla glue.

“and you’re not even sorry about any of it.” Sans continued. “you’re just trying to run away from the problems you caused instead of fixing them. that’s not something a person who wants to be forgiven does. that’s something a coward who doesn’t want to take responsibility for his actions does. it’s-” Sans pause, an uncomfortable thought settling in his head. He voiced it. “....its what i did.”

The break in atmosphere hit them both and lulled into an uncomfortable silence. It took a few seconds for either of them to say anything, and Sans continued his controlled tirade.

“listen, gaster.” he started. “you haven’t been the best at anything recently. i can see that it’s starting to hit you. neither of us are really good at expressing ourselves, so in a situation like this where we don’t have anyone like papyrus to act as a mediator, it’s hard for me to say what i’m feeling without joking or covering it with a mask.”

Gaster lowered his eyelids. “I, for one, think you’re doing a phenomenal job at telling me how horrible I’ve been.”

“good, and i hope it’s getting through your thick skull.” Sans said, looking up at him. “yeah you’ve been a piece of shit and you’ve done some shitty things, but i know you better than anyone on this planet. you didn’t mean to hurt anyone. you weren’t thinking about what you were doing and were acting selfishly, but you thought you were doing something right. you’re not a bad guy, you’re just a guy that’s been doing bad things, and i don’t hate you. and i know you don’t hate me either.”

“I could never in my life, ever hate you.” Gaster defended immediately.

Sans sighed. “yeah, ‘cause everything you ever did was because you loved me, right? and you wanted me to love you back, right?”

Gaster was taken aback at his statement, mildly flustered. “How...where on earth did you get that from?”

“you, sorta.” He said, mirroring his step backwards, to give Gaster some space. “you through angel. we had a miscommunication this morning and she ended up saying something along the lines of that through the channel your mark left on her.”

Gaster brought a hand to his chin in thought. “Yes...I do remember feeling something this morning. Though, I was far too preoccupied with getting fired.”

“you can still take that off of her you know.” Sans offered, looking to the side. “the mark. she’s upstairs sleeping. i could wake her up-”

“I cannot.”

Sans paused and stared at Gaster. “what?”
“I cannot undo my mark from Angel’s Soul.” Gaster said with a hint of guilt and regret. “For starters, Marks are supposed to be virtually unbreakable. Once one is placed on the other, only a magic that is significantly stronger than the magic placed on it can break it. Depending on the monster, this can be a very difficult feat. Toriel and Asgore have not broken their mark for this specific purpose.”

Sans frowned. “tori said that she didn’t take her mark off of asgore because she still cared about him.”

“That may also be the case. But it is much more likely that they attempted to break it and failed. Their divorce was before my incarceration, so I do not know firsthand what happened between them.” Gaster explained, smirking at his brother. “And you, you tried to break Angel’s mark very recently, didn’t you?”

Sans was half surprised at the accusation. Half. “you could feel that?”

He scoffed. “Of course. What do you take me for? I felt an influx of your magic and deemed it annoying, so I rejected it. It was a minor inconvenience.”

“no shit.” Sans deadpanned. Well. That explained why they both blacked out, probably.

“Though I must say, brother, I’ve never known you to be so hasty.” Gaster chided him. “Trying to overtake a mark with your own magic that drastically. What an active move.”

“i’ve been learning to be a lot more active since you started fucking up my life.” Sans shot back at him. “but i promised her i’d talk to you and settle our differences, so that’s exactly what i’m going to do.”

“What a noble sentiment.” Gaster complimented him. “If only more people had that kind of resolve.”

“you’re sure you can’t do anything to get it off of her?”

Gaster shook his head. “I’m afraid not. Even if I tried, with the state that her Soul is in, it would be hazardous to pull it out and leave it empty once again. It is an unpredictable element and should be treated with much more care than I had given it. However, before I was evicted from the underground laboratory I volunteered a fragment of my magic to Alphys. She had asked me for it in the mention that she would work to pull my magic out of our dear Angel’s Soul with her machine.”

Sans remembered the conversation he had with Alphys. “i don’t like her plan. it’s dangerous.”

“This entire situation is dangerous.” Gaster said, stepping forward and putting a hand on Sans’ shoulder. “And I take full responsibility for it. I care about her just as much as you do. I gave her a piece of my magic with the hope that it would be the last good thing I could do for you and your friends. I believe that with her expertise, and Angel’s strong will, that everything will turn out just fine. And, if things do not and you find yourself slightly less upset at me, you can always call me back and we can work on a solution. Together.”

Sans pulled a hand out of his pocket and grabbed at Gaster’s sleeve, the severity of the situation hitting him hard. Gaster was going to leave, again. He didn’t want him to.
“please don’t go.” His voice was softer than he had intended it to be, trembling. “i don’t want to watch you leave and never come back again.”

Gaster didn’t move to pull away. “I’m sorry Sans, but I have to do this.”

“no! you don’t!” Sans said, gripping his sleeve harder. He felt himself on the verge of tears as he grabbed the front of Gaster’s turtleneck. “you don’t ‘have to’ do anything! you can stay, we can figure out solutions together right now, this week. you can come to the monster week party this saturday and talk to everyone and offer to fix things. you can sit between me and papyrus and be our older brother for the first goddamn time since you left. we can be a family again if you just stop running off on your own like you always do.” He reasoned, tears now spilling down his face. That was it, that was all the emotion he could hide and he couldn’t hide any of it anymore. He closed his eyes to kill the sting of tears. “i’m sorry i stopped paying attention to you after papyrus was born. i’m sorry i fucked up your machine just to spite you, and i’m sorry i didn’t do a better job trying to find you after everything settled down. you stayed for me once...please stay again. i don’t want to lose you a second time.”

Sans felt pathetic. All of the effort he put in to be happy about the situation shattered at the thought of Gaster actually leaving and never coming back. Yeah, he yelled at him and told him to, but he was angry. He didn’t actually want to never see him again. All this time he’d been working to keep everything together and it was crumbling in front of him anyway. He sobbed into Gaster’s stupid black turtleneck and barely registered it when the taller skeleton put down his briefcase, and wrapped his arms around him.

“I’m sorry I left.” He said, putting one hand on Sans’ head as he tried to sniff up his tears. “I should have never done that to you, and I was wrong to put that kind of responsibility on your shoulders without asking you about it beforehand. And, I’m sorry for all of the trouble I caused afterwards by acting first. I should have consulted you before making any rash decisions. This is, after all, your world.”

Sans felt awful. He felt like a little kid all over again, crying to his big brother to stay. He hated that feeling. He looked up at him. “you’re a part of that world too, gas.”

Gaster shook his head. “I was never meant to be a part of this world. Another world, perhaps, but not this one.”

“where are you going to go?” Sans asked him. He didn’t want to let him go as the elder brother pulled away. He kept his grip on his sleeve as he reached down to pick up his briefcase. “you don’t have anywhere else.”

“On the contrary, brother dear. I do have one place I can go.” Gaster told him with a poor attempt to tug his sleeve from Sans’ grip. He didn’t want to leave either. “And, who knows. Perhaps when I get there it will feel like home.”

“you don’t have to go.” Sans fought him, softly. The hand he had his grip on for the past minute moved to cup his cheek and he felt like he was going to vomit from the pressure of the situation. He hated this so much.

“No. I don’t.” He said, wiping at one of Sans’ tears. “But, I need some time on my own to think. I need to separate myself from things and clear my head. I want a break. Surely you of all people can understand that?”

Sans could understand it, but that didn’t mean he had to like it. “are you gonna be coming back?”
He looked to the side, avoiding Sans’ eyes. “I don’t know.” He started. “But if I do not and you absolutely need me, you can ask your little flower friend to come and get me. He knows where everyone always is.”

“you should get a cell phone.” Sans offered as Gaster pulled back his hand from his face. “it would be a lot easier to reach you.”

“You would be the only number in my contact book.” he said with a smile. Sans found himself smiling with him, halfheartedly. Gaster put a hand on Sans’ shoulder. “Please take care of yourself.”

“in case you haven’t noticed, i’m kind of notoriously bad at that.” Sans shrugged back, eyeing the briefcase. It dawned on him that it looked a bit wider than a briefcase that just held papers. “don’t do anything stupid.”

Gaster took his hand from his shoulder and adjusted his glasses with it. “What a preposterous sentiment. I am a genius, after all.”

The room was quiet for several very awkward and tense seconds. Neither of them wanted to move.

“Well.” Gaster said, clearing his throat. “I’m glad we had this time to talk, but I should be going.”

“yeah.” Sans said as Gaster nervously shuffled past him. He didn’t turn to watch him go. He couldn’t stomach watching him leave again. He had to be strong for this.

His facade broke immediately at the sound of the door closing behind him and he fell to his knees and cried.

Chapter End Notes

Remember that chapter where I said 'if you at any point yelled at the screen you have to leave a comment?’

Well, if at any point you cried at this scene, you have to leave a comment.. Or just, comment if you felt anything. This chapter was a long time coming.
A Person Can Change At The Moment When The Person Wishes To Change.

Chapter Summary

Love is good. It changes people, for better or for worse. You could look at it as a chance for you to change. The best kind of love helps you grow up.

Chapter Notes

Two chapters in two days? I'm getting back in my groove!

Even though this chapter's short.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The first thing you felt when you woke to the darkness was an immeasurable sadness. You clutched your chest and stared at the wall across from your bed as you felt your eyes water for a reason you couldn't place. Why were you crying? Was it because of a nightmare? What kind of nightmare would make you cry? Did you kill Sans again?

Sans

You looked to your right and found him gone. Normally he watched you sleep, just in case any flashbacks jolted you awake, but he wasn’t anywhere in the room. You were certain you didn’t feel a flashback. It didn’t feel like a flashback, but it did feel familiar. It was a pain you’ve felt before and you couldn’t recognize it and the tears weren’t stopping. You swung your legs over the side of the bed, wiping at your face. You had to stop them. What time was it? Three am? Why did weird shit always have to happen at like, three am. You frowned and sniffled. You were getting sick of this.

You pushed yourself off of the mattress, a chill going through you. Why you had opted to sleep in a night shirt and your underwear at this time of year was beyond you. You reasoned that it was warmer under the blanket. Taking steps towards the bedroom door you opened it, rubbing at your eyes to try to get the most of the wet off of your face. You were so sick of crying for no reason.

“Sans?” You half-whispered to the rest of the house, voice sore and raw from sleep. You listened for a noise or sound of affirmation from your spot on the balcony and grew worried when nothing echoed back to you. The house at night was surprisingly silent. You knew for a fact that Papyrus was sleeping. It took a while for you and Sans to introduce the concept of it to him, since he ‘wasn’t so busy all the time anymore’. You frowned and walked down the steps carefully, eyes already adjusted to the dark of the house. Some small panic started to build inside your chest. Sans normally didn’t leave the house at night, it was too much effort to go for a walk when he could just fall asleep on the couch. When the said sofa was empty of any particular skeleton to speak of, you tried the kitchen, which yielded no luck aside from a lukewarm coffee cup and a quickly cooling coffee pot.

This wasn’t like him. He didn’t disappear in the middle of the night. Or did he? You weren’t really
awake most nights to know what he did. Still, the fact that he was gone and that you had woke up so upset was troubling. Where could he have gone this late at night? Could he have teleported back to waterfall? You hoped not. That was way too long a walk for you to make again.

To answer your silent prayers, the front door opened to reveal your missing skeleton boyfriend looking nearly deflated. You power-walked over to him and he seemed shocked to see you out of bed.

You take his face in your hands in concern. “Sans? Is everything okay?”

He doesn’t look alright, and you don’t believe him when he nods and places one of his hands over yours. “Yeah. everything’s…fine. have you been crying?”

You were hoping he wouldn’t be able to register your face as well in the dark, but he did anyway. “Yeah it’s…I woke up and I was just, sad. I don’t think it was a nightmare.” You tell him, noting the top of his shirt and how his face seemed to be slightly wet. “Have you been crying?”

“Yeah.” He said, not even bothering to mask it. You could feel the tug of his emotions at your Soul and pulled him inside the house, shutting the door to keep the cold out. You guided him over to the couch and layed down on it, letting him drape himself over you. It didn’t look like he wanted to elaborate on it. It didn’t look like he wanted to do anything other than lay there and let you run soothing circles on his skull with your thumb. He felt heavier than he normally did, like he was allowing gravity to pull all of himself down and he refused to fight it.

You needed to know what happened to make him like this.

“Do you want to talk about it?” You ask him softly as his hand tightens in your night shirt.

“no, but i’m gonna anyway.” He said. You smiled. He’d made it a point to be more open about things in your relationship and it made you happy that he was putting in that kind of effort. Neither of you were really good at the whole relationship thing and being affectionate. This was the most you normally got. It looked so much easier on tv.

“What happened?”

“gaster left.”

You raised an eyebrow. Gaster left a while ago. An entire week ago. “Gaster’s been gone for a while hun. You told him to leave, remember?”

He shook his head. “he came back to pick up some stuff a few minutes ago.” he told you, pausing a bit. “....we had a talk.”

Oh. *OH*. You squeezed his shoulder, that must have been hard for him. For him to come back like this...it must not have gone very well.

“How did it go?” You ask anyway. You want to hear it from his mouth, to know how you can make him feel better.

Sans shifted. He didn’t want to talk about it. He didn’t want to do anything but pretend to sink into you and the couch, it seemed. “i apologized for being a shitty brother and he apologized for fucking things up.”

You give him a small smile that he doesn’t lift his head to see. He’s too busy staring off at nothing, his pupils dim lights in his sockets. “You two must have really needed that.”
He nodded. “yeah….”

You didn’t know what else to say so you opted to hold him, rubbing your hand up and down his arm as you hummed a song you heard on the radio the other day softly in his ear. Well...where his ear would be if he had any. After a few seconds he seemed to notice your humming and looked up at you.

“nice song. where’d you hear it?”

“Radio.” You tell him. “They were playing it last week and it made me think of you.”

He smiled. There was a tiredness to it, but it was genuine. “i wanna hear the whole thing.”

“I don’t know the lyrics yet.” You confess. This isn’t about the song though, this is about him, and you want to redirect it but you don’t want to take his smile from him. “I’ll learn them and then I’ll sing it to you.”

He re-nestles his head in your shoulder. “sounds like a plan.”

You continue to hum to him until you forget what comes next in the song. You’ll definitely look it up later. “I’m sorry you had to watch him leave again.” You try to comfort him, leaning your cheek against the top of his skull. “Do you know if he’s going to come back?”

“No.” Sans shook his head at the word. “he said if we ever really need him that we can send flowey after him. since...y’know.”

“Yeah yeah.” You nod too. It’s not a horrible idea, but it’s not one you really wanted to opt for. Flowey was beginning to be much more helpful than he ever had been, but having to rely on him as a lifeline made you uneasy. “Gaster needs a cell phone.”

Sans chuckled once, his shoulders rising and falling quickly with the action. “funny. that’s what i told him.”

“And his answer?”

“that i’d be the only one in his contact list.” He said, moving his head slightly to roll his eyes. “i asked him about getting his mark off of you too. apparently marks can only be broken by monsters with stronger magic than whoever put the mark on them so, that’s why we both blacked out yesterday.”

“Huh. That makes sense.” You say, tilting your head. “Wait. Isn’t your magic stronger than his? Didn’t he get his magic from you?”

Sans blinked and then moved to look up at you, the realization hitting him. “my magic is stronger than his.”

You stared at each other for a second before your furrowed your eyebrows in resolve.

“Sans.” You look him in the eyes as he sits up on the couch “Pull out my Soul.”

His eyes shifted down to your chest and then back up to your face. “you sure?”

“Yes.” You say firmly and brace yourself for it, straightening your back and closing your eyes.

You couldn’t see Sans nod, but you definitely felt it when he put his hand over your chest and gently pulled your Soul out of you. You expected it to look the same as it did the last time he had
pulled it out. Clear, but with some sparks of yellow magic floating inside it. But if Sans’ magic was stronger than Gaster’s, then that would mean the magic inside of it would be blue, right?

Your thoughts on the matter are thrown out the window when you hear him mutter an awestruck ‘holy shit’ and open your eyes to see why.

Indeed your Soul had changed. There was certainly no more yellow magic swirling around inside of it. Or, at least you thought there wasn’t. You couldn’t tell, since the heart-shaped container Sans was holding wasn’t crystal clear anymore.

It was gold.

Chapter End Notes

Bet you didn't see that coming, did ya?
The World Isn’t As Bad As You Think

Chapter Summary

I don't think anyone is born with a reason to live. It's something you have to find for yourself.

Chapter Notes

There is absolutely no reason why I couldn't have combined this chapter with the last one other than that I just didn't want to.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Ohmygod.” You stare at the bright, shimmering Soul in front of you. Your Soul. “Ohmygod!!!”

“what the fuck.” Sans stared at it too, mesmerized by it. Every time he's stared at it he seemed mesmerized by it, but he literally could not take his eyes off of it now. “how.”

“I don’t know??” You say, hardly believing it. “I mean, I think I should know but I don’t?? What does Gold mean??”

“i don’t know.” He said, pulling your Soul a bit closer to his chest. “it’s so warm....”

“I need to google this.” You stand up from the couch, heading upstairs to your phone. You didn’t know what gold meant. Your soul couldn’t be gold, right? Gold was like...gold. You weren’t good enough for a gold Soul, right??

You exit the bedroom and carefully walk down the steps, typing ‘what does the color gold mean’ into the search bar and waiting for it to pop up. You steal a glance at Sans whose eyes haven’t left the shining heart since you raced upstairs. You sit down next to him and wait for the website to load on your browser.

“The color gold is the color of extravagance, wealth, riches, and excess, and shares several of the same attributes of the color yellow” You start, listing off the site. “It is cousin to the color yellow and the color brown, and is also associated with illumination, love, compassion, courage, passion, magic, and wisdom. I thought Orange was courage?”

“orange is bravery.” Sans corrected you, feeling the weight of your Soul in his hands. “how did this happen? I thought…”

“I thought too, but apparently we don’t know what we’re thinking about.” You sat, staring at your own Soul. “Sans did you...did you break Gaster’s mark?”

He finally tore his eyes away from the gold heart to look at you. “uh...probably? i don’t know? i mean....i could have? i don’t know how marks work, i’ve never done anything like that before. And watching it spark was sort of weird.”
“Spark?” You raise an eyebrow. “What spark?”

He shifted his eyes to the side. Clearly there was something he wasn’t telling you. “uh...okay so....i didn’t tell you because I didn’t want you to freak out but uh, after you passed out and fell forward there was this spark between our souls, because they got too close to each other.” He started, the golden glow bouncing off of his face and illuminating the shadows in his skull. “i didn’t think anything of it at the time, until i blacked out too and we both woke up, but there’s a chance that the combination of magic from my soul and my...well...me...could have overpowered gaster’s magic and broke his mark. probably.”

"That’s…that’s something you probably should have told me beforehand. I feel like I should be mad at you for hiding that information from me, but I suppose it worked out so I’m not really upset.” You both stare at it in silence for a second before you reach your hands out. “Hand it over.”

He nods and hands it to you. It’s cool to the touch but radiates warmth from somewhere deep inside. Holding it in front of you and feeling it yourself, there’s no doubt that this was your Soul. It resonated with you, pulsing out a soothing glow. All the hardship you endured, the resets, the possession, the emptiness and self-loathing, it was all a test that led up to this answer. Pulling it towards you and hugging it, you realized that it wasn’t too good for you, a gold Soul. You swore to yourself a long time ago that you were going to make things right, and that’s what you stood for. You lit the way for Monsterkind to walk the earth freely. You poured all of your love and compassion into your friends and made it a point to help them all be happy. You faced your issues with the courage that you would redeem yourself. You gained wisdom from your struggles and ventures, and the magic between you and Sans had broken Gaster’s mark, giving you back your chance to finally discover that yes, this Soul was yours, and you earned it.

Coming to terms with it was enough to make you cry. You were okay with it this time.

“shit.” Sans said, scooting closer to you and brushing a hair out of your face. “angel, are you alright?”

You nod at him and smile through the tears, still hugging your own Soul to your chest. “y-yeah, I just...I don’t deserve it. It’s just...It’s not perfect but I can’t believe it.”

You weren’t making any sense to yourself, or him probably, but he smiled all the same, taking your face in his hands. “it is perfect. you’re perfect. it’s the most beautiful thing i’ve ever seen in my life.”

You smiled and chuckled at him. “I thought that 2 liter bottle of ketchup was the most beautiful thing you’ve ever seen in your life.”

He shrugged. “it’s a close second. but you’re definitely first. how are you feeling?”

“Better.” You say, looking down at the heart. It was bright enough to light up the dark living room with no problems, but not bright enough for you to have to shield your eyes while looking at it. “I feel like...whole. Like everything’s gonna finally start to be okay. I feel...solid. If that makes any sense.”

“it makes perfect sense.” Sans said, taking his hands off his face and holding them over yours. “wait ‘till i tell alphys this. she’s gonna flip.”

“Hopefully she won’t have a heart attack.” You giggle. He beams at you. In this moment, things are good. You’re happy. Happier than you’ve been in a long time.
You’re both startled at the sound of a door opening and turn to look upstairs.

“IT IS VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING.” Papyrus said, rubbing his eye sockets with one hand. “SOME OF US ARE TRYING TO SLEEP.”

The irony of his statement wasn’t lost on you and you found yourself giggling again. Sans snickered beside you and your combined amusement pulled him out of his apparent sleepiness to focus on you completely. Or, more importantly, focus on what you were holding. He stared down at you and Sans with a look of confusion.

“What is that?”

“It’s my Soul!!” You exclaim as you stand up from the couch and hold it out so he can see it better, excitement bubbling in you like a twelve year old in a puppy pit. Once the words register his eyes go wide and his grin nearly splits his face.

“Oh my god!!”

He immediately ran the length of the balcony and nearly tripped as he cleared the steps in two bounds. His face is nothing but glee as he too takes in the radiant gold of your Soul.

“This is incredible!!” He exclaims, grabbing on to your shoulders. “I thought your soul was empty, but it is not! It is very full! of a color I have never seen before! Wowie!!”

“Yeah! It’s...weird.” You stared down at it with him. “I mean, I’m really happy, and it’s....beautiful. Way too beautiful for someone like me. I don’t really know what to think.”

“Well, you are apparently thinking a lot.” He said, letting go of your shoulders and crossing his arms. “Because if your soul has a color, that means you know what you are living for now! Or, at the very least, what it is filled with.”

You cradle the heart in your arms. “Yeah but...I still don’t really feel like I’m filled with anything. Or that I’m really living for anything either. I don’t feel like I deserve something like a golden soul. Gold is supposed to be like...perfect. I’m not perfect.”

“You were never trying to be perfect.” Sans tells you, getting up from the couch to stand next to his brother. “you were just trying to be good, maybe even great. I dunno what gold stands for but, I think you earned whatever it is all on your own.”

You shook your head and hugged it. “No...I was never alone. I had all of you. I worked hard for everyone, even Gaster.”

“And you will continue to have us, for the rest of your life.” Papyrus said, beaming down at you. Sans was smiling in-kind.

“A person who lives for their friends, huh?” He said, shoving his hands in his pockets and winking at you. “sounds like that heart of gold is just perfect for you.”

You look down at it, it’s radiant glow bouncing off of your arms. “You think?”

“Of course!” Papyrus said, striking a rather valiant pose. “After all, there is nothing more noble than to fight for one’s friends.”
“Noble, huh?” You look back and forth between them and your Soul. “Nobility. Yeah. That sounds right. A Noble Soul. I’m okay with that. I feel like that fits”

“well it would suck if it didn’t.” Sans said, shrugging “you’d be missing a golden opportunity.”

You snort at the brilliantly times joke. Papyrus’s external groan only fuels your giggles.

“BROTHER THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT REALIZATION FOR ANGEL. PLEASE DO NOT MAKE A JOKE OF THE SITUATION.”

Sans chuckled. “right right. guess I should keep all of my dialogue light-hearted.”

You could see Papyrus smiling, but he was trying very hard to fight it. “WHY MUST YOU DO THIS TO ME.”

You giggle and set to repossessing your Soul back into your body. It was nice to look at, but having it out for that long was a bit draining. “Sorry Papyrus, but you know how he is. Once he gets going there’s not a Soul that can stop him.”

Yours and Sans’ combined snickers almost overpower the taller skeleton’s clearly disappointed grumble.

“You are both terrible. Terribly perfect for each other.” He said, turning around to climb back up the stairs. “I am going back to sleep, and we will celebrate this brilliant discovery tomorrow, when neither of you are full of awful jokes.”

“I don’t know, Pap.” You say, leaning on Sans as he wraps an arm around your waist. “I don’t think we have the heart to spare.”

His frustrated but still amused noise of frustration is drowned out by your laughter as he shuts the bedroom door behind him. You sigh and Sans shifts beside you.

“he’s right you know, it is really late. early. Early-late.”

“Yeah. I’m not sure I can sleep really, after all that.” You tell him.

He moves to wrap his other arm tightly around your waist. “guess i’ll just have to bring you to bed with me.”

He winks at you and within seconds you’ve moved from standing in the living room, to lying down on your bed in Sans’ arms. You land with an ‘oof’ and chuckle, pulling the blanket up over both of you.

“Guess there’s no room to argue.”

“not even an inch.” He says, pulling you to him. “nobility huh? that’s a new one.”

“But a good one.” You tell him, kissing his jaw. “It feels good. It feels...right. I’m a little less nervous of it now.”

“good, and we can celebrate later when it’s not four in the morning.” His eyes slowly drift closed and you take pride in watching his smile shift into something natural, something real. You nodded and closed your own, the last thought drifting through your mind that maybe, finally, things were starting to look up.
I'm a sucker for happy endings.
I'm also a sucker for building stuff up before it all comes crashing down.
Enjoy this little victory while you have it.

And leave a comment and kudos, if you would.
“So, why does your Soul have a color to it?”

You were finishing up your first shift when Sans walked in to surprise you at work. He brought takeout from Grillbys for you, much to the chagrin of your manager. You, however, were thankful for the food. You hadn’t eaten anything at Grillbys since the new year and a part of your forgot what his burgers tasted like. Monster food always tasted so much better than human food did most of the time. You chalked it up to the fact that monster food was made to energize, where human food was just...made.

Your question caught him off guard and he stared at you for a few seconds, ketchup bottle inches from his mouth. You knew he didn’t like to talk about himself. He never told anybody anything about himself unless he really had to, but you still had so many questions for him. So many questions and so little time. Lunch was always the time you would ask them. He seemed a little bit more at ease when he was eating with you.

“I mean...monsters don’t have strong Souls. Or Souls with colors at all.” You clarify, popping a french fry in your mouth. “But yours is blue, and Gaster’s is yellow. Does Papyrus’s Soul have a color too?”

“yeah, he does.” He says after a second, returning the bottle to his mouth. “it’s complicated, but it basically boils down to the fact that things were different in the other universe.”

“Different how?” You say, taking a bite of your Grillburger.

He shrugged. “humans and monsters have been coexisting for centuries where i came from. somewhere down the line monster and human relationships became a thing and people started forming families. markings and magic transfers between monsters and humans became common, and monster kids were born with physical forms and combined souls from their parents magic. there’s a lot of science behind it too, but explaining it is way too much effort.”

You swallow and wipe the side of your mouth with your hand, resting your chin on it. “Do you miss it?”

“sorta.” He said, putting the ketchup bottle down. “it was alright. i had a cool job, cool friends, cool benefits. the world worked differently on the other side. here, it’s kinda like a hundred steps backwards. sometimes i forget that monsters and humans haven’t always been on the surface here.”

You look down at your burger, unsure of how to reply. You never really thought of how Sans must feel half the time, living in a completely different world than what he was used to. Two years might seem like a short amount of time for him. You weren’t even sure how old he really was anyway.
Living in a world that was just adjusting to monsters, instead of one where they’ve been coexisting for generations. Having memories of a place that doesn’t exist anymore, and having to hold it all up inside because you have nobody around to talk to about it.

Being trapped in a state like that for so long must feel like hell.

“Hey.” He nudges you with his foot under the table and you look up at him. His standard smile puts you a bit at ease. “Don’t get sad over something you’ve got no control over.”

You pick your burger back up. “Yeah. Sorry...I just-”

“No, you don’t. You don’t ‘just’ anything. It’s not a bad thing, so don’t sweat it.” He nudged you again, pulling what you assume is a tinfoil wrapped hotdog out of the Grillby’s bag. “I mean, it’s not the wurst thing to happen to me. After all, if I didn’t come here I wouldn’t’ve met you.”

You smile at him and nudge his foot back. “Nerd.”

You’re both startled when one of your human coworkers, Shae, rounds the corner to your table, tapping you frantically on the shoulder.

“She’s on! C’mon!” She told you, whisking back around the corner. Sans looked at you quizzically, opening the tinfoil on the ‘dog and taking a bite.

“Who’s on what?”

“Catty.” You elaborate, wrapping up your burger in it’s own tinfoil. “She’s a host here, remember?”

“Oh yeah.” He watched you exit the booth. “What’s she on?”

“TV.” You say, pulling at his arm and grabbing your foiled burger off the table. “She doesn’t work Fridays because she runs ‘Super Chatty’ on Fridays.”

He raised a brow bone and followed you towards the bar. “Super what?”

You rolled your eyes. “You don’t watch a lot of TV, do you?”

“Nope.” He grins at you.

You both grab seats at the bar top, surrounded by several of your other coworkers, humans and monsters alike. That was the one thing you liked about working at Benjamins. They were one of the first restaurants in your town that was more than accepting of monster applicants. The bartender, a tall black and gold metallic monster affectionately nicknamed Boone by the wait-staff, fiddled with the channels until it landed on a bright pink screen. You unwrap your burger and settle in for the show on your stool.

The pink screen runs through a colourful and bubbly opening sequence where the words ‘Super Chatty’ flash in bright colors on the screen before switching scenes. Within seconds you see Bratty and Catty at their usual posts behind their reporters podium, a big SC on the large television screen behind them. Catty had on a different set of suspenders this time. Black ones with pink fur on the straps and a pink shirt underneath. She had a pink beanie on her head with little holes cut out of it for her ears. A nod to Mettaton, you guessed. Bratty’s poncho was also black with pink accents and her hair was pulled back into a curly ponytail. They always seemed to perfectly compliment each other. Catty waved one paw in the air.
“Helllllllooooo everybody! I’m Catty!”

“And I’m Bratty.”

“And we’re-”

“SUPER CHATTY!”

“Super Chatty!”

“And we’re sooo super chatty today, right Bratty?”

“Well yeah, ‘cause there’s so much going on this week.”

Catty was practically jumping up and down in her seat “Yeah, ‘cause it’s MONSTER WEEK!”

“The best week for monsters.” Bratty added, waving a hand.

“How long have they been doing this show?” Sans asked from beside you, apparently already finished with his ‘dog.

You shrug. “I dunno, a while?”

“huh.” He said, turning back to the screen. “I’ll have to ask them about it at the party.”

“Guess we’ll start from the beginning of the week then.” Bratty said, pulling several pieces of paper out from behind the counter. “I made this schedule to help keep us on track.”

Bratty beamed at her. “Ohhhhh, that’s like, a really good idea.”

“I know right?” Bratty cleared her throat and put the schedule down on the table. “First thing’s first, Mettaton had a huuuuge concert this Monday.”

Catty lit up as the blank TV screen behind her showed a picture of Mettaton on the red carpet, waving to the crowd. “OH MAN THAT’S RIGHT!!! He looked so good!! I wish I could’ve gone but like, I had to work”

“I had work too.” Bratty consoled her. “Why do girls as cute as us have to like, do so much work?”

“I dunno, but getting money is pretty great.” Catty told her. “But some of our friends went to the concert and they recorded, like, EVERYTHING.”

On cue, the picture behind them switched over to a video stream of Frisk and Papyrus stepping out of the limousine in their new outfits. Mettaton walked over to Papyrus and practically hung off of his arm. It was strange to you, watching something happen from a different angle when you were there in person.

You blinked and turned to Sans. “Where did they get this footage? Why is it so HD?”

He furrowed his brow. “i dunno, but I have a weird feeling about this.”

Catty lit up at the camera, her tail flailing happily behind her. There must have been a second screen behind the camera, out of sight. “OHMYGOD!! Bratty we know them!!!”

“Ohmygod, yeah we do.” Bratty said, equally as excited but much better at controlling it. “That’s
Frisk and Papyrus, for anybody keeping track at home. Frisk is the human kid responsible for like, the liberation of all of monsterkind.”

“Yeah they bought junk food from us once like two years ago!” Catty said, bouncing in her seat. “Papyrus is like, the head of Asgore’s Royal Guard, but he’s the only member of it and he doesn’t really do anything?? He like, waters flowers and makes a lot of burned spaghetti, but he’s like soooooo nice! He and his brother are like, wicked strong though.” Catty said, waving a paw at the air “They also like, show up at my work sometimes with his brother to eat food and hang with one of our servers. I see them alllll the time.”

Some mild anxiety bubbled in you at the vague mention of who you could only assume was yourself. Things were going in a weird direction.

“Yeah Papyrus is a huge goober, but he wasn’t the only one hanging out with Mettaton, right?” Bratty said, probably also watching Mettaton on the probably hidden screen. The picture changed to a video shot of the limo as Papyrus exited it, leaving you and Sans in the shot through the open doorway and pausing on it.

“Oh no.” You whispered, mortified as half of your co workers turned to look at you and Sans. “They’re not gonna.”

“They are gonna.” Sans said, equally horrified as he stared at the screen.

You both knew what was coming.

“Oh. My. GOOOOOOOOD.” Catty screamed, literally jumping out of her seat. “I KNOW HER! I WORK WITH HER! THAT’S ANGEL AND SANS!!”

“Who?” Bratty asked her, leaning out of the way of her fluffy friend’s excited outburst.

“Ohmygod, you know Sans. Short skeleton guy, Papyrus’s brother?” Catty said, taking her seat again with a wide smile plastered on her face. “He used to like, do shows at the comedy club back in the Underground and used to trade hotdogs and glamburgers with us a reeeeally long time ago. I think he does Waterfall tours now but I only see him when he comes in to bother Angel so I haven’t asked? But she never told me she knew Mettaton either!!” Catty said, glaring at the camera. “Angel!! Why didn’t you get me Mettaton’s autograph!!!”

Bratty giggled behind her hand. “How do you even know if she’s watching us right now?”

“She was scheduled today, of course she’s watching.” Catty said, still lightheartedly glaring at the camera “Sans is probably with her too. They’re like, totally in love with each other.”

You glance over at Sans and see this his eye sockets are dark. Having Catty basically telling the whole world about him on TV is probably the exact opposite of what he wanted to happen today.

Come to think of it, it’s the exact opposite of what you wanted to happen today too.

You fished out your phone from your apron, nervous at the looks of your fellow coworkers. Most of them were smirking.

“I’m stopping this, right now.” You said to no one in particular, looking up Catty’s number in your contacts list and hitting the dial button. You put it to your ear and watched the TV screen, praying to whatever gods existed that she had her phone on her.

You didn’t have to pray that hard. She always had her phone on her. It got confiscated at work.
nearly ten times by now.

You watched on the screen as a muffled Catsong ringtone broke Catty out of her miffed tirade. She pulled the phone out from somewhere behind their podium and stars lit up in her eyes once she registered the caller ID.

“I was totally right!!” She said, excitedly showing Bratty her phone. “She’s totally watching right now! Ohmygod, I’m putting her on speaker.”

“Wonderful.” You mumble sarcastically as you watch Catty pick up, placing the phone down on the tabletop. “Hello?”

“ANGEL!!” Catty cried happily, leaning on the table with her elbows. “You’re like, totally live right now!”

“I know. I’m watching.” It was weird, watching this happen in real time. There was a delay between the words you spoke and when they came through the receiver on the other end.

Catty had no curb to her enthusiasm. “That’s so cool! I knew you would be. Everyone at work is watching right now, right? Like, hi everyone!”

“She’s really excited.” Bratty tried to remedy towards the camera. She was talking to it and the phone at the same time, so it seemed. “We don’t get a lot of callers on the show. Especially not ones with such juicy gossip.”

“Yeah, that’s what I’m calling about.” You said, nervously looking at Sans. The lights in his eyes returned and he was looking between you and the screen apprehensively. “If it’s alright with you girls, could you maybe not start spreading mine and Sans’ dirty laundry on national television? I’d appreciate it a lot.”

Several of your co workers were snickering at the situation. A few seemed to be unhappy that you were trying to stop the girls’ fun. You didn’t care. You didn’t want to be in the spotlight. Neither did Sans.

“Oh man but like, you’ve got the best gossip this week though.” Catty said, sitting back in her chair and counting off her fingers. “You’re totally dating Sans and live with him, You’re really good friends with the queen and Mettaton. You’re like, sitting at their table at the big Monster Party tomorrow. You even changed your name because you were like, named after The Queen’s dead human kid or something? You came out of like nowhere and now you’re this really important person and nobody knows why. It’s like, the best kind of story we could tell!”

“Catty please stop talking.” You say, bringing a hand to your face in absolute mortification. “Listen, I know that i’m interesting and you basically just told my entire life story to everyone watching TV right now, but from this point forward can you just...not? I’m asking this as a friend. Sans and I don’t want our stories out there for everyone to know. He’s not really happy with this either.”

Catty’s ears perked up at his mention. “Oh man, is Sans there too? I knew it! Hi Sans!”

You took a deep breath and handed your cell phone over to your boyfriend. You earned a playful nudge in the side from Shae and put your head in your arms on the bartop.

“yeah, i’m gonna have to ask you to stop talking about us too.” Sans said into your phone. You gave up watching the screen, but you could still hear Bratty’s reply. “i don’t want my business out there and neither does she.”
Catty didn’t sound too happy about the reprimand. “Awwww, but you guys are like, soooo cute together. And you’re both like, really interesting.”

Sans wasn’t having any of it “yeah well, our business is our business, capiche?”

Bratty was the one to reply this time “Okay fine, we’ll stop talking about you. But like, is your brother dating Mettaton or what? I’m asking for professional reasons.”

“i’m gonna hang up now.” He said, wasting no time in hitting the end call button. You felt the corner of it being nudged into your arm and you looked up from your slump, grabbing it and putting it back into the pouch of your apron.

Catty frowned as she watched her phone screen switch from the active call to an ended one. She grabbed the phone and put it back behind the counter “Fine, guess we’ll see you tomorrow at the party and ask him ourselves! We have a show to run anyway, right Bratty?”

“Absolutely right Catty.” Her tall reptilian best friend replied, unshaken by the sudden hang up. “We’ve got commercials too. But after those, Temmie’s all around the world are going off to College. Where did they get the money for it? More in like, five minutes.”

You have never been more thankful for a commercial break in your entire life. You let out a long frustrated groan and turned to Sans.

“How much damage control am I going to have to do now?”

He shrugged “hopefully not a lot. i doubt that many people were watching.”

“Their show broadcasts to everyone in the Underground.” You tell him, “It’s probably the most popular Monster Show on TV right now.”

“i’m uninviting both of them from the party tomorrow.” He said, half-jokingly. You were almost convinced.

You jumped as Shae’s arms wrapped around both yours and Sans’ necks. “‘They’re so totally cute and like, totally in love with each other!’” She said in a nearly accurate rendition of Catty’s voice. “You two are lucky everyone here is so chill about your relationship. Not everyone’s as accepting about it as we are”

“Speak for yourself.” Another one of the servers piped up from across the bar. Troy, was his name. He ran a hand through his duckbutt haircut. “A relationship with a monster? How does that even work? He’s a fucking skeleton. It’s practically necrophilia.”

Sans’ smile shifted into what you knew from experience was anger. You glared back at him and was about to tell him to fuck off, but Shae was the one to speak up on your behalf.

“Chill fuckboi. At least they have a stable relationship. What are you on, your third girlfriend since you started here? And you’ve only been here for two months?”

He turned red at the comment and several other coworkers sniggered at him. He slammed a hand down on the countertop and left out the side of the bar, glares from the surrounding human and monsters in uniform following him. That was uncalled for.

“The hell are all of you standing around the bar for?” An irate voice asked from behind you. You turned to see your GM, arms crossed and face cross. “Get back to work, all of you. We’ve got a restaurant to run. And you.” He said, looking down at you. “Clock out. Your replacement’s here.”
“I’ve been clocked.” You reassure him as the rest of your co workers dispersed back to their sections. Shae stayed by your side, removing her arms from your shoulders.

“Hey Dave,” She started, taking a step towards him “Can I talk to you in the office real quick? It’s about another employee.”

He looked between the two of you and uncrossed his arms. “Yeah sure. Oh and shorty, you have a visitor up front.”

“A visitor?” You ask, swiveling around in your chair. Your manager doesn’t elaborate as he walks off with Shae in tow. She was more than likely going to tell him about Troy. Good for her. You’ll complain about him later. Sans turns to you.

“your manager calls you ‘shorty’?” He asks, raising a brow.

“It’s an inside joke that I’m the shortest person in the restaurant.” You tell him, hopping off of your seat. “I’m smaller than nearly everyone except Catty.”

He smirks. “nah, you’re still smaller than catty.”

“Wow rude.” You nudge him and he chuckles, following you around the corner to see whatever visitor was waiting for you at the front. It was far too quiet for it to be Papyrus or Undyne, and your manager seemed pretty chill, so it couldn’t have been Toriel or Asgore.

You were surprised to round the corner and see Chi, calmly sitting on one of the waiting benches with her legs crossed. She had on a different outfit than the last time you saw her. Last time you saw her she was wearing a wide poncho-esque dress. This time her outfit resembled that of a summer dress, separated by a black belt in the middle. It was the same color purple as the first dress you saw her in, and the symbol that had adorned the front of her old dress had been turned into a belt buckle. She had no hat this time, two grey pigtails the same color as her skin taking its place. You didn’t remember whether or not she had hair the last time you saw her. It must have been hidden under her hat.

She perked up when she saw the two of you, quickly rising off of the bench into the air as you approached.

“Hello again Miss Angel. Mister Sans.” She gracefully curtsied in the air towards the both of you. “I hope I’m not interrupting anything important.”

You smile at her. “No you’re fine. It’s good to see you again.”

“Likewise” She said, hovering enough off of the ground to meet you and Sans at eye level. She seemed nervous, but smiled back all the same. “I hope it’s not too forward of me to visit you at your workplace. I went to the address that Mettaton gave me, which was your house I assume, but I was told by the other skeleton that the two of you weren’t home and that you had departed for your work.”

“oh yeah, you were working on our clothes for tomorrow.” Sans realized, shoving his hands in his jacket pockets. “since you’re here, does that mean they’re done?”

She clapped her hands together. “Oh, yes! Well...Yes and no..” She said, dropping a few inches in the air. “I have...most of it done. The outfits are done but, I’ll need to do a final fitting to make sure they’re actually complete and that you’re both satisfied. I left them all at your house with Papyrus, but if you’re in the middle of your job right now I can come back later.”
“No, actually I just got off.” You tell her, looking back to the bar. Bratty and Catty were back on the screen and you prayed internally that they had kept to their word and weren't talking about you. “We were planning on leaving anyway.”

She beamed at the two of you. “Wonderful! Well then, if you don’t mind I’d like to get started as soon as possible. So I can have time to make any alterations if I have to before tomorrow.”

You reach around yourself to untie your apron and turn to Sans. “Sounds good. Should we teleport home?”

Chi tilted her head at you. “Teleport?”

“Yeah he can teleport.” You say nonchalantly. “It’s normally how I get home from work nowadays.”

“it’s not that big a deal.” He shrugged at Chi’s near shocked expression. “but uh, i’m not really feelin’ up to teleporting right now. think i need to walk off some steam, y’know?”

You nod and fold your apron over your arm, addressing Chi. “You don’t mind walking, do you?”

She put a hand to her face in thought and smiled what you wanted to say was mischievously. “Well, I’m not entirely used to touching the ground, but I can make an exception if you’d like.”

Sans chuckled, catching the joke easily. “must be nice, being able to fly.”

“It must be nice to be able to teleport.” She retorted. You rolled your eyes and started for the door.

“C’mon you two. We’ve got clothes to fit.”

Chapter End Notes

I'm back baby. And my baby's back. I'm so happy Chi is relevant again.

Sorry I was away for so long. Normally I never take that long a break between chapters, but I'm good to go now. I just had to sit down and push myself through it. And honestly, writing Bratty and Catty is so much fun. They are the light of my life.

Comments and Kudos are also the light of my life, and I would love it if you left some too!
What is a legacy?

Chapter Summary

It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see

Chapter Notes

I hope you're all ready for a face full of Alphys.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Alphys glared at the magic remnant that Gaster had left behind. She was trying to keep her emotions as bottled up as the magic radiating yellow bone before her.

How dare he.

He whom she idolized since she was nearly a child. He whose footsteps she did her best to fill when he had disappeared. He who had been the driving force of her pursuit into science. He whose discoveries and creations helped expand the possibilities of monsterkind. He whom she had jumped at the chance to work with, if only to learn from his processes and hopefully gain insight on what it was like to be a true Royal Scientist from him. The man who had once been heralded as a scientific god in the Underworld for the sole reason that he was the one responsible for keeping everyone alive.

How dare he bring that image crashing down before her.

She was young when she’d first heard of him. Very young. Probably no older than that one armless yellow monster that usually hung around Frisk. It was a passing conversation between two grey monsters that had piqued her interest at first. Softspoken whispers of ‘the greatest scientist that ever lived’ were what drew her to them. She questioned it. If this person was the greatest scientist ever, then where was he? Why had she never heard of him? Where did he go?

The second time she had heard of him was when Asgore showed up to her high school. She had lived in one of the farther parts of the Underground, where there was more sand and desert-like landscapes than what she had become accustomed to. One of her classmates had asked about The Core and how it was possible for it to produce enough energy to sustain the entire underground. He had laughed and said that it was ‘Due to the brilliance of the previous Royal Scientist’ that it was able to work. He told the class that they had been close friends and good colleagues, but when questioned about his name he failed to give an answer.

It took Alphys another year to figure out what it was, and when she had seen the name W.D Gaster scrawled into the margins of her notebook in a handwriting she couldn’t identify, she almost didn’t believe it was real.

It fueled her. The question of the missing scientist who worked on The Core and mysteriously disappeared. Nobody remembered who he was, and when she moved herself out to Hotland to
investigate, everybody she questioned had no idea what she was talking about.

Either that or they were lying.

She worked hard to become a top scientist, making a fully functional robotic body for Mettaton’s ghost to impress Asgore and earn the title. She had hoped that with the new position it would give her the ability and resources to search on a bigger scale. She put her lab in Hotland, right next to The Core, to study it. How did something so essential to Monsterkind come to be? How did the geothermal energy convert into magical energy so easily?

These questions she quickly found the answer to, along with several others that Asgore had asked about the nature of Determination. The question she couldn’t find an answer for, however, was ‘What happened to Doctor Gaster?’.

From what she had gathered of her little information, he was a Humanoid monster with a somewhat skeletal form.

She racked her brain for months thereafter. Mettaton had built a hotel in the time it took her to gather even a shred of evidence that The Great Doctor had even existed.

And then, slowly over the course of time, he appeared.

She awoke to more scribbled notes on her blueprints, started seeing different types of monsters around The Core. Grey ones, ones without any color and or form. She thought she was going crazy at first, but then he appeared.

“Sup.”

The question had caught her off guard. The entire situation had caught her off guard, honestly. There she stood, in front of a wooden sentry station (That should have been on fire), covered in snow (Which shouldn’t have been there either), staring at a short blue-hooded skeleton who was selling...

Actually. She wasn’t sure what he was selling, but the Vulkin off to the side seemed to like it.

“You gonna buy somethin’ lady?” He asked, pouring ketchup onto what was definitely not a regular hotdog.

“You’re new.” Was her eloquent response. She wasn’t very good at talking to people. She didn’t have a lot of people to talk to.

He shrugged and brought the ketchup bottle to his mouth. “Yeah, guess I am. you live around here?”

She looked to the side and pushed her glasses further up her nose. “Y-yeah. I have a lab...on the bottom floor.”

That seemed to interest him and he raised one of his brows. “A lab? like a laboratory? for science?”

“Yes uh, I’m.” She cleared her throat. Time to make a good impression “I’m Alphys. The new Royal Scientist.”
He put the ketchup bottle down, a frown crossing his features. “new royal scientist?”

“Y-yes well, the old one-” She stopped. What could she say? She had no idea who this person was. Could she tell him about the old scientist? He looked interested, somewhat. Like he was interested but pretending not to be. She couldn’t really tell. “The old one disappeared.”

“How.”

He seemed serious, very serious. Whatever facade he was putting on for her before was all but gone now. She stuttered under his gaze.

“I d-don’t...nobody knows.” She told him. “That’s uh...what i’m trying to figure out. D-did you know him?”

He sat back in his chair, putting the hotdog buns away. “you could say that. but uh, this isn’t really the place for a talk like that, y’know?”

“Y-yeah...I guess not.” She said, looking at the growing crowd down the walkway. One of Mettaton’s live performances must have let out. He’d be swamped with customers soon. She couldn’t let this opportunity go, though. It was too important. “Would you um...like to c-come and see my lab? And talk? When...uh...when you can, I mean.”

He checked a glance at the upcoming crowd and then returned his attention to her. “sounds like a plan, doc.”

“Alphys.” She said, fidgeting with her glasses. “My n-name, is Alphys.”

“sans the skeleton.” He smiled at her and brought the ketchup bottle on the table back up to his mouth. “i’ve got a feeling we’re gonna be good friends.”
She built the True Lab and worked on things there, and he had occasionally come down to help, but when the fallen monsters started dissipating into each other he stopped visiting. She was convinced that it was her failure as a scientist that drove him away, and she secluded herself.

It wasn’t until Frisk and Angel came along that she decided to leave the confines of her self-inflicted prison.

And now here she was, glaring in hatred at the remnants of the person whom she had dreamed of becoming the predecessor to. A shattered discarded piece of the man who she spent her entire life trying to find, and she was furious. He was supposed to be a legend, her idol. Someone she looked up to. But now...now he was nothing but a traitor to her. He crushed her expectations, ruined her chance to redeem herself in the eyes of her friends, abandoned her after promising to do everything he could to help her. She grabbed the jar holding the bone and threw it against the wall, watching it shatter and break, a mirror to her current state.

He didn’t deserve the pedestal she put him on. He never did.

“Wow, you’re pissed off.”

As if Alphys’s mood couldn’t get any worse.

She didn’t bother turning to look at him. Flowey was one of the last people she wanted to see or talk to right now.

That didn’t mean he wouldn’t keep talking though.

“Is this a bad time?” He said from someplace behind her. There was a slight mocking in his voice that only made her madder. “I could come back later.”

“Why did you come back at all.”

Her voice was low, disappointed, demanding. His presence here was added insult to injury.

“Would you believe me if I said it was to apologize?”

That made her turn.

She moved slowly to face him, his reply doing nothing to dissolve her anger. He looked nervous when she set her eyes on him.

“No.”

“Yeah, didn’t think you would.” He rubbed his leaves together sheepishly. “I’m probably the last person you wanna see right now.”

“I don’t really want to see anyone right now.” Her voice stayed low. She didn’t have the energy to raise it.

Flowey scoffed “Nah, you wanna stay down here and have a tantrum instead, right?”

She glared at him. She wasn’t in the mood for his snide remarks.

“I don’t need you judging me.” She walked over to the shattered glass jar and leaned down to pick up the pieces. She heard Flowey ‘hmph’.

“Funny, He told me the same thing. Doesn’t mean i’m not gonna do it anyway.”
She tried to focus on picking up the jar pieces. There weren’t many small parts. “What do you really want, Flowey?”

“To apologize, like I said.” He told her. His voice sounded closer and when she looked up he was right next to her. She had half a mind to swing her arm at him, drop the glass on his petals, but she refrained. “Just hear me out. Ten minutes, that’s all I want.”

She gave herself time to compose herself, walking over to the nearest waste disposal bin and dropping the broken glass shards into it. When she turned back around she saw Flowey holding the glowing yellow bone with one of his vines. She didn’t feel the need to take it from him.

She took a deep breath “You have ten minutes.”

He didn’t waste any time “Right, okay. First of all, I’m sorry about convincing Gaster to let me go. In my defense, I was like… ninety nine percent sure you were going to kill me. I’m still really not sure what would have happened if I stayed.”

“I wouldn’t have killed you.” Alphys confessed. Her own embarrassment at the situation was enough for her to tell the truth. “I wasn’t planning on pulling Asriel out of you in the first place. I know he doesn’t exist in you anymore.”

“Well, you’re half-right.” He said, flipping the bone into another vine, like he was playing catch with it. “Asriel’s definitely in me. Or, he was at one point. His ashes are in me, sorta, but his consciousness? Died out after he broke the barrier. Goat boy’s gone for good.”

Alphys raised an eyebrow. “I...I thought Frisk broke the barrier.”

“It’s a long story.” Flowey said, looking to the side. “But uh, why did you keep me down here if you weren’t gonna do anything to me?”

She shifted her feet. If there was any time to come clean, now was the time. “I wanted to make it look like I was doing something helpful. For all of my friends. For Toriel. For Asgore.”

He frowned at her and she felt it. She wasn’t happy with her decision. She was never happy with any of her decisions.

“Why didn’t you tell me?”

She balled her fists at her sides. “Because I didn’t want to admit that I was n-nothing but a fraud.”

A tense silence lingered in the air after that. Neither of them wanted to break it. But she couldn’t keep everything inside her anymore.

“My whole life...my entire life I worked hard to become a scientist. I wanted t-to be someone that was respected. Revered. I wanted to be j-just like him.” She said, fists shaking at her sides. “B-but everything important that I’ve ever done is just a lie. Mettaton isn’t a robot with a Soul, he’s a ghost in a robot body. I wasn’t...wasn’t able to bring back the fallen monsters with Determination like I said I would. I hid them from their families and lied about it. I ended up making you in the hope that something would go right, but that ended up b-being a mess too!” Tears filled the corner of her eyes as she spoke, her voice raising with each sentence. “And then...then the one time I get t-to work with the man I spent my entire life t-trying to find I end up lying to his f-face in an attempt t-to impress him while s-saving my own skin. And then I was betrayed by him anyway!” She sniffed hard, her glasses falling down her nose as she shook. “What kind of scientist am I when the only thing I ever manage to discover is my own shortcomings?”
“A shitty one, probably.”

She glared at him through her tears. His expression didn’t really read ‘sympathetic’ as much as it read ‘tolerating’ and she hated it. “I don’t even know why I even b-bother half the time.”

“Then why are you still doing it?”

The question hit her like a truck and she shook more. She didn’t know. After all this time of working as hard as she has she had nothing to show for it. She wasn’t even sure she liked science anymore. She just wanted to make the people around her happy and proud of what she did.

“I mean, you don’t have to keep being a scientist.” Flowey continued, eyeing the bone in his vine. “Gaster? That guy’s a scientist to his core. He questions everything, tries to find answers for everything. He thinks like a scientist. Lives to experiment. You may have looked up to him and wanted to be like him, but that doesn’t mean that you have to turn into him.”

He held the bone out in front of him and gazed melancholically at it. “I know how that feels. To want something so badly because you think that’s what you should do, but not really feeling up to it inside. I felt that way the first time I woke up and saw Asgore. I felt like I was supposed to love him, and that I was supposed to care, but I didn’t. And I tried, believe me. I tried mustering up everything in me to care about him and Toriel again, but I knew deep inside that my heart wasn’t in it. Or, well, what I can pretend is a heart, anyway.”

He lowered the bone and brought his eyes up to her. “But now? Now I’m learning how to. I’m discovering my emotions again and how to deal with them. I’m trying my hardest to be friendly and help everyone that’s helped me get here. I’m doing it all because I want to, not because I think I have to. And I wouldn’t be able to do any of this if you hadn’t created me in the first place. I may not have a Soul, but i’m determined to live and make the most of it, and I’ve helped everyone I could. I’ve learned from my mistakes and I’m working hard to fix them.”

He shrugged and twirled the bone. “So you’re not a great scientist and your role model turned out to be a moron, big deal. Nobody can be like that psycho nerd if they tried. And hey, you don’t have to be a scientist if you don’t want to. You can sit around all day watching anime and blogging about reboots and whatever and your friends will probably still love you the same. But don’t say that the only thing you’ve done is fail when one of your greatest successes is standing right in front of you.”

She blinked at him, completely taken back by the heartfelt words. She wrung the edge of her labcoat and went to speak, but any words she could have said were interrupted by a hiccup. She put her hand over her mouth and took a step forward, outstretching her hand to grab the bone from him.

He gladly gave it to her. “And anyway, the only reason he let me go is because I convinced him to. He’s not that terrible a person, and he’s trying too. If I stayed, you probably could have impressed him.”

“No.” She said, finding her voice. She took the bone and clutched it to her chest “I couldn’t have. He’s… he’s much more of a scientist than I’ll ever be.”

“Well, you’re both huge nerds so I don’t see the difference.” Flowey said, trying to fall back into his persona. “Anyway, you two should probably talk or something the next time you meet. I’m sure you both have a lot to say.”

She nodded “Yeah… I should apologize.”
“You both need to apologize.” Flowey said, crossing his leaves over his stalk in a pout “Honestly, it’s like I’m everyone’s personal fix-it guy.”

“And t-to think, you tried to kill us all once.” Alphys said, walking over and placing the bone on a shelf. “I like this version of you better.”

He grumbled “Don’t make it sappy.”

She held up her hands in a mock imitation of typing, as if she was writing a review on her blog. “Flowey 2.0, significantly more enjoyable than Flowey 1. Good character development. Ten out of ten, would rate again.”

“Okay, now it’s getting weird.” He grumbled. “I’m getting out of here before you turn me into a comic and start romanticising my love life.”

“I c-can’t romanticise something that doesn’t exist.” She chided him.

“Alright that’s it.” He said, pulling all of his vines back into the ground, minus his head. “I’m not gonna sit here and be made fun of by a lizard that watches kid cartoons.”

She waved him off and smiled as he popped back into the ground. She felt better, much better. She didn’t feel like she was at one hundred percent, but she was feeling better about herself, and that’s what mattered. She turned towards the yellow glowing bone on the shelf and formed a resolution. He wasn’t the person she imagined him to be, but that just meant she had to learn who he was. She didn’t have to try to impress him, or anyone.

She just had to make sure that whatever she was doing, she was happy. And she had a good feeling that now, she finally could be.

Chapter End Notes

Alphys needs a hug and an ATLA marathon. I'm glad I could get to write another conflict resolution. It's one out of the way.

Also, I finished the rough outline of the rest of the story, and Act 3 will be the last act. I estimate about 10-12 more chapters before it's finally finished so, you've still got 10 chapters to look forward to.

But uh, how did I do this round? Comment and lemme know.
Just Like Wine, Some Relationships Need Time To Mature.

Chapter Summary

Sometimes the things that matter the most are right in front of you.

Chapter Notes

I wrote a lot more than I intended to. Whoops.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You were one hundred percent convinced that Papyrus was completely incapable of wearing anything other than what resembles a crop top and booty jorts. At least, you were before that shopping trip with Mettaton. Admittedly, even though he never wore anything other than his prized Battle Body half the time, he looked good in relatively normal clothing. If the picture you saved as your lockscreen attested to anything, he was a pretty handsome guy when he wasn’t decked out in neon green tank tops and speedo shorts. Of course, his sense of style had it’s own charm. It was very ‘Papyrus’, and it was one of his more endearing traits.

You still weren’t prepared when you walked through your front door to see him dressed up in an orange button down and black slacks. It took you a second to convince yourself you weren’t hallucinating. No boots, No gloves, no scarf. It was almost like he was a completely different skeleton.

“ANGEL! SANS!” He greets you as enthusiastically as ever, shirt still untucked. Either he was only halfway dressed or he just wasn’t aware that shirts needed to be tucked in. “YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE HOW COMFORTABLE THESE NEW CLOTHES ARE!”

You were anxious to get into your party clothes too, but a small sigh to the left of you made you think that maybe he wasn’t supposed to be in his at the moment.

“I do wish you would have waited until I returned.” Chi said, confirming your suspicion. “What would have happened if it had been damaged?”

Papyrus shook his head and waved her off. “NONESENSE! THERE IS NOTHING THE GREAT PAPYRUS CANNOT HANDLE ON HIS OWN. ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO HANDLING THINGS THAT REQUIRE DELICATE CARE.”

“you look great bro.” Sans compliments as he steps in from behind you. You nodded, agreeing with him. He definitely looked good, comparing it to his regular clothes. You’d gotten used to seeing them, but seeing him out of his armor and boots reminded you that there was an attractive skeleton somewhere underneath the show of exuberance. Part of you wondered how he managed to fill out the shirt so well, considering it had nothing but a ribcage to hold onto.

Chalk it up to magic, as always.
“There is also a vest and a tie, both of which are completely optional.” Chi said. Floating over to the open garment bag on the couch to pull the two things out. “I wasn’t really given a description or example of the dress code, but it’s always good to be safe. Just in case.”

“It seems a little formal for a birthday party.” You say, walking around Papyrus to inspect his new wardrobe. It was simple, but it fit him well.

She tilted her head. “Birthday party? I thought it was going to be a coronation.”

“It was. is.” Sans shrugged at her. “It’s still technically a coronation, but it’s a lot more casual now.”

The answer didn’t seem to help her confusion. “How could it be more casual?”

“It was tough on Frisk.” You tell her, eyeing the other two bags on the couch. “It ended up being really stressful, having them be the ambassador to monsters and everything, so Toriel decided to make it a strictly monster thing. Asgore’s gonna hold a press conference next week or something for the human officials.”

She seemed struck by this information, also eyeing the bags on the couch.

“Oh dear.” She fretted with her sleeves. “Oh dear, I’ve made a terrible mistake. These clothes are way too formal for that now...”

“YOU ARE WORRYING TOO MUCH.” Papyrus chided her. “THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS ‘TOO MUCH’ OR ‘TOO FORMAL’. NOT IF YOU WEAR THEM WITH CONFIDENCE!”

“he’s got a point.” Sans said, walking over to the couch and picking up one of the hangers. “i’m sure whatever you made for us will be fine, if a bit stuffy. this one mine?”

She floated over and took the hanger from him, weighing it in her hand. “No, this one is for Miss Angel. Though I believe she would rather change in a room away from the boys?”

“Yes, I would.” You say, accepting the clothing and starting for the stairs. “C’mon, let’s let the boys have their suits.”

Sans watched the two of you ascend the stairs and enter his room. Your room. He sighed. Part of him still couldn’t believe that he could call it that. He turned to his brother. “y’know, you’re supposed to tuck that into your pants pap.”

“I’M NOT USED TO HAVING SHIRTS THAT ARE LONG ENOUGH TO TUCK.” Was his response as he went to tuck it in. Sans saw that he’d put on a belt with the pants. Must’ve come with the outfit. “BUT DO NOT WORRY! I, IN MY MAGNIFICENCE, WILL CONQUER THIS OUTFIT AND LOOK AS DAZZLING AS EVER! MAYBE EVEN MORE SO! NYEH HEH!”

Sans grinned. It made him happy to see Papyrus as enthusiastic as he was. After the crash and burn with Catty and Bratty’s show, he needed the energy boost. He held up the black vest to his brother. “it’s kinda weird seeing you in a button down.”

He took it and pulled it on himself. It fit him perfectly, as it should. “YES, I AGREE. THIS WEEK HAS BEEN FULL OF CHANGES TO MY EVERYDAY WARDROBE. BUT FEAR NOT BROTHER! ONCE THIS WEEK IS OVER YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SEE MY ORIGINAL WARDROBE AGAIN.” He said, pulling the tie from the couch. “IF THIS WEEK HAS DONE ANYTHING IT HAS STRENGTHENED MY RESOLVE TO ADD EVEN MORE THINGS TO MY LINEUP!”
“more cut-off shirts with words painted on them?” The shorter skeleton asked, plopping himself down on the couch. Half of him wanted to see what was in his bag. Half of him knew that it would something like Papyrus’s complicated outfit and didn’t want to be bothered.

Papyrus fiddled with the tie. “WHY WOULD I WANT TO WEAR ANYTHING ELSE? BESIDES, ALL OF MY SHIRTS LOOK GOOD ON ME. BUT NOT AS GOOD AS MY BATTLE BODY!”

Sans watched him struggle. He’d help him in a minute. “you really love that body, don’t you bro?”

“OF COURSE I LOVE IT. IT’S THE FIRST THING YOU AND I MADE TOGETHER.” He grumbled loudly as his hands failed at correctly tying the thin black accessory. “NYEH. SANS, HELP ME WITH THIS.”

That plea alone was enough to get him off the couch. It was amazing at how many things around him was enough to get him moving. “you’re gonna have to shrink a bit. Y’know, since i’m of pretty short-standing.”

Papyrus groaned, but the joke didn’t dampen his mood. In fact, he grinned back at him as he knelt down into Sans’ reach “LET’S JUST HOPE YOU DON’T MANAGE TO GET TIED-UP IN THE PROCESS.”

Sans almost fumbled with the tie, not expecting a retaliation from his brother. He grinned wider, absolutely ecstatic. “i dunno pap, this kinda thing’s pretty against the collar. To be honest, i’m fit to be tied.”

“I DON’T KNOW ENOUGH JOKES TO KEEP UP WITH YOU IN THIS DEPARTMENT.” He admitted, staying as still as he could as Sans fixed him in a windsor. “NEXT TIME I’LL THINK OF SOMETHING.”

“i believe in you, bro.” He said, finishing the knot with a pull and tucked it in his vest. Papyrus stood back up, putting his hands on his hips.

“WELL?” He said, bringing a hand to his chest. “DO I LOOK AS PHENOMENAL AS ALWAYS? OR EVEN MORE SO?”

Sans nodded at him. Papyrus looked good in everything he tried, simply because he had the confidence to wear everything he did with no shame. This outfit was no different. His grin turned into a strained one as a feeling of nostalgia washed over him. The last time he saw Papyrus in something this fancy was back in his old universe, before they got here. He was helping his baby brother get ready for his first prom…

“SANS?” Papyrus asked him, snapping him out of his thoughts. He was looking down at him with mild concern on his face. “YOU’RE DOING THAT THING WITH YOUR FACE AGAIN.”

Sans looked to the side and shuffled his feet “what thing? i’m not doing a thing.”

Papyrus wasn’t having it. “YES YOU ARE! YOU HAD THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE AGAIN! THE ONE WHERE YOU ARE REMEMBERING THINGS I DO NOT.”

Oh.

He didn’t know he had a face for that kind of thing, but Papyrus certainly did. Sans wasn’t an idiot, and neither was his brother. Papyrus was very observant when it came to him. The way he worked, his habits, his facial expressions. Of course he was bound to pick up on the small facial cues that
Sans might have displayed when he got lost in his thoughts. The smaller skeleton prayed that he wouldn’t have noticed, but those prayers were shot to hell apparently.

He didn’t like the look of concern on his brother’s face. It reminded him too much of the past.

“i’m fine pap, don’t worry about it.” Sans said, walking back to the couch and opening up his own garment bag. Jeez that was a lot of white. “anyway, i should probably put on my clothes too…”

“DO NOT CHANGE THE SUBJECT, SANS.” Papyrus said, moving to stand behind him. He felt a chill go up his spine.

“Papyrus, drop-”

“I REMEMBER TOO.”

Sans dropped the bag and turned to face him, eyes wide.

“you what?”

The taller skeleton looked to the side nervously. “I….I REMEMBER.”

He could tell when Papyrus was lying. He could always tell when Papyrus was lying, due to the fact that he was a horrible liar.

His brother’s eyes bore into his and he knew with one hundred percent certainty that he was telling the truth.

He dropped his fists to his sides. “…what do you remember.”

Papyrus looked apprehensive. This wasn’t exactly an ideal situation. He fidgeted.

“I REMEMBER...SMALL THINGS. SITUATIONS AND INSTANCES. IT’S NOT AS MUCH AS YOU ARE PROBABLY HOPING, AND THERE ARE MANY BLACK SPOTS, BUT I DO REMEMBER.” He tells him, looking out the window almost wistfully. “I REMEMBER OUR OLD HOUSE, OUR PARENTS, EVEN GASTER.”

Sans couldn’t believe it. It shouldn’t have been possible, for Papyrus to suddenly regain his memories after years of having lost it. There was no such thing as a miracle amnesia fix, unless…

“how.”

Papyrus fiddled with the bottom of his vest. “I…I BELIEVE...THROUGH MY DREAMS?”

Sans didn’t want to believe it at first. Dreams? He had memory dreams. Angel had memory dreams. Memories of people dying and being killed, of resets. Of Chara. He didn’t want to believe that his brother was suffering from the same ailments that had plagued him since they first saw the sun.

He was pulled out of his thoughts by a chuckle. Papyrus’s chuckle.

“YOU KNOW, I ALWAYS USED TO SAY HOW UNNECESSARY SLEEP WAS, AND HOW IT CONTRIBUTES NOTHING.” He said, smiling “BUT I GUESS THAT IT IS GOOD FOR SOMETHING AFTER ALL! EVEN IF THAT SOMETHING IS SPOTTY AND HARD TO UNDERSTAND”

Sans grabbed his brother’s arm as a waterfall of questions poured from his mouth.

“how much do you remember? how far back does your memory go? how many times have you had
those dreams? is it every night? have you had any nightmares? what if—"

“SANS, SANS, PLEASE.” Papyrus put a hand on the shorter skeletons shoulder to calm him. “WHILE I AM HAPPY TO SEE YOU SO ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THIS, I CANNOT ANSWER SEVEN QUESTIONS AT ONCE. THOUGH, IT WOULD BE REALLY NEAT IF I COULD.”

Sans nodded at him. He was shaking. He didn’t know why, or with what, but he could hear his bones rattling all the same.

“prove it to me.”

The younger brother raised a browbone at him and sighed. “YOU REALLY ARE SO IMPOSSIBLE SOMETIMES. YOU DO NOT BELIEVE SOMETHING IS REAL UNLESS YOU EXPERIENCE IT FIRSTHAND.” He said, leading Sans to sit down on the couch. Papyrus sat next to him. “WELL, FIRST OF ALL, I AM REAL, AND MY WORDS ARE ALSO REAL, SO YOU SHOULD BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THAT MY MEMORY IS VERY...BROKEN-ISH. NEVERTHELESS, I DO RECALL CERTAIN POINTS IN TIME BEFORE SNOWDIN.” He said, crossing one leg over the other. With the new half-suit on it almost looked poise. “FOR INSTANCE, THERE WAS A TIME LIKE THIS WHEN I WAS YOUNGER. YOU WERE THE ONE IN THE SUIT. YOU WERE GETTING READY FOR A BIG DANCE NIGHT AT YOUR SCHOOL.”

Sans remembered. Senior Prom. He nodded. “yeah, what happened next?”

Papyrus huffed and crossed his arms. “GASTER WAS VERY INSISTENT THAT YOU WEAR A FORMAL OUTFIT FOR THE EVENT, BUT WHEN IT CAME DOWN TO IT YOU COULDN’T BE BOTHERED TO EVEN BUTTON UP YOUR OWN SHIRT OR FIX YOUR OWN TIE. HE HAD TO DO IT FOR YOU. AND THEN YOU COMPLAINED THAT THE KNOT HE MADE IN YOUR TIE WAS ‘TOO COMPLICATED’” Papyrus air quoted him and returned to his huff. “FOR SOMEONE WHO PRIDES HIMSELF IN BEING LAZY, YOU SURE DO PUT FORTH A LOT OF EFFORT TO KEEP UP THAT APPEARANCE.”

Sans remembered that too. It was an Eldritch Knot and it was way too complicated. And too tight. He lost it halfway through the night.

He must have been smiling wide, because Papyrus seemed pleased by whatever reaction he was giving him. He cleared his throat.

“I also remember that I was not always so loud.” He said. “In fact, I used to be very good at controlling my volume.”

The sudden change of volume caught Sans off guard and he flinched. It had been so long since he heard his brother talk at a non ear-splitting volume. He was sure that he had just gotten used to it, but with his voice lowered and his speaking patterns turned ‘normal’, he almost sounded like…

“gaster…”

He muttered it before he could stop himself and it took him a second to realize it. He slapped a hand over his mouth and Papyrus laughed at him.

“Nyeh heh! So you noticed it too?” He said, his eye twinkling. “I cannot say I am completely unsurprised. After all, we are a family! It is only natural that we were to take after each other in our own ways.”
“Yeah but he’s not—” our family, is how Sans wanted to finish. It was an automatic response, much like most things out of him nowadays. He couldn’t say that Gaster wasn’t his family. He made up with him. He forgave him. He couldn’t go back on that just because he left.

He was a part of their family, even if he wasn’t there anymore.

Papyrus sighed and put a hand on his shoulder, smiling. “Listen, Sans, I know you are going through a lot, all the time. You remember more things than I do, virtually everything that I do not, and I know how hard it is for you. But can you make me a promise to talk to me about it? When you remember things from our other life and want to say something about it, tell me. I am your brother and I will always be here for you. And, who knows, maybe it will help jog some of my memories too.”

He was so cool. His brother was so cool. What did he possibly do to deserve such a cool and perfect younger brother. He would have cried if he had any tears left in him. Instead he nodded and smiled back. “i’m not very good at keeping promises pap, but... yeah. i can do that.”

“Good.” Papyrus took his hand off his shoulder. “And, if I may make a request?”

Sans nodded “go for it.”

“Instead of reading me bedtime stories, perhaps you could tell me stories about the other universe?” He asked, looking over and nodding towards the end-table by the door. “Perhaps some from the album you keep?”

Sans was already ready to burn those Fluffy Bunny books. “yeah. hell yeah. and uh, if i can make a request too?”

“Anything, brother.”

“please stop talking like that.”

The sentence launched Papyrus into action, off of the couch. He put a fist to his chest valiantly and if he had been wearing his cape, Sans was sure it would have been waving behind him. “OF COURSE! AFTER ALL, IF I DID NOT PROJECT MY WORDS, HOW WOULD EVERYONE AROUND ME KNOW HOW AMAZING AND CHARISMATIC I AM?!”

Sans stood up too. “you could walk around in those new clothes all the time?”

“NYEH! THESE ARE FAR TOO NICE! MY REGULAR CLOTHES ARE TOO PERFECT FOR ME.” Papyrus grabbed the garment bag and held it up to Sans. “YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, COULD BENEFIT FROM A WARDROBE CHANGE. SO CHOP CHOP LAZYBONES!”

“Now I feel like I over prepared.” Chi said as she floated over to sit on your bed. She crossed her legs with a nervous look on her face.

“You’re fine, don’t worry about it.” You tell her, crossing the room and sitting down next to her. “You couldn’t have possibly known about the change. Besides, I’m sure whatever you made will
be fine.”

She didn’t seem happy with it. If you knew her any better you could have guessed she was a perfectionist for these sort of things.

“True. I suppose it was a sudden thing if Mettaton didn’t tell me anything about it.” She said, a little more at ease.

“You should have gotten the dress code in the invitation.” You tell her. “We sent them out yesterday.”

Her smile seemed a little forced. “Yes, that would have been nice, if I had received one. But unfortunately it appears as though I was not slated for the guest list.”

You flinched internally. You didn’t even think to put her on the invites list. The seven of you were so busy yesterday with trying to figure out placements that it didn’t cross your mind to add her. Granted, she wasn’t someone you had been around long enough to remember, but she should have been on the list.

“You know, I can ask if we can put you at a table.” You tell her. “I’m sure the seating chart is flexible enough.”

She shook her head and smiled. “No, you don’t have to go out of your way for me. Besides, my work will be at the party, and that’s what matters more.”

It wasn’t a good enough answer for you, but you’d fix it later. She deserved to have a good time too.

“Right. Anyway, this dress, huh?”

“Oh, yes!” She clapped her hands together and pulled the garment bag into the air, unzipping it and pulling out…something way nicer than you had expected.

It was a sleeveless, blindingly bright dress that fell down further in the back than it did in the front. It was adorned head to toe in an elaborate lace cover with pearlescent beads spotting it in every which way. It almost looked like it belonged in a bridal magazine, but the design was just too informal enough for it to be considered a sun dress.

It was beautiful, for sure.

You walked forward to rub the fabric between your fingers. It was soft and lighter than it looked.

“You made this…”

She beamed and floated into the air. “Yes!”

“You made this. Like, from scratch.”

She tugged at her collar. “Yes well, it wasn’t particularly difficult…”

“It has been four days since I last saw you and you made an entire dress by hand.” You say in disbelief. “And three other outfits? What are you?”

“Magic.” She smiled, proud of herself. You certainly couldn’t imagine making four entire outfits in four days. “Most of the other outfits were alterations. This is the one that took the most time.”

“And I get to wear it!” You say, grabbing the dress and plucking it out of the air. “You don’t mind
“I deal with customers in dressing rooms every day of my life. This is nothing different.” She replies, backing away to give you your space.

It took you a while to pull yourself out of your work clothes and into the new dress. You wanted to be as careful with it as possible. Your reflection in the mirror when you had finished was one of the most satisfying things you’d seen in awhile.

“It’s so nice.” You tell her, turning from side to side. The frilly parts swayed as you turned and you strongly resisted doing a princess twirl. You really wanted to do a princess twirl. “It’s so pretty.”

She floated up behind you and you saw her equally pleased reflection. “Yes, but how does it fit?”

You move yourself around, testing it. The lace fell to just above your knees in the front and to your mid-calf in the back. There was no pulling, the chest and waist area seemed fine. You could breathe normally.

“It’s perfect.” You tell her, smiling. It would be even more perfect if your hair was done nicely and you didn’t just get out of work, but you’d make yourself nice and presentable tomorrow. You turn to her. “It’s really perfect. I don’t know how I can repay you for it.”

She waved her hand dismissively. “Oh. Oh no. You don’t have to worry about payment. Mettaton has already taken care of any fees that could have come with making everyone’s clothes. And then some. He was unusually generous about it.”

Still wasn’t good enough for you.

“Nope. Nuh uh. I’m repaying you, right now.” You say, walking over to the bedroom door and opening it. The first thing your eyes were drawn to was another bright splot of white in the middle of the room. Namely your boyfriend and his cream colored replica of his brother’s outfit, with a blue collared shirt that he hadn’t assed to button up yet. Papyrus was the first to notice you and his eyes lit up when he did.

“WOWIE! ANGEL! YOU LOOK FANTASTIC!”

“Yeah so do both of you!” You tell him as Sans turns. His face goes from what was probably casual to the same shocked look you saw from him when he first saw you in the department store. You decided you really liked that look on him. “I never thought I’d ever see you two look so dapper in my entire life.”

Papyrus huffed in mock offense. “EXCUSE YOU, BUT I AM DAPPER EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE. REGARDLESS OF WHAT I AM WEARING.”

“He’s got a point.” Sans says, buttoning his white vest. Chi flew out from behind you to join the commotion.

“You both look wonderful!” She said, clapping her hands together and flying down to the first level. Man you wish you could fly. “And everything fits alright?”

Sans rolled his arm “this is a lot more effort than i’m used to putting in while wearing clothes. it fits good though. really good.”

You crossed the balcony and took the stairs down. Because you couldn’t fly or teleport. “It looks good too.” You tell him when you reach him. “And to think, I’ll be walking in with you like this
tomorrow.”

He turned to you, wrapping an arm around your waist. “you’ll be walking in with me? i’ll be walking in with you. do you know how many people can say they went to a party with a literal angel on their arm? not many.”

“I’m sure you two will certainly be catching people’s eyes.” Chi says from her spot. You suddenly remember why you came down in the first place.

“Oh! Right.” You turn to the skeleton you were hanging off of “Sans, Chi didn’t get an invitation.”

He furrowed his brows, as if it didn’t occur to him either. “she didn’t? Huh.”

“COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE.” Papyrus cut in, turning to her. “THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON WHY YOU SHOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CELEBRATE THE DAY WITH US. AFTER ALL, WE WOULD NOT BE STANDING HERE IN THESE INCREDIBLY NICE CLOTHES IF IT WAS NOT FOR YOU!”

She floated back from the group, bringing a hand up to her face in what you think was embarrassment. “O-oh no. You don’t have to...I mean. Like I told miss Angel, the fact that something that I made will be there is enough. I don’t need anything else.”

“that’s dumb.” Sans answered her, letting you go and walking over to the coffee table. He brought a backup seating chart home so you could all memorize it before the big day. “like my bro said, you should have fun too. it’s a celebration for all monsters, not some. we just gotta find you a place to sit.”

He flipped to the chart and you looked at it over his shoulder. “Is there anyone that we know won’t be able to make it? Or isn’t coming and didn’t RSVP?” You couldn’t think of anybody off the top of your head. Most of the residents you sent out letter invites to had RSVP’d immediately.

Chi protested still. “You don’t have to remove someone to make room for me. I wouldn’t want that to happen.”

Papyrus put a hand on her shoulder. “NONSENSE! YOU ARE OUR FRIEND NOW. IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU SHOULD CELEBRATE SUCH AN OCCASION WITH US. NOW, BROTHER, WHAT SAY YOU?”

Sans fist tightened as he held the paper. “Well...there is one person that i’m like...eighty percent sure isn’t coming. considering he said he wouldn’t…”

You didn’t have to think twice to know who he was talking about. His tone said it all. It made you mad, that Gaster had this kind of effect on him. That he left at all. It was your suggestion for them to sit together, to work out their problems, but they had already done it. You were relieved and furious at the same time, but still.

“If Gaster is going to be a whiny pissbaby and leave like that, then who needs him.” You say harshly. You almost don’t recognize your voice as you kept talking. “If he wanted to make up for things so badly he could be here right now, but he’s not. He doesn’t deserve a spot after abandoning you again.”

The three of them looked at you in disbelief. You were never that harsh, with anyone. It took you a second to realize the words that came from your mouth were filled with a bit more malice than you had intended and you brought a hand up to your face. You didn’t want to say that.
“I...I mean…” You stutter, trying to regain your composure. “If we know he’s not going to be there, then we shouldn’t hold his seat. If it’s empty it’s just going to be a sad reminder…”

The air in the room didn’t change and you suddenly felt very hot. You didn’t want to be downstairs anymore. You cleared your throat “Anyway, I’ve been working all day and I need a shower so, you three can figure it out. Chi, thanks again for the clothes. They’re really gorgeous and I can’t thank you enough.”

She looked at you with a hint of worry in her features, but she hid it quickly. “It’s no problem at all. After all, it’s my job.”

“I’ll see you guys in a half hour.” You tell them, quickly ascending the stairs and entering your bedroom. The last thing you heard before you shut the door was a quiet ‘Who is Gaster’ that you could only guess came from Chi.

You took off the dress in a huff. Why did you say that? Why did you sound so angry about it? Like you hated Gaster? Granted, you weren’t happy with him for leaving, but you didn’t hate him. You could never hate him. You wanted him to be happy, just like all of your other friends.

You entered the bathroom through the conjoined door in your bedroom and stared at yourself in the mirror. There were strange bags under your eyes and you didn’t look happy. You almost didn’t recognize yourself until you blinked and refocused your eyes.

You were fine. Everything was fine, you told yourself. You weren’t mad at Gaster. You needed him. Why did you need him? You didn’t know, but a voice inside you told you you did, and you believed it. But, thinking about it was going to help nobody.

You turned the hot water on in the shower and prayed that it would burn away your thoughts.

Chapter End Notes

And so the downward spiral begins.

There's something serious in the works with Angel. Ya'll best be rooting for her.
Whose Fault Is It That Things Ended Up Like This?

Chapter Summary

Coincidence? An accident? Fate? There's no such thing as fate. It's simply a combination of one circumstance and the next. And who is it that creates those circumstances? Who is it? It's you.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

He wasn’t exactly sure what strange force of nature brought him to this kind of establishment. He wasn’t really the type to go out to eat for any reason, and it was nearly the peak dining hour for a place like this.

Of course, the large ‘Closed’ sign on the front was more than likely the reason it was deserted inside.

“Of course it would be closed.” Gaster mused out loud. “It’s monster week. Everything is closed.”

“Do you want it to be open?”

A timid voice behind him made him inhale sharply, not expecting company. He turned to see a green flame monster standing behind him wearing what he knew was a school uniform. One not knowledgeable of the monster holiday would assume she had just gotten out and was on her way home. Gaster knew better, if the invitational letter she was holding was any indicator otherwise.

“I would not want to trouble him.” He said plainly.

Her face lit up in what he hoped was a positive response. “The skeleton family’s always welcome here.”

It took him a bit off guard. ‘The Skeleton Family’. He nearly forgot the reputation that Sans and his brother had with the used-to-be residents of Snowdin. But for Grillby’s niece to know about him specifically, and know that he was a part of Sans’ family, was a shock. Then again, Grillby’s friendship with Sans ran deeper than most people knew. It was only half surprising that the extended family of both would be conscious of each other. He wondered how much she knew.

When he blinked himself out of his thoughts she was already gone, moved off to the side of the building to the Fire Exit in the back. Within the minute he watched the door in front of him unlock, her light green head poking through the entrance.

“You can come in, if you want.”

He considered, for a moment, turning and running. It was only for a moment.

He followed her into the bar. It had expanded since it left the underground, at least by twice the size. It was deeper and held more booths, on both sides of the building, along with several small tables in the middle. It was about the size of a hole-in-the-wall restaurant now, but not big enough
that it lost its personal charm. Once he stepped inside he felt a tug on his sleeve and looked down to see her hand outstretched towards him, letter facing up. He took it and raised a browbone, his fingers pressing against what was no doubt a wax seal on the underside. A quick inspection confirmed his assumption as he gazed at the purple Delta Rune sign in the wax.

“Since you’re here, you can give it to him.” She said “I told him you were here, so he should be out soon.”

He glanced down at the letter in his hand, and then back up to her. **“You’re not going to stay?”**

She shook her head. Or, he thinks she shook her head. “I have to meet up with a couple of friends, so I can’t stay.”

Gaster shifted his gaze to the bar, the pale green glow of her fire casting the room in an almost calm, if slightly eerie, light. It was the only light in the room aside from what little of it filtered through the windows. He turned back to watch her open the front door and exit, the glow leaving with her. She took the noise with her too, the small crackling of her flames a pleasant ambiance to the empty bar. He turned towards the bar, walking up to it and staring at the stools and countertop. It was funny, being in a place he’d seen so many times but never experienced. As different as it was, it was still the Grillby’s of two years ago. He looked long and hard at the stool on the right-most side. How many times had he seen Sans sit there, enjoying a burger or fries with Angel through each reset. How many times had the food gone cold as he watched the same conversation happen over and over again. It seemed like so long ago.

A soft creaking noise shifted his attention from the stool to behind the counter, where a surprised looking Grillby had decided to join him. At least, he thinks he was surprised.

Gaster looked down at the countertop, an apologetic smile gracing his features. **“I apologize if I am not the skeleton you were expecting.”**

Grillby nodded at the seat in front of him, a gesture of invitation. He took it and sat, making an effort to avoid the seat to his right. The combination of the light from the bar owner and what was left of the sunlight cast the restaurant in a warm orange glow. It was inviting, a complete opposite to the atmosphere mere seconds ago. Grillby grabbed a glass from behind the counter and placed it down in front of him.

“I don’t expect skeletons. They just happen.” His voice was calm and firm when he spoke, but quiet in the silence of the bar. His words echoed slightly, his consonants crisp crackles that copied the cry of a campfire. It, too, was warm.

He was so used to listening in on everything from afar. Hearing him in person was a completely different experience. Gaster cleared his throat and held out the envelope in his hand. **“Yes, well...er. I believe this is addressed to you.”**

Grillby took the envelope, carefully. Being as though he was made of fire one would expect anything flammable to ignite in his presence, but the invitation held fast, kept whole by the fact that Grillby was very used to controlling what around him burned. It was one of the perks of being an elemental monster.

He watched as Grillby broke the seal, pulling several pieces of paper out of the envelope. One of which was, no doubt, the invitation. The other Gaster couldn’t see from his position across the counter, but it was much larger than the invitation. Grillby took a minute or so to go over both papers before putting the invitation down on the table. He turned his attention towards Gaster.
“Thank you.”

“Your thanks should lie with your niece.” Gaster deflected, adjusting his glasses. “I’m simply acting as a middleman.”

Grillby didn’t reply, instead opting to place the invitation and other paper somewhere behind the bar counter. He didn’t question Gaster on how he knew about his niece.

Gaster fidgeted and went to get up. “Well, I suppose I should...be taking my leave then.”

“You don’t have to leave.”

The idea was spoken just loud enough for him to hear and it stopped him. He didn’t have to leave. Why was he in such a rush to remove himself from the presence of yet another one of his brother’s friends?

“I was wondering when I would see you in here, Mister Gaster.” Grillby said, pulling out a dark blue bottle from behind the counter. His voice was barely audible over the pops and cracks that rose from his fiery head.

“You can blame my brother for it.” Gaster watched Grillby open the bottle and pour the glass in front of him. The liquid was clear, almost like water, but Gaster knew better. “You were one of his sole confidants before I resurfaced. It’s only natural I would end up here.”

Grillby nodded and pushed the glass towards him. “Before and after.”

“It is a sheer miracle you did not once tell him of me.” Gaster accepted it, taking a sip. It was strong and unpleasant, but he didn’t voice it. He wasn’t much of a drinker. “You are, of course, entirely aware of the circumstances surrounding my current situation. What a wonderful thought.” He said, taking another sip. It wasn’t as bad as the first, “I shouldn’t even be here. You are closed.”

“The bar is closed.” Grillby said, returning the bottle back under the counter. “I, however, am always open to lend an ear for a friend.”

Gaster scoffed. “Friend. You have not seen me in centuries and yet you would still call me your friend?”

Grillby lowered his head “You haven't made me your enemy.”

“I would not dare to make you my enemy.” Gaster said, taking another sip. “I suppose this is the part where I regale to you the efforts which I had taken to reclaim any honor I once had in the eyes of my brother and his friends? You’ll forgive me if i’m not the type to tirade.”

“From what I remember, you like to tirade.”

Gaster grumbled. He was incredibly prone to tangents and tirades. There was so much to say, all the time, but in front of this man everything seemed like it was already said. Grillby knew him, about his work and his life. He knew about his mistakes. He knew more than Gaster wanted him to know, and that thought terrified him.

“I have seen your conversations, while I was in the void.” Gaster said, swishing around his glass. “There is very little that he has said about me that would paint a positive picture in the
eyes of a stranger.”

“I’m not a stranger to your family.” Grillby made a noise like the crackle of a campfire. “And you haven’t heard him recently.”

“I do not have the freedom to listen like I did when I was imprisoned.” Gaster said, putting the glass down. “I doubt he would be saying anything positive after I marked his human.”

“She is an interesting person.” Grillby said, as if it wasn’t already obvious. “It is very rare that I’ve seen him as happy as he is around her.”

“A true beacon of light in an otherwise dark and dreary world.” Gaster agreed.

“You're fond of her.”

It didn’t make Gaster flinch as much as Flowey’s accusation had, but his shoulders stiffened all the same. His reply was curt. “It is not hard to like someone who’s sole purpose for living is to fulfill others’ wishes and make them happy.”

Grillby adjusted his glasses. “Is that what you think of her?”

“Of course not. I think the world of her.” Gaster said, downing the rest of his drink. “The reason I willed her to the Underground was to set me free. But for her to instead relive her experiences because she fell for my brother instead…”

“She is not yours, you know.”

Gaster pushed the glass away from him and glared at the bartender. “What do you know.”

“I know more than you think.” Grillby said, taking it from him and placing it behind the counter. “I know, for one, that your brother was beside himself when you came back into his life.”

“With anger, yes I know.” Gaster was well aware of how upset Sans was with him and his...reappearance.

“With grief.” Grillby corrected him. “It was a myriad of emotions. He was happy that you were back, guilty for your circumstance, upset at your sudden betrayal, and afraid that he was going to lose you again.”

“He would have lost me anyway if he had not-” Gaster cut himself off as Grillby raised a finger to him, signaling his silence.

“You're upset, for a multitude of reasons that are beyond your control.” the fire elemental told him, all too aware of his situation. “The very fact that they are beyond your control is the reason you are upset.”

Gaster grumbled. “Yes, because I have issues with controlling the things around me. I’m aware of my shortcomings.”

“Have you tried letting things go?” Grillby tried.

“You sound like her.” Gaster put an arm on the countertop. “She once told me to ‘let things happen’, but it is impossible. To sit back and deal with the results of things instead of planning for them, it’s not something I can do.”
“Why not?”

“Because it is not who I am.” Gaster started. “I am a scientist! I do not wait for things to happen, I use my power to cause reactions, gather information, manipulate chances and data until I find the solution I am looking for. I do not deal with the inevitable, I work towards avoiding it.”

“And look where that has gotten you.”

He glared at him. “Do not patronize my pain.”

“I’m not patronizing. I’m giving an outsider’s opinion.” Grillby told him as he took the glass and started to clean it. “An opinion from someone who understands the struggle of things not going your way.”

“You have no right to talk.” Gaster chided him. “You are a war hero. You could have had so much more than just this. You could have had a house of grandeur in Hotland. We could have worked nearly parallel to each other and yet you moved out here and settled for...this.” Gaster made a gesture to the bar.

“This is not settling.” Grillby argued, offended.

“Forgive me for not understanding why you would not want more than you have.” Gaster turned back to him. “You are one of the strongest monsters I know. The fact that you are here working as a simple business owner instead of heralded as a knight, as a hero. I cannot imagine why you would want this.”

“I believe you're here to talk about your problems.” Grillby tried to steer the conversation back on track. It worked.

“Yes, I am.” Gaster said, putting his other arm on the bar. “And I am at my wits end. I made up with my brother and yet I still feel like I don’t deserve to be here.”

Grillby would have raised an eyebrow if he had any. “Are you considering leaving?”

“Technically I have already left.” Gaster said, putting his head in his hands. “It would do them all better if I was not around.”

Grillby would have frowned at him. “You don’t know that.”

“I do.” Gaster said firmly. He wasn’t budging.

Grillby sighed. “They worry about you constantly, you know.”

“Who and why.” Gaster demanded. He drew back under the walking flame’s glare and took it as a signal to not speak like that again.

“Angel, Sans, and Papyrus.” Grillby answered him. “The former are often in here. The latter I haven’t seen since new years.”

“And they talk, about me?” Gaster was interested now.

Grillby nodded. “Angel worries about you. She believes if you applied yourself as a brother to Sans and Papyrus that you would have a greater chance of getting your life back together.”
Gaster sighed. “Of course she would worry. She is far too optimistic for her own good.”

“I believe she is right.”

The scientist raised one of his own brows at him. “You can’t be serious.”

“Oh, I am.” The bartender said, pulling out the invitation and paper from behind the counter. “If you applied yourself as a friend and a brother before you applied yourself as a scientist, you would have a chance to fix your mistakes. With everyone.”

Gaster leant back in the stool, a condescending smirk on his face. “Oh, yes, and where or when on earth would I be able to solve all of my issues at once, hm? Should I pick a day to corral all of my brother’s friends into one room and say ‘I’m sorry for sabotaging all of your lives’.”

Grillby put the paper on the counter and turned it to face him. “Tomorrow looks promising. Since you’re on the guest list.”

“I’m what?” Gaster said, taking the paper. It was indeed a guest list of monsters attending the MWMP the next day. He searched it until he found his name in a box situated between both of his brothers, surrounded by their friends, and Angel. “How.”

“I believe your love interest might have been the cause of placement.”

Gaster placed the paper back on the counter. “She is not my love interest. She is unattainable and belongs to Sans.”

“She belongs to no one.” Grillby corrected him. “You are under the impression that because she exists, she must have someone she exists for, but she does not.”

“And here is where you preach philosophy to me.” Gaster said. Six hundred years and he was already used to it all over again.

“I do not preach. I help.” Grillby said, leaning one hand on the counter. “Isn’t that why you came? For help?”

Gaster averted his gaze to the counter. He did come for help. He only came to Grillby for help. He took a deep breath and steeled himself.

“What should I do?”

Grillby removed his hand from the counter. “What you should do is first apologize, and then work closely to better yourself with them. No analyzing, no planning. Ask for help and you will receive it. Don’t shove them away. They care about you more than you know.”

Gaster looked to the side remorsefully “They care about me and yet I have done nothing but hurt them....”

“Then prove to them you’re sorry and that you won’t do it again.” Grillby offered him. “If you don’t listen to Angel, if you don’t listen to Sans, listen to me.”

Gaster gave his words heavy thought. Grillby was one of the most level-headed trustworthy people he knew. If he was going to listen to anyone, it would be him.

“I will consider it.” He said, raising from his seat. “Though if I follow through, who’s to say
they won’t all turn on me out of spite?”

“You’re underestimating them.” Grillby replied “You won’t know if you don’t try. Besides, I will be in the room. If you need anyone to fall back on.”

Gaster smiled, a ghost of a smile. “Where would I be without your assistance.”

“Dead.” the bartender stated. Gaster nodded.

“Thank you for watching over them in my stead.” He moved out from his chair. “And for being a constant ally in trying times. I don’t know how I could ever repay you.”

“You could settle your brother’s ridiculously overdue tab.” Grillby offered.

Gaster chuckled. “I expect an invoice sometime next week. As for now, I have business to attend to and science that needs to be done.”

“Will I see you tomorrow?”

Gaster paused at this and thought for a second, before smiling at his friend behind the bar.

“Yes. I believe you will.”

Chapter End Notes

So I guess I dropped a few bombs here that I didn't intend to drop initially. I didn't really talk about Grillby much until now because, well, he has a lot to do with things.

As for the science Gaster is doing well...

You'll see when the time comes.

But for now, speculate! Comment! Kudos!
Premonition

Chapter Summary

Life comes at a cost. Wouldn’t it be arrogant to die before you’ve repaid that debt?

Chapter Notes

I have decided that due to the course the story is taking, this chapter is going to be the first chapter of the 4th arc, appropriately titled Repossession.

This arc is the last and final arc in The Road To Redemption and will focus on the main characters attempting to finally reclaim their lives and shoot for that happy ever after.

Though, by the end of this chapter I assume many of you will know that the title of this act means so much more than that.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Darkness was something common in your dreams now. The inky void was a close second to things you preferred to see when you slept. You don’t remember when you started paying attention to the vast expanse of black nothingness that consumed your mind at night, but it was a pleasant reprieve from your replicated genocidal nightmares. The void was just as comforting, if not more so, than the pleasant images that very rarely ran through your head anymore. At least in the void you didn’t have to worry about reliving any memories, good or bad. You could just exist in the peaceful, quiet emptiness for a while.

The only thing you didn’t like about it was the wait.

It wasn’t bad per say, just annoying. Being completely conscious for the exact number of hours that you slept was nearly torture. Most of the time you had your thoughts to occupy you, and it gave you an opportunity to take a break and plan out the day. You tried not to think too much though. Some of the thoughts you had weren’t exactly positive. The general nature of your existence tended to be a popular topic you’d gone over countless times.

Your given name is Angel.

Your initial existence and purpose for living was to free Doctor W.D. Gaster from an impossible prison.

The prison that he ended up falling into due to his own avarice after creating The Core.

A prison that existed in a world altered by Sans out of spite for his headstrong decision to abandon his brothers in another universe.

Which was once again altered by you to atone for your sins.
Sins which were caused by the possession of a demon child named Chara.

Who had, over the course of repeated run-throughs of the Underground, had latched onto your soul and caused you to murder everyone that you cared about.

Which, in an attempt to right the wrong, caused you to create Frisk in your stead, to free all of your friends from the Underground.

Friends that you wouldn’t have had if Gaster hadn’t willed you into the Underground in the first place.

Friends that, after learning of your ordeal, had stuck by you through thick and thin for the past year.

Friends that you were going to celebrate with today, at the Monster Week Monster Party, and who were happy to have you in their lives.

Yes, the void was a great place to think. But thinking too much gave you a headache, and you guessed you were probably going to be here for a good while longer.

Closing your eyes and pretending to sleep through it sometimes helped. You wanted to do it this time but you felt...odd.

For one thing, there was a floor and you were touching it. Void dreams normally had you floating, unmoving, weightless. Like being underwater but without the whole ‘wet and completely unable to breathe’ part.

For two, normally when you gazed off into the void you didn’t have the chilling feeling that someone was staring back.

“Hello?” You called out into the darkness, your voice falling flat in the shadowy abyss before you. There was nothing for it to rebound off of and you listened to it die as it catered off into the void.

There was something seriously wrong here.

As if being pulled by an unknown force, you started into the dark. You felt your body move as you placed one foot in front of the other cautiously. You didn’t know where you were going, or why you wanted to get there. There was nothing for miles and miles. You closed your eyes and let yourself wander. How long has it been since you last had a dream you could control? When was the last time you were able to shape your mindscape into something you wanted? Months probably. Years probably.

Come to think of it, you couldn’t remember.

You felt yourself come to a stop as the magnetic pull on your body dissappeared. You exhaled and released the tension in your shoulders that you didn’t know you’d been holding. When you opened your eyes they weren’t met with the dark, but the bright golden light of your shimmering soul, laid out floating before you.

A deep feeling in your chest told you that your Soul wasn’t supposed to be out of you, or on display. You reached out to grab it before you could think, taking it in your arms and cradling it. It was your Soul, the Soul you had earned, right? You went through so much to get here, you deserved to have this.

So why did it feel like it didn’t belong to you?
When the question finished in your mind you felt your body release and fall. You clutched your Soul to your chest as you fell, like a puppet snipped from its strings. Your knees crumpled under you from the sudden force of the fall and you lay kneeling on the ground. There was a pressure in the air that wasn’t there before and you struggled to breathe. You closed your eyes to concentrate, heavy breaths pouring from your mouth as you fought the pressure in your chest. The only thing you could hear was the quiet hum of your Soul aside your labored breathing. Once you recovered you leant back from your doubled over position, fondly regarding the Soul of your own creation. If you were to wake up now, you would be okay. A dream of darkness and light would be one of the more pleasant things you’d woken up to.

A very audible set of footsteps indicated that that wasn’t going to happen anytime soon.

Fear struck you when your ears honed in on the noise. What else could it be besides footsteps? Who else would be with you in the void? They were too light to be Gaster, or Sans. Flowey didn’t have access to the void. Nobody you knew had access to the void. It was inside you, inaccessible to everyone but you.

Everyone but you and, apparently, whoever else was inside you.

Panic hit you as the footsteps stopped, a chill falling down your back as your body froze. You tried to move, tried to get up and run from whatever was at your back, but you were stuck rigid in the presence of the entity behind you.

A pair of arms came into your view, from either side of you. You wanted to bat them away but you could do nothing as they took your Soul from your grasp, lifting it up and out of your sight behind you. You heard a chuckle and felt every inch of your body tighten as a low ominous voice exuded from the demon at your back.

“I think it’s time we put this back where it belongs.”

When was the last time Sans had gotten a decent amount of sleep? When was the last time he had dreams that he couldn’t predict? Honestly, he couldn’t remember. It was probably before the portal, before the Underground.

He used to have good dreams. Dreams about Papyrus’s overconfident endeavors that had him smiling when he woke. Dreams about the scientific discoveries that Gaster had made and how he could help him with whatever he was working on. He rarely had dreams for himself.

But now his dreams were plagued with every iteration of you he could imagine. Your voice from when you were a child, your face from last week. He saw you literally grow into a different person in the span of a year and it still shocked him sometimes. Your smile shifted ages sometimes. When he blinked he could see the same face that fell into the Underground for the first time.

He knew that wasn’t who you were anymore, but it was still something that lingered in the back of his mind. The reason he was constantly holding back. The reason he couldn’t let go.

Recently his dreams of you had been good, what little ones he remembered when he napped during the day. They were memories he didn’t mind reliving. Memories of you in the snow, red-faced and smiling as you watched Frisk and Papyrus throw snowballs at each other from a distance.
Memories of you on New Years as the clock struck 12 and you kissed to ring in the turn of the calendar. Memories of you doing nothing in the living room, his head lying on your legs as you read through some kind of book or whatever on your phone.

Those kinds of dreams, the lazy happy dreams, he didn’t mind so much. He wished those were the only dreams he had. He wished he had dreams of you two doing more. Dreams of you pressed so close together in the dark that it would take a spatula to separate you. Ones where his hands roamed your body, pressing into the soft give of your skin, breathing in your scent like it was the only thing he wanted to smell for the rest of his life as you whispered strained ‘I love you’s’ into the crook of his neck.

He wished for those kinds of moments with you, more moments than you two could normally get, but neither of you were the kind to initiate that sort of thing. Your relationship was comfortable, close. Sans was too unmotivated and lazy to do anything half the time and you didn’t really have the sort of sex drive that needed satisfying. Still, every once in a while it would be nice to have just a little bit more. And to his merit, he had been putting in more effort than he usually did when it came to you. After all you went through for him, for everyone, he wanted you to be safe and happy. You were the reason he kept moving forward. His reminder that there was no more resets. You were the shining noble light that kept him together, and he wanted you to feel how much he appreciated you.

That’s one of the reasons he opted to watch you sleep at night. Mainly so he could monitor you whenever you had a particularly bad relapse. Yours were worse than his. He supposed that’s because of the whole ‘was possessed by a literal demon child’ thing. Where he watched his brother die in a dream, you were the one holding the knife. It had numbed him after a while, but for you the afterimages hurt more. You both knew you would never do it now, but to watch your body move without having any control over it…

Being someone else’s puppet has to hurt more than being a member of the audience.

He enjoyed watching you sleep, though. On peaceful nights he thanked the gods for your quiet, even breaths and small unconscious smile. Nights where he could tuck stray strands of hair behind your ear and leave kisses on the back of your hand, as if you could feel them somewhere in your mind. It was the kind of lazy love he was capable of giving you, alongside the few kisses and hugs you shared on a daily basis.

But nights like these? Nights where whatever nightmare you were having wracked your body so badly that it nearly shook the bed? Nights like this where all he could do is hold you and stroke your hair as you fought through another one of your terrors. Nights like these were the reason he stayed awake in the first place.

“it’s gonna be alright.” He whispered as his fingers rubbed soothing circles in your back. He held you close to his chest as you shook. “you’re gonna get through this.”

This one was bad, he thought. You never shook like this. There were some occasions where you shivered from the cold, but this wasn’t cold shivering. Whatever you were dreaming about was enough for your shudders to rattle his own bones. You were terrified of something and he wasn’t going to let you stay that way.

“angel?” He brought a hand to your face, cupping your cheek. You were sweating almost as much as he normally would. Your breaths were hot on his face as he gently jostled you. “c’mon babe, fight it.”

He wanted to wake you, to pull you out of whatever hell you were experiencing, but he didn’t
You legs felt like they were made of concrete. As much as you wanted to get up you couldn’t. You were surprised at yourself when you found your voice.

“It belongs to me.”

The laugh aimed at you was chilling. You felt the hairs prickle on your arms, but the fear didn’t stop you.

“It’s my Soul.” You tell it, courage flaring up from somewhere within you “I earned it.”

You feel it shift to your right, the glow of the golden heart an indicator to it’s position. It’s the only source of warmth in the dark.

It’s voice was condescending and snide. “You earned it? By doing what exactly?”

“I-” Your words stop in your throat and you can feel the anger rising in you. “I’ve done enough. I’ve done more than you know.”

“I know more than you think.” The voice said as the glow moved to your left. “I know every single thing you’ve done for the past two years. I know how hard you worked to try to correct your mistakes. Mistakes that you weren’t even the cause of in the first place.”

“What do you want.” You demand from it. You felt your voice shake with the rest of your body. The cold surrounding you was nearly unbearable.

It vaguely reminded you of Snowdin the first time you set foot in it, but this was a much different kind of cold.

“What do I want?” The voice echoed. Something in the back of your head told you that you’d heard that voice before. A long time ago in another nightmare. Of course, you were already in your own head, so that something could have very well been whatever was standing behind you. You heard footsteps against a solid surface and watched as the shadowy figure came around from behind you. The colors registered in your vision and suddenly you knew why you were too scared to move.

The yellow and green of Chara’s sweater glared back at you and you strained to look up at their saccharinely sweet smile. They were holding your Soul to their chest like a plush toy and even though every part of you screamed to take it back you were frozen. They reached their hand out towards you and you yelled at your body to scramble away, but you could do nothing as they grabbed your chin in their hand and forced your head up to their eye level.
“I want a lot of things. I want revenge. I want to see chaos seep into this world and rot it from the inside out. I want blood to be shed.” They told you, dropping down to your level. They still looked like a child.

“I want what’s mine, and you’re going to give it to me whether you like it or not.”

You didn’t jolt out of your sleep like you did with most nightmares. Or, rather, you couldn’t jolt out of anything. Your body was too busy being flush up against Sans, wrapped in his arms as he regarded you with worry. A rightfully placed worry. His face seemed to soften a bit once he noticed you were awake.

“there’s my girl.” He said, smiling through his concern. “welcome back.”

You were still shaking as you frantically pulled away from him, sitting up and putting your face in your hands. It was impossible. There was no way it could be happening to you.

“Yes?” His voice didn’t tear your head from your hands. You heard a sob and it registered as your own. You were crying, again. The thought made you shake harder. You felt his hand take one of yours, and then the other one, pulling them from your face. He was giving you a look of what you knew was Determination but seeing that kind of look on his face made you feel guilty.

“What happened.”

It was a demand, not a question. You woke up shaking in his arms from what was by far the worst nightmare you’d ever had in your life and he was there with you. He was ready to fight your nightmare for you. Your body was wracked with a sob. You didn’t deserve him. You shook your head and tried to pull your hands back but he wouldn’t let you. Instead he scooted himself closer, pulling you into his lap as you cried. He cared so much. He loved you so much.

His voice softened as he brushed the sweaty strands of hair out of your face. “angel, baby, you gotta tell me what happened.” He starts, his tone soothing in the aftermath of your shock. “if this is a relapse, you have to tell me what happened so i can help you. i’m worried about you.”

You shook your head furiously. This wasn’t something he could help with. Nobody could help with this. “You can’t.”

He furrowed his brows, but his voice didn’t get any harder “why not?”

“B-because…” You sniffed, tears blurring your vision as you looked him in the eyes. “Because Chara is still inside me.”

Chapter End Notes

Welcome to the beginning of the end.
“What the hell do you mean ‘Chara is still inside you’?!”

You sat on the couch, surrounded by virtually all of your monster friends minus Undyne and Alphys. After telling Sans about your nightmare and it’s meaning you both decided the best course of action would be to call Toriel. You expected her to show up at your house soon afterwards. You did not expect her to bring Frisk, Flowey, and Asgore with her. Flowey technically showed up after the other three had already arrived at the skeleton household and was quick to talk once he was up to date on the situation.

“That’s impossible.” Flowey continued “You reset the world. You reset yourself!!”

“I know! I just…” You started, looking over at Sans for support. He looked tired. More tired than usual. “It...it makes sense.”

Asgore, who apparently wears flowery pajamas to bed, stepped forward. “Maybe it would be best
if you started from the beginning.” He offered. “Perhaps a beginning that we do not remember.”

You looked up at him. Even in bright pink pajamas he was still intimidatingly tall. He continued.

“While I am not as close to you as Frisk or Sans are, and have rarely had the opportunity to see you or get to know you, I understand that you are a very important person to the members of my family.” He started, looking down at Frisk. “If you claim to harbor the spirit or Soul of Chara, I would like to understand how it came to be.”

“Right.” You say, lowering your head. You can’t look him in the eye. “Yeah...guess I should do some explaining, huh...”

You clear your throat.

“It started when I first fell into the Underground. I didn’t know what I was getting myself into. I didn’t know at the time that I was there because of Gaster. I didn’t know anything about Chara. I fell into the ruins for the first time for a reason that I don’t really understand. I want to call it curiosity, but it was probably more than that. I ended up meeting Flowey who immediately tried to kill me. I know now that it was because he knew that I didn’t belong there. I wasn’t a monster that lived in the Underground. It was his job. I don’t hold it against him.”

You move your eyes up to Frisk and Flowey, both of which had your full attention. You could see the memories play behind their eyes. Frisk probably went through the same thing. You lowered your eyes and continued.

“At first I didn’t know what to do. I followed Toriel through the ruins and listened to her explanations about puzzles and pacifism. After she left me to go do...whatever...I ended up walking the ruins alone. I came across a couple of yellow stars that enabled me to ‘save’ my progress. When I touched them I could see a menu in my mind, and each one I touched filled me with Determination. I can’t really describe the feeling, but I made sure to check every one.

I kept walking for a while and I encountered even more monsters. We had some miscommunications and I tried talking to them, like Toriel said, but it got to a point where I couldn’t dodge the attacks they threw at my Soul. I took a bad hit and before I knew it, I was dead. But I could hear a voice in my head telling me not to give up. A voice I didn’t recognize, even though it sounded familiar.

I woke up shortly after in front of one of the stars I had saved at. I guess being able to see them and touch them meant that I was able to save myself from dying. I didn’t know what to think of it, but I felt something propelling me forward so I didn’t dwell much on it. I ended up finding those stars everywhere later on.

The second time I died was in the forest near Snowdin. I was desperately trying to avoid being hit by Dogamy and Dogaressa’s axes when I felt one cut clean through me. Everything went black and I heard the voice again. It was a repeating trend, dying and hearing encouraging words to not give up and then coming back. After the tenth time the shock of it started to wear off and I went into confrontations with monsters not even caring whether or not I got hit. I knew that if I died I’d eventually come back and some part of my little kid mind thought I was invincible as long as I didn’t give up. I was kind of right.

I made it to Waterfall and ended up getting attacked by Undyne multiple times. She ended up killing me so many times that I just gave up after a while. After everything went dark I shut down. I had the thought ‘if I could go back and do this over again, I would’. The next thing I knew I was in the same patch of flowers I fell in at the start.
I did that a few times, running through the underground and resetting when I did something wrong. It was fun for a while, trying to see how many things I could figure out on my own. Of course, some things changed with each run. I did some things differently, ran into a few different monsters, made different choices. I made friends with Undyne, accidentally set her house on fire, fought Mettaton, and made it to the palace at the end where Sans was waiting as my judge. He told me what LOVE and EXP stood for and let me pass with minor well wishing, telling me that the fate of the world was in my hands. I couldn’t handle that kind of responsibility, so when I met you for the first time, Asgore, and you killed me, I reset. I honestly didn’t expect you to be so ruthless.

Something went wrong then, I suppose. In that reset I felt something change in me. I started hearing a voice in the back of my head that told me that running through the way I was was boring. I’d heard every conversation, met every monster, fought nearly every battle. It was monotonous. The voice asked me if I was happy with the way things were, and if I wanted to change it. I kind of did. I went through the underground with a different mindset and before I knew it the dust of the first Froggit I encountered littered the floor before me. Part of me felt pity and regret, but a larger part of me felt...alive.”

You took a break and a deep breath as your hands shook. You remember that feeling, the feeling of remorse that welled up inside you when you raised your stick and sliced the Froggit in half. The shock that tore through you after you realized what you did felt like a betrayal. You remember that feeling quickly dying as sick satisfaction set in. It made you sick. You took a deep breath and steeled yourself, continuing.

“I didn’t know at the time that Chara’s spirit had latched onto my Soul. I guess it was because I made it to the throne room that time, since Chara and Asriel died there. Asriel’s spirit had already latched onto Flowey after Alphys injected him with Determination, so it would only make sense that Chara would latch onto the only other Human that managed to make it that far. After that...things went down a darker path.

I started killing everything in my sight, looking for the differences. Before I knew it the Ruins were empty and there was nothing but ash behind me. I...I ended up killing Toriel and walked past the door. I knew I couldn’t go back, but I didn’t care. Chara had set in my mind and I could do nothing but go forward. It was when I killed Papyrus for the first time that I immediately wanted to stop, but I couldn’t. I wasn’t in control anymore.

I met Sans at the end again and needless to say, things didn’t go well. We fought, I died, I came back, we fought some more. Chara was driving me. When I finally landed a hit...I felt like the worst person in the world. I walked past Sans’ ashes into the throne room and watched Flowey kill Asgore in an attempt to stay on Chara’s good side, but they ended up killing him too. Before I knew it Chara had completely taken control of me and tried to convince me to erase the world I killed. I didn’t listen and I was thrown into darkness…”

Your hands were shaking at this point, as was your voice. It took you a second to register Sans’ hand on your arm. Everyone in the room was dead silent and you felt like you were breathing too loud.

It was Frisk voice that pierced the silence. They’d moved closer to you during your story, now only two feet from you as you sat on the couch. “What happened next.”

Next...you brought your hands up to rub at your arms, drawing your knees in. “I felt horrible. I took so long to learn about all of these monsters and become their friend, and then I went and murdered them all and left nothing behind me. What I did was unforgivable, so I did something unspeakable just so I could have one last shot at saving everyone.
After I came back I knew I wasn’t going to be able to do anything to save anyone. I knew that Sans knew what I did. He always seemed to know. I went back to see him so many times in that corridor, trying to apologize. I suppose after the third or fourth time he got fed up and gave me the key to the back room of their house. The one with the machine in it. I didn’t know what it was for at first but after another round it came online on it’s own and then I knew. I knew that I would be able to fix everything with it and pull myself out of the cycle I trapped myself in. I punched in a few buttons, secured a substitute, and jumped through. The rest is history.”

There was a hard silence after your explanation had ended. You felt the eyes of everyone in the room on you and you wanted to shrink into yourself and disappear. Things were so much easier in the beginning, before your memories came back. In that first week where Papyrus tried to cook you food and their friends had visited you at work. Things seemed so much easier back then. So much more peaceful.

But now? There was no going back. Your memories had all come flooding into you the second you picked up that file.

“It all makes sense now, I suppose.” You continue into the silence. “My clear Soul, the fact that even with a color in it i’m still nervous and unsure that it’s mine. Why their name clung to me the strongest in the reset...”

“I AM STILL NOT FOLLOWING.” Papyrus said, stepping forward. “WHY DOES IT MAKE SENSE? I AM CONFUSED.”

“angel.” Sans’ tone was serious as he put a hand on your arm. The arms which you were already squeezing. “what did you do to make yourself come back one more time.”

You shut your eyes hard. “You’re not gonna like it.”

“Nobody likes any part of this so you might as well just tell us anyway.” Flowey piped up from his spot on Frisk’s arms. His voice sounded harsher than usual. You didn’t blame him.

“I might have….sorta...kinda...sold my soul to Chara.”

There was a beat of silence as the information set in, the calm before the storm.

“you WHAT?!?!”
“Oh dear...”
“Are you out of your fucking mind?!”
“Flowey, language!”
“WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?!”

“I don’t know!!” You yell, uncurling from your position and standing up. Your outburst came directed at Flowey, who was the closest and most in your face. “I was scared okay?! I was a kid and I wanted to do anything to fix my problem! I didn’t even think it was that important, having a Soul. I didn’t care!! I just wanted everyone to be alive and happy again! But now Chara’s still inside me and they’re hell-bent on coming back to the surface. I’m a walking ticking time bomb that could go off at any second! Two years after all of you were finally set free and-oh god the party.” You look at Sans frantically. You felt the effects of the panic attack you’d been riding during your tirade hit you. “I can’t go to the party tonight. What if Chara possesses me while I’m there? I’ll be surrounded by hundreds of Monsters that I once called my friends and I have a mass murdering twelve year old inside of me. Oh god what if I end up hurting someone, or worse!”

Sans stood up off the couch, grabbing your shoulders in an attempt to ground you. “you’re not
going to hurt anybody. *chara* isn’t going to hurt anybody. we’ll all figure out a solution together.”

“I’ve got a solution.”

Everybody in the room turned towards Flowey. He was bent over in his flowerpot and shaking. Sans narrowed his eyes at him and the tension in the air seemed to rise.

“That so.” He said, stepping in front of you protectively. “mind sharing with the class?”

Flowey looked up, a twisted grin formed on his face. You knew that grin. That grin had tried to murder you before. “You already know what it is.”

Sans’ magic instantly took root in his eye and he smirked. “over my dead body.”

Several white pellets formed behind Flowey. “That can be arranged.”

“That is quite enough!”

Toriel’s commanding voice rung out through the room, completely dispelling any and all magic conjured. You watched both Flowey and Sans shrink bashfully as she approached you.

“Frisk.” She started, focusing on you and Sans and not turning to look at them. “Please take Flowey outside. The adults need to talk.”

You watched Frisk smirk as they carried the irate floweypot outside. Once the door had closed, the air in the room seemed to significantly lighten. There was still the looming sense of dread at the fact of the new realization.

Chara was alive, inside you, and was out for blood.

“Toriel.” You say softly. You can feel yourself still shaking from the panic as you fall back down onto the couch. “When you first met me at the restaurant, why didn’t you say anything? About my name? Did you know?”

Toriel looked down. “At the time...I was skeptical.” She started. “I knew in my heart that my child had passed away. It was an unfortunate event that I witnessed with my own two eyes. When you introduced yourself to us, I thought of it as nothing but a mere coincidence. Though I will not lie, hearing the name Chara come from someone as kind as open as you made my heart swell.”

“I’m flattered.” You tell her, fidgeting with your hands.

“I am very well aware of the situation at hand.” She continued. “I am aware of Chara’s original personality. I am aware of their original plot to destroy the humans using my son as a vessel. It saddens me to know that one of the children which I had devoted my care to would have turned out to be so horrible. However, if the soul of my child, as wicked as they are, resides in someone with as much determination as you...I am sure you will be able to overcome this.”

“But I wasn’t able to once.” You say, grabbing your arms again. “If Chara could possess me once who’s to say it won’t happen again? They have my Soul.”

“IF THEY HAVE YOUR SOUL, THEN WHY IS IT GOLD?”

Everyone turned to look at Papyrus. Toriel and Asgore were clearly the most confused.

“Gold?” Asgore raised an eyebrow. Papyrus stepped forward.
“YES! GOLD!” He walked over and sat himself down on the couch next to you, putting a hand on your shoulder and facing the two royals. “THE OTHER DAY WHEN WE WERE ALL AWAKE AT FOUR IN THE MORNING, FOR SOME REASON, ANGEL REVEALED TO US THAT HER SOUL HAD TURNED GOLD OUT OF NOWHERE! WE HAD ORIGINALLY THOUGHT THAT IT WAS BECAUSE SANS BROKE THE MARK THAT GASTER HAD PUT ON HER SOUL, BECAUSE HE IS STRONGER THAN GASTER.”

“monster markings can only be broken by someone with stronger magic than the monsters who created the mark.” Sans said. “that’s what gaster said.”

Asgore nodded. “He is correct. Monster markings are to be made with the assurance that the two are devoted to each other for the rest of their lives. They are made with the hopes of creating a child from the magic and letting that child live on as the legacy and proof of the strength of their relationship. I have unfortunately been called in several times in my life in order to break a mark placed on two monsters who had come to negative conclusions.”

“You’re like the Underground’s personal divorce lawyer.” You look up at him. “Is it rough? Watching monsters fall out of love with each other?”

He nods again. “In the beginning it was. But, knowing that the reason I broke their marks was so that I could give them a second chance at life...that is what helped.”

“You claim that the mark on your Soul was broken by Doctor Gaster?” Toriel questioned.

You nodded. “Yeah. Or...we think so? None of us are really well versed in what it’s supposed to look like when a mark is placed on a Soul. I didn’t even know they were a thing until it happened.”

“it’s common where i came from.” Sans gave his own side. “for humans and monsters to mark each other. i never explored it because it wasn’t something that interested me. I kinda hoped that my magic would be enough to break gaster’s mark on her soul, but i don’t even know if it worked or not.”

“You are underestimating your brother.”

You all turned to Asgore. Sans was the one to reply.

“What?”

Asgore cleared his throat. “It may come as a surprise to you, but Doctor Gaster is much stronger than you think.”

“no he isn’t.” Sans argued, standing up. “he’s living off of my magic. the reason he even exists now is because he took magic from me. you can’t be stronger than the person you’re feeding off of.”

“He is not feeding off of you anymore.” Asgore said, staring Sans down. A strange feeling of uncertainty filled the air. It felt like they were going to fight.

Sans narrowed his eyes. “what do you know about my brother that i don’t.”

It was an accusation, but still a question. Asgore took advantage of it.

“I know much.” He started, straightening up to his full height. He towered over you. “You were not here to see his work as a scientist, or the power he gained while working.”
“Power?” You raised your own eyebrow. “What power.”

Asgore eyed Sans and waited for him to sit back down. Once his black shorts had made it back to their seat, he himself took a seat on the carpet in front of you. You settled yourself in between the two skeleton brothers. You felt a story coming on.

“Your brother has always been a very headstrong and straightforward man.” Asgore started. Toriel knelt and took her place beside him. “He appeared to me several decades after The War had ended, a time so long ago it seems like a dream. The experience of war was set in me and I was much different than the man you see before you. My convictions were set in me and my trust in others was very low. It was a time before the softness of a family had warmed my heart.

The seven wizards had already sealed us behind the barrier and our people lived only in The Ruins. He was escorted to me through my guards at the time who claimed that a monster nobody recognized had appeared out of thin air. He was brought before me and immediately explained that he was a scientist from another world and that he had come to save my people…”
I know everything feels like its been building up to something. That's because it has.

There are 7 chapters left of this story. We are finally coming to the end.

Frisk said sat on the stoop outside, holding Flowey between their knees. “What do you think they’re talking about?”

“Don’t know, don’t care.” The flower said, crossing his leafy arms. Frisk didn’t believe him.

“You tried to kill her.”

“I wasn’t gonna kill her.” Flowey mumbled.

“Yeah you were.” Frisk pressed. “The minute you heard Chara’s name you got hostile.”

“I didn’t get hostile!”

“You’re getting hostile right now!”

“Just drop it alright!” Flowey turned to face Frisk. “I can feel however I want about this and it’s none of your business!”

“It is my business!” Frisk shot back. “You’re my friend. Angel is my friend. I don’t want my friends trying to kill each other.”

“And what if she does?” Flowey asked. “Kill somebody? What if Chara takes over her pathetic human body and goes on a murder spree? What are you gonna do about it?”

Frisk flinched. “I….I’ll stop Chara. Just like I stopped you.”

“Chara isn’t like me, Frisk.” He told them. “Chara isn’t going to stop at the mention of mercy. They’re a vengeful murderous demon who wants to watch the world burn. They’ve always been that way. You can’t save them, no matter what you do.”

“I can try.”

Flowey shook his head. This was how Frisk was. Determined in everything they set out to do.

“They won’t yield to kindness.” He told them.

“I can reason with them.”

“They won’t listen to reason.”

“I’ll confront them.”
“No.” Flowey said, looking Frisk dead in the eye. “No way. Like hell i’d let you.”

Frisk pouted “You can’t tell me what to do. You’re not my mom.”

“No but she’s right there, behind that door.” He gestured with his head behind them. “And if you die trying to do something stupid and heroic while stopping Chara from slaughtering everyone then she’s going to be the one hurt the most. Do you want that on your conscience?”

“What about your conscience?!” Frisk argued. “You lied to Toriel!”

He rolled his eyes “I lie about a lot of things.”

“Asriel.”

His whole body froze at the name. Hearing it from other people didn’t bother him. Hearing it from Frisk did.

“Don’t call me that.” He grumbled. Frisk frowned.

“Why did you lie to Toriel?”

“I didn’t want to die, mostly.” The flower looked down, purposefully avoiding Frisk’s eyes. “It took me two years to finally come to terms with who I am as a monster. I don’t have a Soul but I’m just as much a living being as anyone else. I know I have Asriel’s spirit inside of me, but I’m my own person now. Plus, it would be easier for everyone if she just moved on and forgot about the kid anyway. You’re her kid now. That’s more important.”

It wasn’t an answer that Frisk liked, but they nodded their head in acceptance anyway. “Yeah. I guess it is.”

Flowey turned away from them. “Anyway, we have to figure out a solution to this whole Chara thing.”

“Without killing anyone.” Frisk emphasized.

“Someone has to die Frisk.” Flowey glanced back at them. “At the very least, Chara has to die. There’s no way to do that without killing her in the process.”

It was a worst case scenario that Frisk didn’t want to hear. “What if we could separate them? Like what Alphys was going to do with you?”

Flowey scoffed “Didn’t you hear her? She sold her Soul to Chara. Even if they did get separated who’s to say that Chara wouldn’t just destroy her Soul anyway? Besides, do you want to risk pulling a serial killer out into the world?”

“You’re here.” Frisk smirked at him. He could see it out the corner of his eye.

“Very funny.” He said, turning to flick the kid on the nose. “I’m serious. You weren’t there to see what Chara did. You weren’t the one to watch them paint the Underground in ash. You never felt the cold steel of their knife slice through your body with the intent to kill. Chara is way out of your league, Frisk.”

“I won’t be fighting them alone.” Frisk said, bringing up their hands to cup Flowey’s petals. “You’ll be with me. All of my friends will be with me.”

“It’s not going to go the way you think it will.”
“Yes it will.”

“You don’t know when it’s going to happen.”

“If it happens.”

“You won’t be able to save or reset.”

“I wasn’t planning on it.”

Flowey sighed heavily, pulling his head out of Frisk’s hands. “You’re really not going to take no for an answer here?”

Frisk smiled at him. “Nope!”

Flowey made an annoyed grumbled noise. Of course Frisk wasn’t going to back down. Determination was Frisk’s main trait. They’d fight him until the end of the earth until. They did it once.

“Alright listen. I don’t wanna admit it, but i’ve been thinking about this scenario happening for a while.” Flowey started. “Back when I found out that she wasn’t actually Chara, the ‘what if’ kept going through my mind and honestly? I expected this.”

“You’ve been thinking about what would happen if Chara somehow came back.” Frisk gathered. “I’ve been thinking of how I would deal with it.” He clarified. “It’s not my responsibility but I can’t sit back and watch Chara let loose on anyone again. I already went through that hell once, i don’t want to do it again.”

Frisk crossed their legs. “What does Chara even want?”

“They want me.” Flowey answered, begrudgingly. “They want revenge on me because I didn’t kill hundreds of people when we exited to the surface. When they died the first time.”

Frisk made a face. If Chara was really the type to hold that big of a grudge, they were in trouble. It would only get worse the longer they waited. If they were going to get rid of Chara, they had to act fast.

“What if we lured Chara out of Angel somehow?”

Flowey gaped at them. “That’s a one way ticket to murdertown kid.”

“But it would work!” They urged. “What if we could give Chara something that they couldn’t refuse, and then pull them out of Angel and trap them.”

Flowey scoffed. “How the hell do you expect to trap them? In a cage? This isn’t Super Mario Frisk. You can’t just pull a lever and suddenly drop Chara into a lava pit. It doesn’t work like that.”

Flowey watched a lightbulb go off in Frisk’s head as the grinned at him. It was absolutely oozing determination.

“Flowey you’re a genius!”

“No.” He protested, crossing his leaves in front of him him. “I don’t like that face you’re making. That’s the face someone makes when they’re about to do something really stupid.”
“It’s not stupid, it’s brilliant.”

“It can’t be brilliant if it involves lava.”

“Not lava. Hotland.” Frisk put Flowey on the ground in front of them, finally allowing his flowerpot to touch the ground. “I have an idea. An idea that will probably absolutely definitely help everybody, but I need two things to do it.”

Flowey frowned “I’m going to regret listening to this, aren’t I?”

It was a brilliant plan, Frisk thought. Reckless, but brilliant. They narrated their plan to an irate Flowey who was even more irate after the explanation ended.

“You’re crazy.” The flower concluded. “Do you know how convoluted and stupid that is? What if you die?! What if I die?!”

“We’re not gonna die!” Frisk assured him. “We’re not gonna die because we have each other, and that’s what Chara is counting on.”

Flowey scoffed and looked to the side “It would be safer if we asked Asgore to do it.”

“No!” Frisk grabbed his petals and pulled him close to their face. “Nobody can know. Especially not mom or dad. Or Angel. Or Sans. They’d try to stop us and we’d lose the element of surprise.”

“This is the dumbest thing you’ve ever done in your entire life. And you went up against me once.” Flowey scolded them. “But fine. If you really think this plan of yours is going to work then we’ll do it. I’ll go grab the brainiac and convince him, or something. If he’s not busy doing something equally as stupid.”

Frisk smiled. “I knew I could count on you.”

“I’m surrounded by idiots.” The flower quipped before popping down into the pot and disappearing to fulfill his new quest.

They had twelve hours until the party. They had to make them count.

You and the two skeletons on either side of you had all slid back into the couch, completely enraptured by the story of how Asgore and Gaster met.

“He said that beyond the door lie the entirety of the underground and with the expansion my people had a new hope in them. After the completion of The Core and the settling of my people and my newly acquired family, he had solidified himself as one of the most valuable monsters to ever work by my side and we developed a collegiate friendship.”

You felt your arm being squeezed and glanced to your left at Sans. He was frowning.

“that still doesn’t explain how he’s stronger than me.”

“I am getting to that.” The king said, unfolding his hands. “In the decades that he had worked with me his latent magical ability grew to exponential proportions to the point where he was able to completely construct the entirety of The Core all on his own. He used his own magic, and some of
mine, to create a system that magically transmuted the geothermal energy of the earth into electrical and magical energy needed to sustain my people. The reason The Underground continued to exist was because of the power that Gaster obtained through his experiences. Of course, it would stand to reason that he is stronger than you because he is your older brother, but I would like to believe that years of magical experience would put him ahead instead of chronological age.”

“so, the reason he’s stronger than me is because he had years of practice here.” Sans mulled it over. “...it makes sense but i’m not happy about it.”

“You say that you attempted to break the mark on Angel’s Soul, did you not?” Toriel questioned. “How exactly did you go about it?”

You and Sans both shared an embarrassed look. You were having sex. Did Toriel know that you were having sex? Did Papyrus know that you were having sex? Probably not since he wasn’t even home. On a scale of one to ten how appropriate was it to tell the queen of monsters that you were having sex? You blushed and stared at the ground.

“We uh...” You started, feeling heat creep up your cheeks. You couldn’t form a coherent sentence. “...Intimacy?”

“yeah that.” Sans quickly agreed

“They were probably trying to have sex.” Papyrus blurted from beside you. You and Sans turn to him and shriek in unison.

“Papyrus!!”

“bro what the fuck?!”

“What? You were.” Papyrus said, crossing one leg over the other. “Really you treat me like I am a child about these things but I am not.”

“That’s not something you just say out loud!!” You tell him.

He tilts his head at you. “Why not?”

You put your face in your hands, mortified. “This is the worst conversation I have ever had in my entire life.”

“We’re all adults.” Sans said from his spot, though his voice was nervously shaking just as much as yours. “We should be able to talk about these things normally.”

You scoffed. “Please. We’re not adults. The only ones in this room who’re adults are Toriel and Asgore, and that’s just because they’re hundreds of years old.”

The latter were both smiling at the three of you.

“Ah, to be young and in love.” Asgore said, standing up. “Though endearing, intimacy is not the way a person breaks a mark on a Soul.”

“Well it’s not like we were trying!” You defend. “We don’t know what we’re doing here alright? This whole thing is sorta new for us.”

Asgore puts a hand on your shoulder. Between his intimidating height and the two skeletons beside you you were beginning to feel a bit boxed in. “There is nothing wrong with not knowing what you
are doing. Sometimes it is okay to admit that you need help or guidance.”

You look down. “I don’t even know if I need help. I mean, I definitely need help with this Chara thing. I don’t want anyone to get hurt. I don’t understand what’s happening to me. Why is my Soul gold? Gold isn’t a color that Souls normally are.”

“No, they are not.” The finality of Asgore’s voice made you uneasy. “I would offer to take a look at it for you, but I sense that in light of recent developments you would prefer not to have your Soul pulled out in the near future.”

“Nope. No way.” You cross your arms in front of your chest. “I don’t want to look at it, I don’t want to know about it. I don’t give a shit about what Chara did to it, I don’t want to know. I don’t want to see it change into something even weirder. What if it has cracks running down it? Or the gold isn’t really gold at all and it’s black inside! I’m too afraid of it changing again to want to know what it looks like.”

“That is probably for the best.” Toriel concluded. “To have your Soul altered so many times, I can only imagine how jarring that must feel.”

“Nevertheless.” Asgore said, standing up to his full height. “If what you say is true, and Chara does reside in you, we will take any measure necessary in order to prevent them from causing harm to anyone.”

You swallowed dryly. Any measure necessary. The back of your mind screamed that that included killing you. You looked at Sans and saw his grin shift into something severe. He was thinking the same thing. Toriel was the one to ease the air.

“I am sure, if anything were to happen, that it would not happen for a very long time.” She optimistically offered. “Certainly not any time today.”

“THIS IS TRUE.” Papyrus took her side. “IF THIS DEMON HUMAN ENDS UP POSSESSING YOU, OR SOMETHING, YOU WILL BE SURROUNDED BY THE STRONGEST MONSTERS IN THE WORLD! SURELY WITH ALL OF OUR POWERS COMBINED THERE IS NO WAY IT WOULD RISK COMING TO THE SURFACE!”

You frowned, gaze directed at the floor. “I don’t even know if I want to go to the party now. What if I just stayed home so there wouldn’t be a risk? I could pick up a work shift tonight or something.”

“Absolutely not.” Toriel protested. “You are as much a part of our family as anyone. If you were to not come, Frisk would be devastated.”

“AND YOU HAVE SUCH A NICE DRESS!” Papyrus added. “IT WOULD BE A SHAME NOT TO WEAR IT!”

“Oh, please, use guilt against me. I love that.” You rolled your eyes, a sarcastic smile tugging at the corner of your lips “Fine, I’ll go. For Frisk. To wish them a happy birthday.”

“AND FOR THE DRESS!”

“Yes. And for the dress.”

“Wonderful.” Toriel said, clapping her paws together. “If that is settled, there is still much to do before the celebration tonight. We should be getting a head start on the preparations.”

“Yes. Twelve hours is not a very long time to prepare.” Asgore agreed, turning to the skeleton
brothers. “I trust you to take care of things here.”

“YOUR TRUST IS WELL PLACES, YOUR MAJESTY!” Papyrus stood up from the couch. “WE WILL SEE TO IT THAT ANGEL ARRIVES ON TIME TO THE PARTY, UNHARMED.”

“Then I will see you to it.” The king said, turning towards the door with Toriel. As soon as the door closed you felt your body sink into the couch.

“I can’t go.” You bring your hands to your face to hide. “I absolutely cannot go to the party. Not like this. Not with this happening.”

“OF COURSE YOU CAN!” Papyrus grabbed your hands and pulled them away from your eyes. There was no hiding from him. “YOU CAN GO BECAUSE WE WILL BE THERE!”

“That’s what i’m afraid of!” You tell him, not bothering to pull your hands out of his grip. You couldn’t if you wanted to. “I’ve seen you die Papyrus. I have nightmares about killing all of my friends and not being able to do anything about it. If I go to the party and then Chara does something and takes over...knowing that I went there and put everyone at risk. I’d never be able to forgive myself!”

“But you have to go with us.” He argued. “If you go there will be food, and dancing, and music and party poppers. And cake! It is a night of celebration, for all of us. Don’t you want to celebrate how far you’ve come?”

You feel his grip on your hands loosen and you slip them out of his hold. “I thought I was doing so well...but even after all this time, I’m nothing but someone else’s puppet.” You admit, defeat in your voice. Papyrus wasn’t satisfied with your answer.

“You are not a puppet.” He asserted. “You are your own person. You are our angel.”

“What kind of person lives without a soul.” You say bitterly, standing up and heading towards the stairs. Papyrus watched as you made a beeline for your bedroom door, closing it roughly behind you. He clicked his teeth together and turned to Sans.

“You have been very quiet, brother.” He observed.

Papyrus’s voice seemed to snap sans out of whatever trance he was in. “What?”

The taller skeleton sat himself back down on the sofa. “You are thinking very hard about this situation.”

It was a statement, not a question. He was right. Sans was thinking hard about it.

“I watched it too pap.” He confessed. “I know what chara is capable of. I fought them. I was killed by them. and now that thing is inside her.”

“You are scared.”

Also a statement. Sans didn’t deny it. “terrified.”

“You love her very much.”

“more than you know.” He said, growling. “dammit. i didn’t plan for any of this to happen.”
“NOBODY PLANS ANYTHING IN LIFE TO HAPPEN SANS.” Papyrus tried to console him

“i didn’t plan on falling in love with her.”

“BUT IT HAPPENED ANYWAY.”

“I didn’t plan on chara coming back.”

“DO YOU BELIEVE HER?” Papyrus asked him. “ABOUT THE DEMON INSIDE HER?”

Sans shoved his hands in his pockets. “you didn’t see the fear in her eyes this morning. she’s telling the truth.”

“A DEMON AFTER THE SOUL OF OUR VERY OWN ANGEL.” Papyrus semi-monologued. “WHAT A DASTARDLY VILLAINOUS THING. CLEARLY WE MUST DO EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO STOP THIS MONSTROSITY.”

Sans half rolled his eyes “c’mon bro, be serious.”

“I AM. I’M BEING VERY SERIOUS.” He said, turning to the smaller brother. “IF YOU LOVE ANGEL, THEN YOU HAVE TO BE HER HERO WHEN SHE NEEDS YOU THE MOST. SHOW HER THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF AND LET HER KNOW THAT SHE IS SAFE. EVEN IF SHE IS NOT, EVEN IF THINGS GO WRONG, SHE WILL BE COMFORTED IN THE FACT THAT YOU WILL BE THERE FOR HER, NO MATTER WHAT.”

Sans stared at his brother in awe, his words hitting him hard. His brother was so cool. He always knew what to say to fix a situation.

“why are you so great.”

“BECAUSE I HAVE TO MAKE YOU LOOK GOOD!” Papyrus answered with a wink. “NOW, GO AND COMFORT HER. WE HAVE TWELVE HOURS UNTIL THE PARTY AND WE HAVE TO MAKE IT COUNT!”

“right, yeah.” Sans nodded and immediately teleported into his bedroom. You were on the bed, facing the wall, hugging your knees to your chest. He took the opportunity to crawl onto the bed behind you, wrapping his arms around your waist. You let yourself be pulled into him and felt his head rest between your shoulderblades.

“I’m scared.” You admitted after a while, your voice a murmur in the silence. You tilted your head back to rest on his skull.

“me too.” he confessed. You could feel his mouth shift on the back of your neck. A kiss of comfort.

“What are we going to do?” The question hung in the air like a spider on a web.

“well, what we’re not gonna do is sit here and mope about it. we’re not gonna act like we’re already giving up.” He tells you, moving his head to your shoulder. “we’re gonna go to the party tonight, you’re gonna have a good time, and you’re not gonna think about Chara for the entire night. you’re going to have a good time for once and we’ll be there to make sure you do.”

You smiled weakly. He was trying so hard to stay strong for you. He’d already given up so many times and now he was fighting for your sake. You could feel how much he cared about you in his
words and it made your heart ache. If he was willing to fight, then so would you.

“Yeah.” You say, moving your cheek to rest against his. “We’ll make tonight a good night. No matter what.”

Chapter End Notes

The party will be the next chapter I swear to god. Sorry for keeping you all in so much suspense.
I had a lot of trouble with this chapter. I know a lot of people are excited about the party but I literally could not think of a way to transition between the drama from last chapter into the festivities of this one so I'm breaking them into two chapters. TBH the party itself isn't going to be as important as what takes place during it, so I hope none of you are upset if the transition into the next chapter is less than perfect.

This is the best I can do. This is me pushing myself so I don’t give up on this story. I’m trying very hard not to give up on this story. I'm sorry if I worried any of you with the lack of updates. There's a lot going on right now in my life. I'll try to finish TRTR as quick as I can.

"Absolutely not."

Flowey scowled at him. Of course this would happen. “What? Why!”

“Because I am done helping you. The last time I did was a social suicide. I’m not going to put myself at risk for you again. Whatever it is is probably ludicrous.” Gaster responded, fidgeting with a screw in the whatever thing he was making.

Flowey always hated dealing with Gaster. He hated traveling to Alphys’s old abandoned lab almost as much. Having to do both at the same time was like asking him to walk through a field of his own thorns. Painful, unnecessary, and something that could be avoided. It took him until the hour before the party to work up the nerve to approach him, but it looked like it was going to be the same irritated song and dance. He cursed to himself. Fighting with the scientist would get them nowhere. He’d have to appeal to him somehow, talk him into it.

“And what you’re doing down here isn’t?” The flower asked him, tilting his head at the thing in his hands. “What are you doing down here anyway? I thought Alphys banned you from her labs?”

The scientist grunted as he connected the two pieces of the sciencemajig. “I came to pick up a few things. I’ll be leaving shortly.”

Flowey rolled his eyes “Yeah right. You’re making something stupid, aren’t you?”

“It’s none of your business.” The scientist brushed him off as he put the round ball-y looking thing into the slightly larger machine in the middle of the table. “Shouldn’t you be at a party or something?”

“Shouldn’t you?” The flower quipped back. “They had a spot at a table for you and everything.”

He seemed to pause at the mention of a table spot. Good. Lure him in.

“They did?”

Flowey smirked. “Yeah, they did until they replaced you with someone who isn’t a piece of
garbage.”

He looked up from the machine. “They replaced me?”

“Yeah. Her name’s Chi.” Flowey informed him. “Nice monster girl from the capital. She’s a bit too nice for me but hey, anyone’s better than you, right?”

Gaster didn’t respond, instead focusing his efforts, and a screwdriver, on the machine in front of him. He was purposefully not responding. Good.

“Angel was the one to decide it, since you up and left her boyfriend a blubbering mess in the middle of the night, and everything. She was reeeeeeal pissed off about it. Though I’m not sure if that was just her being pissed off at you or the fact that Chara’s reawoken inside her but hey, who knows right?”

Gaster’s hand fumbled at Chara’s name, slipping and making a loud metal noise as the screwdriver raked against the cover. “What.”

Flowey smirked. That got him. “Yeah, that got your attention didn’t it.”

“What do you mean Chara has reawoken inside of her?!” There were hints of both concern and rage in Gaster’s voice.

“I mean exactly what I said.” Flowey stared him down. If the shock of the situation wasn’t enough to convince him, he had another way. “I mean, none of us have actually seen it. She’s the one claiming that it happened, in a nightmare or something. But I saw her eyes when she was telling us what happened and there’s no doubt. Nobody can instill that kind of fear but them.”

Flowey watched his face furrow in frustration as he placed the screwdriver down. “You believe her.”

“Of course I believe her.” He said “She’s not the kind of person who would lie about something that dangerous.”

“No, she is not.” Gaster agreed, sinking slightly in his seat. He didn’t want to believe it. Flowey didn’t want to believe it either. He took a breath.

“Listen. I know you still like her.” Flowey told him. “But if Chara’s inside her we have to figure out a way to pull them out before anyone gets hurt. She’s going to be in a huge hall surrounded by monsters. If Chara acts up during the party, i’m not sure if either Sans or Asgore can stop them. We need an extra hand. We need you.”

“And what makes you think that I’ll be of any help?” The scientist returned to his machine. “I don’t have the same kind of fighting capabilities that my brothers do.”

“We don’t need you to fight. We need you to use science.”

Gaster raised a browbone. “I’m afraid i’m not following you.”

“Of course you’re not.” Flowey crossed his petals. “Listen, that machine that you were going to use to pull Asriel out of me. Is that still working?”

It took Gaster all of a second to figure out what he was aiming for. It earned him a harsh glare. “No.”
Flowey expected it “Is that a ‘no it’s not working’ no or…”

“It’s an ‘I’m not going to put Angel in a situation that could kill her’ no.” He countered. “I’m not going to put her in any more danger than I already have.”

He grit his teeth. “And what about the monsters that are in danger, huh?” He raised him. “What about them? Every second she’s in the same room as everyone there’s a high chance of Chara coming alive and dusting everything in sight. Do you want to risk your family getting killed?! Do you really want the extermination of the entire monster race on your hands just because you don’t want to risk the safety of human you happened to fall in love with?!”

He expected retaliation. He expected Gaster to start yelling right back at him, as he always did. He didn’t expect the scientist to slump in his chair, defeated.

“You seem so sure that I’m the one who can stop this.” He was still fighting him, but there was no fight behind his words.

“It was Frisk’s idea, actually.” Flowey briefed him. “You’ve seen what they can do. If Chara breaks loose at that party and we don’t have a contingency plan, that’s it. We’re all dead. And there’s no guarantee that Angel will be able to recover if it happens. We need a way to control the situation before it gets out of hand, and you have a way to do that.”

“So it’s either one person dies or everyone dies.”

“She’s not going to die.” Flowey fought. “If we can get this right, nobody will die. Everyone will live and have a stupid happy ever after. Isn’t that what you want?”

Gaster didn’t look at him when he answered. “I want everyone to be happy without the risk.”

“There’s always a risk.” Flowey warned him. “It’s up to you to decide whether or not it’s worth it. What’s worth more, the fate of Monsterkind, or the life of one human woman?”

The scientist gave him a long hard look before answering. “I don’t have much of a choice, do I?”

Flowey shrugged. “I mean, you have a choice. Either you use that machine to pull Chara out of her or I’ll do it myself. I’m not above it. Frisk won’t be happy with me though. Hell, nobody will be happy with me. Sans will probably kill me.”

“If you do it you’ll definitely kill her.” Gaster stated, mildly appalled. “Why are you so certain that it has to be done on tonight of all nights?”

“Because Chara’s a sucker for good timing.” Flowey answered him. “They waited for the right time to take over Asriel’s body, they waited to take over Angel the first time, and they’re waiting right now for every monster to gather into the same room so they can come alive and slaughter them. I know because I did the same damn thing. We have to stop them before it happens.”

Gaster took a deep breath and stood up from his spot. “You talk too much.”

“Ouch. That’s coming from you.”

“Fine.” Gaster strode over to the other side of the room. “I will help you on the condition that if I do not, things will go from bad to worse.”

Flowey sighed, relieved. “Thank you. You have no idea how much this means to me.”
“I’m not doing it for you.” The scientist snapped, pulling the tarp off of the soul sucking machine. “When does the party start.”

“Thirty minutes.” Flowey tapped one leaf on the other in a mock ‘watch’ statement. “You think that’ll be enough time?”

“Of course.” He said, turning to the plant. “And if it’s not, it’s a statement to be fashionably late.”
You and Sans were fashionably late. About a half hour or so. You had gotten caught up in the fact that neither of you had actually gotten Frisk a gift for their birthday and had to make an emergency stop at Walmart beforehand. It took you twenty minutes to think of something and you weren’t even sure the kid would like it. Sans teleported you right outside the venue, gift clutched tightly in your arms. Your late appearance to the party had apparently been taken into consideration when you saw Frisk standing at the entrance to the gigantic hall Toriel and Asgore had rented out.

“You’re late.” They said, hands on their hips. You could see now the outfit that Chi had made for them. Semi-formal long sleeved purple shirt with the Delta Rune embroidered on the front pocket and dress pants. Apparently she had done formal clothing for all of you. You didn’t feel so out of place knowing that.

“Sorry kiddo.” Sans apologized “we got kinda caught up.”

“Happy birthday Frisk!” You say, holding out the present. It was small, the size of a DVD case, whereabouts. They took it. “Did we miss anything?”

“Not really.” They shrugged, tucking the gift under their arm. “A lot of people showed up and wished me happy birthday but now everyone’s getting ready for dad’s speech. We were waiting on you guys.”

You sucked in a breath of embarrassment. “Oooh, sorry about that. I didn’t know he was waiting on us. We got distracted getting you a present.”

They shook their head. “You didn’t need to get me anything. Having you here is the best gift I could have.”

“Careful you don’t turn into a tree with all that sap kid.” Sans said, ruffling their hair.

They laughed it off. “C’mon, everyone’s waiting.”

You raised an eyebrow and followed, hand in hand with Sans. “You’re not going to open your present?”

“Nope!” Their gait took on a, dare you say, determined change. “I’m gonna wait until the end of the night, when we’re all together as friends.”

You took the time to assess the place as you followed Frisk to the main hall. It was a very large ballroom style building, clearly made with the intent to be rented out to big, expensive parties. The ceilings were certainly high enough for the tallest monster to walk through with room to spare. The long corridor towards the main hall gave you chills for some reason.

“This is all a bit much for a birthday party…” You offhandedly comment.
Frisk shrugged. “It’s more than just my birthday. It’s the anniversary of when I helped everyone get to the surface. I chose to have my birthday today so, it being my birthday is just a bonus.”

“we’re gonna have a real birthday party for you afterwards though, right?” Sans asked.

“Oh yeah, definitely. But now you gotta sit down so dad can be important for ten minutes.” They said, shoving the ballroom doors open.

Every monster you could have imagined was there. Everyone you remember talking to a long time ago. All the royal guards from Snowdin, Undyne’s neighbors from Waterfall, the hotland hotel crew. You made the seating chart, sure, but it couldn’t have prepared you for the surge of nostalgia that flowed through you. You saw a couple of them occasionally in your day to day, but this? Every single monster that you tried so hard to save in the same room, smiling, laughing, hopeful. It was almost overwhelming. The future you wanted for them was happening right before your very eyes.

And you being there put them all in danger of being murdered again.

The thought sent a ripple of fear through your body and your hand tightened around Sans’.

“This is a bad idea. I shouldn’t be here.”

“relax.” He squeezed it back. “you’re fine. nothing’s gonna happen.”

The three of you made your way to your designated table, loud choruses of “Sans!” echoing through the hall as his mass of friends noticed his arrival. You carefully made your way through the tables to your own, the voices of those around you also a bit overwhelming.

One voice was significantly louder than the others.

“SANS!!” Papyrus shriek-scolded from his spot at the table. He stood up so fast he knocked is chair backwards. “DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW LATE YOU ARE?!”

Sans grinned. “didn’t realize being late would affect our reception.”

You watched Papyrus try hard not to grit his teeth. He tried so very hard. “FINE! ON THE ACCOUNT OF IT BEING TOO GOOD OF A NIGHT TO BE UPSET ABOUT YOUR HORRIBLE SENSE OF HUMOR, I’LL GIVE YOU THAT ONE. ALSO THAT WAS KIND OF CLEVER.”

“We were late because of me.” You held your hand up. The one that was unoccupied, anyway. “I wanted to get Frisk a birthday gift.”

You heard Alphys curse under her breath beside you and watch her hand Undyne something out the corner of her eye. You didn’t think too hard on it.

Papyrus, on the other hand, looked horrified. “OHMYGOD!!! HOW COULD I FORGET THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BRING TO A BIRTHDAY PARTY!!”

He placed a hand on his chest, now a little bit less comical of a move since he wasn’t wearing his battle body. “FRISK, I APOLOGIZE FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY SOUL THAT I DID NOT THINK OF BRINGING YOU A PRESENT. THIS WILL BE REMEDIED IN THE VERY NEAR AND POSSIBLY IMMEDIATE FUTURE!”

“Oh crap, I forgot a gift too.” Undyne said, clicking her teeth together. “I was so caught up in the food prep and security that I didn’t have time. And I call myself a bestie. Man!!!!”
“I...also forgot...” Alphys joined. “I was so occupied with helping Mettaton and setting up that it slipped my mind. Sorry Frisk.”

“It’s okay. We can have another party later.” They put the unwrapped present down on the table and took their seat. “Today’s supposed to be about you guys anyway.”

You and Sans took your own seats, yours next to Alphys and his next to...the empty seat.

“Where’s Chi?” You ask them. “Isn’t she supposed to be here too?”

“She floated off to talk with Bratty and Catty.” Frisk answered for you as they pulled out their phone. “I think she knew them.”

As if on cue, the small purple clad monster floated back over to the table, settling herself down in her seat.

“Sorry.” She apologized. “There were these two delightful girls that frequent the boutique one table over. They never buy anything, but they do stop in on occasion to look at the new things we get in. I thought it polite to say hi.”

“They stop in because they’re obsessed with Mettaton.” Undyne quipped. “The only reason they’re here is probably to see him in all his gaudy glittery pink glory.”

“HE IS NOT GAUDY!” Papyrus interjected. “HE IS FANTASTIC AND STYLISH AND CHOOSES EACH OF HIS OUTFITS FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF LOOKING AS FABULOUS AS POSSIBLE. I SHOULD KNOW. I ASKED HIM.”

“a whole night about monsters and here we are talking about a robot.” Sans huffed under his breath.

You caught it. “Would that be irony?”

“Guys shhhhhhhhh.” Frisk hit their hand on the table several times. “Dad’s about to do his speech thing!”

You didn’t really get a chance to take in the room when you walked in, since Frisk was practically pulling you to the table. You took the chance to look around at the setup as the room slowly quieted. The tables were organized exactly as you had them on the roster, each section separated into what kind of monsters came from where. You could see Grillby at a bar setup in the back of the room and Muffet at a table setup on the other side. Toriel and Asgore had their own personal table at the head of the room. It was positioned in front of a raised stage that no doubt was made for Mettaton to perform on for the night. There was, however, a podium on the stage, one that Asgore was currently standing at. He scanned the room as it fell to silence, eyes glancing over your table last and giving a curt nod before he spoke.

"Thank you all for coming." He started. "Tonight is a very important night, and there are many festivities to be had, but before the night begins, I would like to say a few words to all of you."

He cleared his throat. The silence felt like the calm before the storm.

“When I was a child, long before many of you were thought to exist, I lived amongst humans on the surface. At that time we thrived and together the two races, Human and Monster, lived as one coexisting unit. Over time I grew, from child to adolescent to adult, and in that time I was given the mantle of King through my father. His hope was for the peace between the humans and monsters to continue into the following generations. Sadly, as we all know, this is not what transpired.
In the midst of my reign a war broke out between the two races. What sparked it, I do not remember. In the beginning I tried to negotiate with the humans, but the wizards of that time were not for words. They wanted action and I gave them action, at the unfortunate cost of the lives of my people. In a last effort to save my kind, I allowed the wizards to seal us under the mountain with the promise that we would be free to live our lives with no human interference. This was a promise they kept. It was the only promise they kept.

Unfortunately, that plan came with many setbacks. There was no sunlight, overpopulation wrought our streets in mere hundreds of years, and in the millennia that we were imprisoned there many things happened that brought the spirits of my people down. I worked alongside my humble Royal Scientist to find a way to break the barrier, but It wasn’t until the seventh human fell that I realized I could have done more. They showed kindness to my people, listened to them and befriended them. Their determination to see their quest through opened the door to the future of Monsterkind, and I am proud to call them a member of my very own family.

…

I have not been a perfect king. Sometimes I doubt that I have been a *good* king. During my time I have tried my best to do what is right for my people, and I tried to do it alone for a very long time. I see now that some things can only be achieved not just through Determination, but through having an open mind and being unafraid to depend on others. I would not be here if it was not for my family. We would not be here if it was not for my family. Monsters are free to roam the surface once again and, while it may not be a perfect scenario, it is getting better every day with the help of our human friends.

But today is about us. It is about the triumphs of Monsterkind and how far we have come. It is about celebrating togetherness and friendship with each other, and recognizing our own strengths and newfound freedom. So I invite you to eat, drink, and be merry tonight. We have our entire lives ahead of us now, and a world of possibilities before us. The future is here, and it is as bright as the sun that we now get to live under.”

The silence that followed his last words only lasted a moment, and the deafening applause that rang throughout the ballroom almost blew out your eardrums. Granted, most if it was because Papyrus and Undyne were simultaneously screaming their joy next to you. That alone would kill anyone’s hearing. You, however, were the one to start the loud chanting of ‘ASGORE! ASGORE! ASGORE!’ as he walked down from the stage. The pride that surged through you when everyone else in the room followed was immense, and you caught the smile he sent to your table as he sat down at his.

And just like that the party was in full swing. The volume rose to what you assumed was an appropriate party level and various monsters (and some humans) walked around delivering food to the tables. You noticed Muffet’s happy smile across the room as some of the plates were unveiled. Yours consisted of a steak with a side of fries, a croissant, and what you could only assume was Sea Tea as a drink. You nudged Sans as you picked up the pastry.

“So, if they’re made by spiders out of spiders, wouldn’t this be cannibalism?”

“i’m like eighty percent sure these pastries are spider free.” he said, picking up his own. You swear you saw something in it move. “....seventy percent sure.”

“I’m almost surprised the steaks aren’t shaped like Mettaton.” Alphys said, cutting into hers. “He’s the one that provided them...”

“Where is Mettaton anyway?” You ask her, biting into the croissant. It tasted fine. You think. You
didn’t really eat enough normal ones to gauge. “Isn’t he supposed to be the MC or something?”

“He’s gonna perform at the end of the night. Napstablook’s gonna be the DJ for now.” Undyne answered before she forked the entire steak into her mouth, ripping off half of it in one bite.

Chi nodded, sipping her own tea “It makes sense. If he was out for the entire night his battery would surely drain faster than he would like. Not to mention his chances of being mobbed by many of his fans.”

“YOU MEAN I WILL NOT GET TO SEE METTATON UNTIL THE END OF THE NIGHT?!?” Papyrus’s steak was already gone somehow. “THIS IS THE WORST. SANS, CAN YOU SPEED UP TIME? LIKE RIGHT NOW?”

Sans shrugged and pulled a bottle of ketchup out of...somewhere. He’s wearing a button down, where is he hiding these things. “it uh, doesn’t really work like that bro. and the answer’s no.”

“If you get ketchup stains on that outfit i’m going to kill you.” You tell him. “Chi is also probably going to kill you.”

She waved her hand. “Oh no, I certainly wouldn’t kill him. I’d just send him the bill for it.”

“You’d be waiting six years for it to be paid.” Undyne said through a mouth full of steak “He still hasn’t paid off Grillby’s tab.”

You give Sans a look. “Really?”

He gave a shrug with a very ‘what can you do’ look that sent the whole table, minus Papyrus, into a fit of giggles.

“Sans is never gonna pay off Grillby’s tab.” Frisk piped up. They already demolished their fries. “He’d have to be banned from the bar for him to pay it off.”

Sans almost choked on his ketchup “hey, careful what you’re spewin’ kiddo. don’t put any ideas in anyone’s heads.”

Frisk grinned. “I mean, if I was determined enough I could go over to Grillby right now. He’s on the other side of the room.”

Sans grinned back. “you wouldn’t dare.”

“If they don’t, I will.”

You all turn to the new voice to find Flowey propped up out of the middle of the table.

You smile at him. “I was wondering when you were going to pop up.”

“Does it have to be in the middle of the table though?” Alphys offered.

Flowey scoffed at her. “Hey, cut me some slack. I was off doing something important. I was off wrangling a friend.”

Sans raised an eyebrow. “didn’t know you had any friends.”

The flower stuck his tongue out at him. “yeah, we’ll see how long that smug smile stays on your face when he shows up. In fact, he should be here right about…”
A few seconds went by as you all waited, the sounds of casual conversation and food being eaten the only thing echoing through your ears.

Flowey tapped one leaf on the other, in a mimic to wearing a watch. “Oh c’mon asshole, I gave you a cue…”

“I believe the word you’re looking for is ‘now’.”

The world around you seemed to go quiet at the words, or was that just the perception of the world around you? Your world went quiet and you turned behind you to see Gaster standing directly behind Sans. You heard the clink of several forks and the scooting of one chair, but your eyes lay only on the scientist before you.

He must have teleported in.

“gas...” Sans half-whispered as he pushed his own chair out, turning to face his taller counterpart.

“Hello brother. And...my brother’s friends.” He said, almost sheepishly. You didn’t know he could be sheepish. “Do you uh...happen to have room for one more?”

Chapter End Notes

It's all downhill from here.
I have had this chapter planned for months. MONTHS. This chapter pooled in the recesses of my mind for a very long time.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Thm-thump**

“You’re here…” You say, disbelief obvious in your voice. You didn’t actually expect Gaster to show.

He fixed his glasses. “Yes, well...I had originally intended to avoid the party due to...personal matters. I was convinced otherwise.”

Undyne stood up violently, chair almost falling back with the force. “You’ve got a lotta nerve showing up here after all the crap you did to us!!!”

Gaster took a step back and held up both hands. “Now, hold on. I didn’t come for a fight. I’m here to celebrate the festivities like everyone else.”

“Yeah right!!!” She yelled. Several of the monsters in the surrounding tables turned to look your way. “You probably came here with another ulterior motive that’ll end up hurting someone!!!”

He glared at her. “Your accusation that my mere existence is to cause inconvenience to people is justified, but I am not here to do anything but reconcile for my past actions and give solutions to problems. The first reconciliation being-”

“GOOOOOOOOOD EVENING MY BEAUTIES~~~!” Mettaton’s voice cut through the murmured silence of the room, startling nearly everyone at your table, Gaster included. Several high pitched squeals erupted from the back of the hall as he waltzed in from the back of the stage. Clearly he had been waiting for the right moment to make his grand entrance. Right after Asgore’s speech seemed like the perfect moment. “What a wonderful bout of words from our very own Asgore. Truly rousing. The ultimate pinnacle of kinglyness, wouldn’t you agree?”

Several whoops from the audience signaled agreement. He smiled.

Undyne facepalmed. “I thought he wasn’t coming out until later?!?”

Mettaton ignored her groan of protest “Of course, who would we be if we didn’t abide by these rules hm? Eat. Drink. Be merry. All that jazz. But don’t kid yourselves beauties, what you really came here to do…is party! And really, what kind of generous host would I be if I didn’t deliver? So, without further ado~”

On cue, the lights in the room dimmed and loud upbeat music sounded from the stage. In a matter of seconds the formal and fancy ballroom was transformed into what could have been constituted
as a monster rave. Monster from various tables had gotten up to move to the dance floor, forgoing their food and conversations. Mettaton had, in a matter of seconds, opened the pit.

Between the pounding in your head and Gaster’s appearance, it was too much for you.

“I have to go to the bathroom.” You say loudly, hopefully over the music. You shift out of your seat and make your way to the ballroom entrance, uncaring of the eyes that followed you out.

The ballroom doors closed behind you and you paused. You didn’t know where the bathroom was and you didn’t have to go, but you didn’t want to go back. Gaster was here, which was good, but you didn’t want to be near him, and that was bad. He should be here, you invited him, but you didn’t want to see him. Why didn’t you want to see him? You wanted to make up with him. You wanted to talk to him and reconcile just like everyone else but your mind was telling you to run. Why were you running from Gaster?

**Thm-thump**

“you’re sulking.”

Of course someone would come after you. That’s what friends did. That’s what boyfriends did.

“I am not ‘sulking’.” You tell Sans, crossing your arms. He was leaning up against the wall, sleeves rolled up and hands in his pants pockets. A substitute for his hoodie that you forbid him from bringing.

“do you really not want to be here that much?” He pushes himself off the wall, concern clear in his features. You didn’t like seeing him worry.

“No. Well, yes and no.” You hunch in on yourself. “It’s just...loud in there. Too loud and too many people. And with Gaster at the table...it’s too much. I want to spend time with everyone because tonight’s supposed to be a celebration but it’s just-” You stop when you notice his hand in front of your face, beckoning you. You take it and slowly walk to him, wrapping your arms around his neck and laying your head on his shoulder. “I’m sorry. I’m sorry this keeps happening and i’m sorry i’m such a coward.”

He rubs your back. “hold on for a minute.”

It registered in your mind that he teleported with you in his arms after it had already happened. The feeling of shifting out of time and space and the void within the shortcut left you dizzy, but only momentarily. Its darker, first of all. You lift your head to find yourself in a different ballroom, a smaller one with a wall made of windows overlooking the terrace outside. You could see the main ballroom through the windows, on the other side of the garden. It was far enough away that you couldn’t see the people inside or hear the music playing.

“now.” Sans said, putting his hands on your hips. “if i remember correctly there was a song that i wanted you to sing to me?”

You raise an eyebrow. “What? .....OH. Oh. Wait, you mean right now? You want me to sing right now?”

He grinned. It was only half shit-eating. “you said you’d learn the lyrics.”

There’s a heat creeping up your neck and you avoid his gaze. “Well yeah, but I thought I’d sing them to you like, privately. At night or something.”
“i don’t see any sun.” He argues, still grinning. “and we’re the only ones here.”

“You’re incorrigible.”

“it’ll take your mind off things.”

“Bet you it won’t.”

“What if I made a deal with you.” He said, leading you around in a circle. “if you sing to me, i’ll dance with you.”

You put a hand in front of your mouth in mock awe. “What’s this? The notoriously lazy Sans wants to put forth effort to dance with me? I thought that was out of your jurisdiction.”

He rolled his eyes at you. “do we have a deal?”

“You really want to hear me sing.”

“I want you to have a good time.” He told you. “that’s what we’re here to do.”

You sigh. “Fine, I’ll sing it. But my singing voice sounds like every other twenty-something year old’s singing voice.”

He smirked. “good thing you’re not trying out for american idol.”

**Thm-thump**

“Shush you.” You abbreviate your reprimand with a pap on his head and take a breath. Your head was pounding, but you could do this.

“I found myself dreaming

In silver and gold

Like a scene from a movie

That every broken heart knows.”

“i know this song.” He said as he started to lead, taking your hand in one of his. “its on the radio like three times a day.”

“It’s rude to interrupt y’know.” You sway with him.

“we were walking on moonlight

And you pulled me close

Split second and you disappeared and then I was all alone.

I woke up in tears
With you by my side
A breath of relief
And I realized
No, we're not promised tomorrow”

“Well this isn’t a depressing song at all.” He said, lazily swaying you back and forth. The lights outside cast just enough into the room for you to see the sarcastic tilt of his smile.

You put your forehead on his “I’m singing it to you because I love you numbskull, now shoosh.”

“So I'm gonna love you
Like I'm gonna lose you
I'm gonna hold you
Like I'm saying goodbye wherever we're standing
I won't take you for granted 'cause we'll never know when
When we'll run out of time so I'm gonna love you
Like I'm gonna lose you
I'm gonna love you like I'm gonna lose you”

“It’s not gonna happen.” He says, the tone of his voice dropping to something more serious. “You’re not gonna lose me and I’m not gonna lose you. We’ve been through too much to lose each other.”

“I know. I know we’re not. It’s just a song Sans.” You tell him. “By the way, this is the laziest dancing I’ve ever seen in my life.”

He shrugged. “I’m a skeleton of commitment. Though, when it comes to dancing I guess I’m a little in the dark.”

You snicker at the joke. “Guess it’s up to me to enlighten you.”

“I don’t know, I’m afraid most of it’ll go over my head.”

“A short joke. Really? That’s the best you can do?” You tilt your head at him and smirk. “Sans the skeleton I daresay you’re losing your touch.”

He arched a browbone and smirked at you, moving his hands down your waist. “Really? I dunno, I think my touch is just fine.”

You slap his shoulder lightly. “Hey, no getting handsy. I like this dress.”
“i like it too. It suits you.” He moved one hand up to play with your hair "All you need it a halo and wings.”

“If I had wings I’d never touch the ground again. I’d soar off into the air and never come back.” You sigh

“Well I suppose we should all be thankful that you don’t have wings.”

Thm-thump

Both of you turn to the windows to see Gaster standing in the doorway. Your grip on Sans’ shoulder tightened and you took a deep breath.

He stepped forward, closing the door behind him. “I apologize if i’m interrupting anything.”

“Is everything okay?” Sans asked, unmoving.

“What? Oh, yes yes. Everything is fine.” He said, waving his hand back and forth. “I made my reconciliations with whom I needed. Alphys and I had quite the talk, away from the stage of course. The King and Queen were a trifle more hesitant to speak with me, but once I showed them I meant no ill will things sorted themselves out. It was...a necessary healing process. It’s going to take time until I’m truly accepted back into the fold. The only person I have left to talk to is, well, you. Both of you.”

“well, cornering us in a dark room is definitely the best way to do that.” Sans joked, unwrapping his arms from around your waist and putting them back in his pockets.

“To be fair, you both ran away before I could say anything at the table.” Gaster reasoned, a faint smile on his face.

You avert your gaze to the floor. “Sorry. I didn’t mean to leave. It just got too loud too quickly.” You lie.

“No, no it’s quite alright. I should have somehow signaled my arrival. I suppose a cell phone would have helped.”

You almost missed the ‘I told you so’ look on Sans’ face. Almost. “so you’ve got something to say?”

“Right, yes. A few things.” Gaster said, taking a few steps closer. “First of all, to both of you, I’m sorry. Sans, I know we already had a talk but I could stand to say it again. My reckless actions hurt you and I never wanted to do that. And Angel, words cannot express how deeply sorry I am for all that I have put you through. You are the last person on this earth that I wanted to suffer and I ended up putting you through more suffering than everyone else combined. I’m sorry.”

You stepped forward, feet moving before you could stop them. “No, no it’s fine. I mean it’s not fine but it’s fine. Without you I wouldn’t be here anyway so, even though I went through a lot of really awful situations, I managed to persevere through them. I’m still here and I wouldn’t be here without you. I wouldn’t have met everyone without you and I definitely wouldn’t be with Sans without you, so it’s fine.”

“But the fact that you are still suffering on the inside is not fine.” There was clear concern in
his voice as he spoke. **The fact that Chara still exists is not fine.**

You blink. Of course he would know about Chara. Somehow everybody seemed to know about all of your problems.

“flowey told you.” It was a statement more than a question. Sans already knew.

Gaster nodded **He did. He also asked me for assistance in separating Chara from your body.**

“he what.”

He held out his hands. **Wait. Before you jump to any conclusions about my return and the reasons for it, allow me to say that I was wholeheartedly against his idea as it could have injured you. However, I am not a man to turn down an opportunity when it presents itself, so...** He reached into his coat and pulled out a small space-looking gun. It had two coils on either side of it and a long coiled muzzle. It looked like a stun gun.

Sans took a step forward. “gas, what the hell do you-”

“Hold on, hold on. Allow me to explain. I’m not going to do anything with it. I swear on my Soul.” He kept one hand up in an attempt to pacify Sans. It didn’t stop the shorter skeleton from moving in front of you.

**Thm-thump**

“What is it.”

Gaster corrected his glasses. **This gun was created with the same technology Alphys and I were working on when we were attempting to separate Asriel from Flowey’s body. Unfortunately those experiments didn’t come to their true fruition due to...obvious circumstances. However, the technology we created worked. I have been testing it in my reprieve. The suitcase you saw me with was the prototype. This is the final product.”**

**Thm-thump**

He turned it around so you could see it completely. **Within this gun lies a combination of magic and science that has the ability to completely separate the properties of one individual item. It works similar to a teleporter. It locates the energy inside it’s target, isolates it, and pulls it out of it’s charge. I had originally created it with the intent to pull my mark from your Soul, but with little persuasion I have been able to change it’s initial purpose.”**

**Thm-thump**

He stepped forward and Sans tensed. You tensed too, until he turned the gun around and held it out to you, handle first. **I figured that an option out would be the least I could do for all the trouble I caused.”**

**Thm-thump**

You reached your hand out to take the gun from him. “You made this to separate us? Me?”

**Thm-thump**
“The world would be very dull if there were no angels in it.” You couldn’t ignore the fondness in his voice.

Thm-thump

You took a few steps backwards, smiling, tossing the gun up several times. It was light. “That’s really nice, but I don’t think I’ll be needing anything like this.”

Thm-thump

“Why on earth not?” The two skeletons both looked at you quizically as you juggled the gun.

Thm-thump

They watched it slip from your hand.

Thm-thump

They watched in horror as it hit the ground.

Thm-thump

They watched your foot come down on it, shattering the coils

Thm-thump

They watched a grin split your face.

Thm-thump

They watched your eyes turn red.

Thm-thump

They heard you speak.

Thm-thump

“Because I’m not going anywhere anytime soon.”

Chapter End Notes

Don’t hate me
Reunited

Chapter Notes

This chapter will switch into third person perspective narrative and will remain that way for the duration of the fic with the exception of the final chapter. I hope this doesn’t throw anybody off but due to the circumstances things work better this way.

It happened in an instant, the switch in Sans’ mind went from ‘fine’ to ‘shit’ in seconds. As soon as the gun hit the floor he knew exactly what was happening. Time seemed to slow down as he watched it break, the voice coming from Angel’s mouth harsh and unrecognizable. The world around him seemed to spin and he felt like he was falling. Flashes of the Last Corridor ran in his mind as the split grin and red eyes of a twelve year old with a penchant for murder swung at him again and again.

He prayed there were no knives here.

“Well, this certainly is a game changer.” He heard his brother say beside him, composed. As if his hard earned work wasn’t shattered in front of him. “I was hoping we would be able to avoid this particular scenario, but I suppose fate has other plans.”

He caught on, Sans realized. Of course he would. Nothing got past him.

The puppet with Angel’s face grinned as it shrugged “Fate had nothing to do with it. I just figured it was time to wake up. Metaphorically speaking.”

Sans stepped forward. He could feel the sweat rolling down the back of his head. “cut the crap. you’ve been awake for a while.”

It tilted its head. “True. I’ve been here for about...how long ago did you try to put your magic into her Soul...a month? Two months? Time is relevant now, I want to make sure I get this right.”

Gaster’s voice steeled “Excuse me?”

“Oh, yeah!” It snapped it’s fingers. “I should probably thank you for that, shouldn’t I? For the whole ‘marking’ thing you tried to do. It was a pretty good attempt, honestly, even if it failed. But hey! Thanks for the magic!” It smiled and it made Sans’ stomach drop. If he had a stomach, anyway. “I was able to absorb so much of it that I woke up! And all you idiot’s were none the wiser.”

It took a second to click in Sans’ mind, and when it did a myriad of emotions consumed him. It must have shown on his face because the demon laughed at him.

“Ooooooh, you get it, don’t you knucklehead? All this time, ever since your brother tried to make your poor, sweet, innocent Angel into someone whole. All he did was pump so much magic into her that I was able to feed off of it.” It turned to Gaster “And I owe you one, doctor. Or, professor. Are you either of those anymore?”

Sans felt the lights dim from his eyes as the realization hit him like a truck. His arms went slack.
...that whole time."

It giggled. “That’s right, bone boy. That lovely, sensual night you spent with your girlfriend was just another catalyst to my awakening. I almost killed her and took over then.”

“*And yet you waited for an opportune moment to reveal your true motives.*” Gaster’s voice pulled Sans out of his stupor. “*And in front of the two most powerful monsters in the world, no less. Truly this is your most clever plan yet.*”

“You think too highly of yourself.” It took a step forward. “I’m in the perfect position for everything.”

Sans held a hand out and closed it’s Soul in blue before it could take another one. “*don’t even think about it.*”

It raised an eyebrow, as if the magic holding it down wasn’t even there. “I’m not afraid of you. You can’t hurt me like you used to. Neither of you can. I’ve got the girl you’re both in love with, and you don’t want anything to happen to her, right?”

Gaster stepped forward, extending his own hand “*This is true. However, you overestimate the amount of leverage you have in this situation.*”

Several black tendrils shot out of the floor, coiling and constricting around Chara until they were significantly more immobile than they were under the influence of Sans’ magic.

“*gaster what the hell?!*” Sans furrowed his brows at his brother.

“A *moment, brother.*” He took a step toward him “*You didn’t think your magic alone would be able to confine them while they were in the body of an adult, did you? It was barely able to hold them when they were a child. In this situation I will take absolutely no chances.*”

He wanted to argue but his logic was sound. Sounder than he wanted. “...yeah. Yeah you’re right.”

Gaster put a hand on his shoulder. “*I will not harm Angel’s body. Just give me a minute.*”

It took Sans a few seconds to agree. He nodded and watched his brother approach the body.

“*Now then.*” He said, folding his arms behind his back. He looked more professional than he should have in this kind of situation. “*Allow me to make two things incredibly clear to you. The first being that if you think, under any circumstance, that either of us will allow you to leave as you are, you are sorely mistaken. The second, I have never been in love with Angel, so you can throw that bit of ‘leverage’ in the garbage.*”

“Bullshit you haven’t.” It spat. “The whole reason you marked her in the first place is because you loved her.”

“Incorrect.” He shot down it’s accusation immediately. “*I was never in love with Angel, but the idea of her. The idea that a human being who had gone through the tragic experiences that she had was trying to become a direct contributor to a positive future that she had once destroyed. A person whose sole existence in life was to make the people around her happy. The idea of an angel, living and walking amongst this earth. A true beacon of light in an otherwise dark and dreary world, as I said once to a friend. That was what I was in love with.*” He took another step forward “*However, after accepting that she is only human and is*
unfathomably in love with my brother, I have accepted my place and moved on. It took some time to accept after initial reflection, but I can say with utmost certainty that I harbor no feelings for her. Too bad for you.”

“wait, what?” Sans said, stepping towards his brother. “hold on. if you’re not in love with her then why did you try to mark her in the first place? how did it go through?”

“It did not.” He clarified. “My magic pooled in the recesses of her Soul and gave life to this one we see before us. After a congregation with your own soul they created a false cover in order to protect the true colour of it. Which, by my assumptions, is red. After all, it would take a very determined personality to completely take over another person’s body for the second time.”

Sans frowned “How are you so calm about all of this?”

“Because, my dear brother, I always travel with a contingency plan.” He smiled. “You didn’t think I would come here unprepared, do you?”

He frowned some more. “What the hell are you planning this time?”

“He’s not planning anything.”

Flowey’s voice startled him. He turned towards the windows to see the flower and Frisk both standing there, the latter holding an exact replica of the gun that Chara destroyed moments before.

“Your timing is, as always, impeccable. You really do fit into your role quite well don’t you. Though, I thought I told you to keep the gun for yourself.” Gaster scolded the flower. It shrugged back at him.

“I don’t have hands genius. I can’t pull the trigger if I don’t have any fingers. You should have thought that through.”

“Flowey…” Frisk clutched the gun to their chest. “Is….is that?”

“Yes, that’s them.” Flowey sneered. “It’s Angelface’s body but those eyes are all Chara.”

The sight of Flowey was enough to send Chara into a frenzy. They tugged frantically at their bonds.

“TRAITOR!” They screamed as they thrashed, but Gaster’s magic was strong. They weren’t going anywhere. “You LIED to me! You said we were best friends. Best friends don’t go back on their word! Best friends finish the job!”

“Hold on, back up.” Flowey disappeared into the ground and reappeared in front of Angel’s body, stretched out to leer into red eyes. “I’m the traitor? You wanted to kill our dad! You wanted to kill everyone! You tried to take over my body and murder innocent people that didn’t do anything wrong!”

The demon scoffed. “Oh don’t act all high and mighty. You wanted to kill everyone too! The second you were made from that stupid flower patch you wanted everyone around you to suffer and die! Because they mistreated you! Because you didn’t feel anything towards them! You’re in the exact same boat as me!”

Flowey scowled “No. i’m not.”
In a flash several vines shot up from the ground, wrapping around the black coils and dispelling Gaster’s magic, taking it’s place.

Sans stepped forward and extended his hand but was stopped by a smaller one. Frisk gripped it hard, shaking their head.

“I know.” They said. “I know what you wanna do, but Flowey’s not gonna hurt Angel’s body. He needs this.”

“I would hope he doesn’t.” Gaster crossed his arms. “I would have to kill him.”

“I’m not like you.” Flowey started, ignoring the peanut gallery. “I’ve been aboveground for all of a fraction of how long I was underground, but I changed. I didn’t have anything in the beginning. I didn’t feel anything for anyone and yeah, I wanted everyone to die. I wanted to die a few times, but I changed. I made friends and learned through my experiences that not everyone’s as bad as you think they are. Nobody deserves to die.”

“What a crock of shit.” Chara spat. “I can see it in your eyes right now. You think I deserve to die. Because I killed you. Because I still want to kill you.”

Flowey shook his head. “Nah. You might wanna kill me, but I could never say that you deserve to die. After all, you’re my best friend, right? Or, you were, anyway. Frisk!” He turned his head towards the three behind him. “Pull the trigger!”

With no hesitation and multiple protests, they did.
Chapter Summary

This chapter and the next chapter are currently finished. I'll be posting them in tandem.

It was bright.
Almost too bright.
The light from the gun hit you both dead on and things became too bright too quickly. You opened your eyes only to be met with a tundra of nothing, a plain expanse that reached off to a nonexistent horizon. There were no shadows where you stood, no marks on the ground. The existence of yourself, a child, a monster, and a floating red heart stationed between the three of you was the only thing that colored the blank canvas in front of you.

Gaster, Frisk, and Sans were gone, along with the empty ballroom you were previously standing in. You had to know why.

“What happened?” You ask the smaller monster “Where is everybody?”

“One Soul split from your body and is trapped between three hosts.” The monster said. “I was connected to you when we were hit and became a part of the confrontation. Sorry.”

They were small and white, Chara’s height, and were covered head to toe in white fur and the demeanor of both Asgore and Toriel. You knew exactly who he was.

“Asriel.” You whisper. “I never thought I’d see you here.”

“You and me both.” He replied, turning to Chara. “You know you’ve made a real big mess this time?”

They huffed. “So? Her Soul belongs to me and that’s all I care about.”

Asriel wasn’t satisfied with that answer. “Why do you want it so badly? Why do you need to have one? You don’t need to fight anyone anymore. You don’t need to kill anyone anymore!”

“Yes I do!” They yelled. “This world was supposed to be mine, just like the last one! I was supposed to erase it and none of these people were supposed to exist!” They turned to you. “We made a promise! You told me we’d erase this world and move on to the next one, and you changed EVERYTHING! You tried to get rid of me!”

“Because you killed everyone I cared about!” You protested

They laughed. It sounded like sandpaper and static and was inhuman as they had become. “I didn’t kill anybody. That was all your doing. I didn’t have any part in it until you picked up that knife and locket. You started it, I finished the job.”

You shook your head. “I didn’t….I didn’t want to….,”
“Oh, but you could have just reset and put everything back where it belonged, right?” They giggled. “That’s what you were going to do, but too bad! You should have thought about the consequences of your actions. You should have thought about me.”

“That’s enough.” Asriel stepped forward. “Chara, you have to stop this.”

“Why should I!” They protested. “Did those humans stop when they tried to kill us?! Did they stop when they tried to kill me?! Do you even know what my life was like before I tried to kill myself in that hole!!”

Asriel took a step back. “You...you what?”

The demon smiled. “Oh, guess I forgot to tell you that. Well, it doesn’t matter anymore. All that matters is that I get what I was promised.”

Asriel moved in front of the floating red vessel “I’m not going to let you hurt anyone anymore.”

“And what are you going to do to stop me?” Chara taunted. “Kill me? You’re powerless without that stupid heart behind you!”

Asriel’s hands glowed orange as fire sprouted from his fingertips. Just like his parents. “Angel! Take your Soul and get out of here! I’ll hold them off!”

You stare at him in disbelief “But what about you?! I just met you! I don’t want to leave you here with them!”

“I’ll be fine, just hur-ACK!”

He’s cut off as Chara lunges for him, knocking him to the ground. The flames in his hands extinguished on contact as Chara held his arms down, grinning manically down at him.

“You were supposed to be my friend, and now you’re trying to set me on fire?!” They yelled. “I knew I couldn’t trust you! All that talk about being together forever, when you said you understood me. It was all a lie, wasn’t it!”

“No!” Asriel tried to throw Chara off but couldn’t. “None of it was a lie! I wanted us to be a family...you were my best friend. I thought I was yours too, but all you did was use me to try to hurt people! That’s not what friends do! That’s what monsters do!”

They scoffed “Looked in a mirror lately? You are a monster! You always have been and you always will be!”

Asriel didn’t get a chance to answer them, as your foot collided with their face, knocking them off of him. You watched Chara flop over onto the floor several feet away from the force of the impact as you helped Asriel up.

“I don’t usually go around beating up little kids, but this time I can make an exception.” You say, looking down at the prince. “You alright?”

He nodded “You didn’t have to do that. It’ll just make them angrier.”

He was right. It did make Chara angry. They slowly lifted themselves off the ground, clutching their face, eyes only a shade brighter than the blood that dripped down it. You broke their nose. Good.
“I’m sick of sitting back and watching.” You say, positioning yourself next to Asriel. “I’m tired of being a bystander. I’m going to do something this time and I’m going to be the one to end this. And we’re both going to get out of here alive.”

“Angel…” He said your name softly, almost reverently. You didn’t know what to make of it. “If that’s what you want…”

Both of you refocused as Chara let loose a bloodied yell, lunging at you both. You took a stance to brace yourself and immediately felt a pair of hands on your side, shoving you roughly out of the way.

You watched Asriel take the brunt of the attack as you fell backwards into your Soul and saw the silent apology in his eyes as your vision went red.

You hit the ground hard and nearly bounced off of it. It was dark again. Darker than it should have been. All the time in the light made your vision go hazy in the night-lit ballroom and it took your eyes a moment to grow accustomed to the light.

Sans was the first thing you saw, and it took all the force in your legs to run to him.

“Sans!” You grab onto his arm, shaking. “Sans, ohmygod.”

He looked nervous “Angel?!”

“Yes, it’s me. I swear to god it’s me.” You say, gripping his sleeve tighter. “Sans we have to help Asriel. He’s fighting Chara all by himself!”

He grips your arm back “He’s what?”

“He’s fighting Chara!” You try to explain. “We were together, and then my Soul was there, and Chara was there too, and they fought and I kicked Chara off of him and he pushed me and he’s all by himself and he needs our help!”

Gaster poked his head into your line of sight. “I’m not sure exactly what you’re talking about, Angel dear, but I believe we have a bigger problem on our hands.”

“A bad bigger problem.” Frisk added as they looked behind you.

You turned around.

You wish you hadn’t turned around.

The colors registered it as Flowey in your mind, but it certainly didn’t look like him anymore. Even the crazy face you were accustomed to looking at when he went into a murderous rage wasn’t what met you. He grew bigger, The top of his petal barely brushing the ceiling. The petals were sharper, the thorns were longer, it’s face was contorted into a wicked drippy smile. Red slits met your eyes and the first thing you felt was fear.

The only thing you felt was fear.

“So this is what it feels like.” It says, evaluating itself and flapping its leaves. “Interesting. I
thought there would be a bit more to it, but I guess this will have to do.”

“Flowey…” Frisk said, dropping the gun to the floor. “What happened to you?”

It tilted its head. “Flowey...what a stupid name. I wonder who came up with that. Nope. No Flowey
here. I’m Chara. Chara the killer.”

“watch out!” Sans grabbed both you and Frisk, teleporting you to the other side of the room as one
of the monster’s vines made impact with the ground where you once stood.

More vines sprouted out of the ground and surrounded it’s body, writhing ominously.

“Aww, what’s the matter? You don’t wanna play with me anymore?!” It reared back two vines and
aimed in your direction. A quick pop from Sans got you out of harm’s way, landing you outside the
ballroom, right behind the glass doors.

“This is bad.” Sans said, releasing you both. “we have to warn everybody to get out of here.”

You looked around, nothing the absence of one of your members. “Where’s Gaster?”

“He must have teleported away!” Frisk said.

“Dammit.” Sans cursed as the demon flower refocused on your group, grinning.

“You think you can run from me?” It cackled. “I’ve waited a thousand years for this. I’m not going
to let any of you get away!”

“nope.” Sans grabbed you both again and in an instant you were back in the party room, in the
middle of a circle formed by your close friends. All of them looked at you worryingly.

“SANS! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?” Papyrus questioned. “WE WERE JUST GOING TO GO
LOOK FOR ALL OF YOU.”

Undyne bent over to your height “Whoa, are you guys okay?? You look like you saw a ghost.”

“Not a ghost.” You gasped. Sudden teleportation didn’t always sit right with you. “Chara. In
Flowey. It’s coming!”

Toriel stepped forward. “What did you just say?”

“We have to get everyone to leave!” Frisk ran to her side, clutching her dress. “Everyone’s in
danger!”

“In the m-middle of the party?!” Alphys stuttered. “It w-would cause a panic!”

Sans turned to her. “Alphys, if there’s any time to panic, now would be-”

He was interrupted by the wall crashing in, debris going everywhere as screams littered the
ballroom. You could see red eyes through the dust.

“-perfect.” Sans turned to address the group. “papyrus, alphys, tori, get everyone to safety. undyne,
asgore and i can hold it off.”

Papyrus huffed. “WHILE I AM HAPPY THAT YOU ARE FINALLY TAKING SOME
INITIATIVE, SANS, DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT SOMEONE AS GREAT AS ME
WOULD DARE TO MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROTECT MY FRIENDS?!”
“Papyrus ohmygod, just listen to your brother and get everyone outta here!!!” Undyne materialized two spears in her hands as Asgore readied his trident. “Who do you think trained you anyway!!!”

“ALRIGHT, FINE.” He said, turning to stomp off with the others “BUT JUST KNOW FOR THE RECORD THAT I AM VERY DISPLEASED WITH THESE TURN OF EVENTS.”

“What should I do?” You ask the shorter skeleton as his brother left. You already knew the answer before it left his mouth and part of you regretted asking.

“you run.” He says. “run as far away as you can. we almost lost you to that thing once, i’m not going to lose you to it again. take frisk with you.” He turns to you and takes one of your hands in his. “no matter what happens, promise me you’ll survive.”

You look him in the eyes and nod. “But what about you?”

The characteristic smile on his face shifted. He was nervous, but there was something else in it. Something comforting. “i’ll be fine. i’m not fighting alone this time.”

“I love you.” bubbled out of your mouth before you could stop it.

He chuckled. “love you too. now get out of here.”

You released his hand and ran off to help evacuate the monsters with everyone else.

Undyne made a sound “Nerd.”

“You both missed your chances.” Sans shrugged, materializing a blaster behind him. “I wasn’t gonna miss mine. Now, i think i’ve got some unfinished business to deal with.”

The demon flower laughed at him. “You think the three of you are going to stop me? I watched this flower kill all of the monsters in the underground once. You’ve got no chance!”

Asgore stepped forward. “Flowey...Chara...whoever you are. You don’t have to do this.”

"YES I DO!" The force of it’s yell shook the building. “Stop saying that! You have no right to tell me what I don’t have to do you murderer!”

Asgore growled. “Killing humans for the sake of my people and mindlessly slaughtering anyone in front of you are two completely different concepts. I’m over that now.”

“Oh i’m not talking about the human souls.” It said “I’m talking about before all that. Back during the war when you showed your real colors to everyone. Back when you killed my parents!!”

“So Asgore killed your parents in the war, big whoop. A lot of people died back then. That’s what happens in war!” Undyne said, chucking a spear at the thorny body. “ Doesn’t mean you have to murder all monsters because of it!!!”

“cool motive, but you still killed us.” Sans said, flicking his hand forward as a volley of bones shot towards the stalk.

It knocked away all of them with ease and focused on Sans. “You’re the only one that remembers. You’re the only one that remembers anything. Tell them what it was like to see their bodies melt into ashy oblivion. Tell them what it was like to watch your own brother die!”

“NGAAH!!! STOP TALKING!!!” Several spears formed around Undyne, spinning menacingly. “Who cares about all of that! None of it happened here anyway!! But what IS gonna happen is
you’re gonna get your ass kicked and we’re gonna go back to our party!!"

It chuckled, sound rough in the air. The thorns on the vines turned into spikes as they swayed from side to side.

“I’d love to see you try and stop me.”
“I don’t like this.”

You and the others had successfully managed to usher out a majority of the monsters from the hall. Alphys and Mettaton were handling crowd control outside while you, Frisk, and Papyrus scoured the halls for anyone who might have ran into a side-room to hide.

“Don’t like what?” Frisk asked you, clutching their birthday present to their chest. They remembered to grab it before they ran out. You didn’t even think of it.

“Not being able to help them.” You say, knocking on a door and grunting when you realized it was locked. “I want to be in there giving them my support, or...something!”

“AS DO I.” Papyrus placed an arm on your shoulder. “AND I KNOW THAT THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT LIFE THREATENING THING WE WILL FACE, MAYBE. THOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF LIFE THREATENING THINGS HAPPENING EVER SINCE WE MET YOU.”

You put your hand over his “I know you’re trying to help, Pap, but that doesn’t make me feel any better.”

“I WANT TO FIGHT TOO.” He reassured you. “WE ALL WANT TO FIGHT TO PROTECT WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO US. OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY, AND EVERYONE ELSE THAT IS AT STAKE HERE...BUT SOMETIMES IT’S OKAY NOT TO FIGHT.” He said, squeezing your shoulder and looking off in the direction of the main ballroom. “MY BROTHER IS STRONG. ASGORE AND UNDYNE ARE HARDCORE SOLDIERS. THE THREE OF THEM WILL BE ENOUGH TO FEND OFF CHARA. AND IF THEY ARE NOT, WE ARE HERE TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO KEEP THE WORLD MOVING FORWARD.”

Your grip on his hand tightened. “But...but what if they’re not enough? What if it is down to us? Papyrus I can’t do anything! I don’t have any magic and I can’t fight with everyone else. I don’t want to just run away and pretend my friends aren’t in danger!”

“I don’t have magic either.” Frisk’s eyes moved to the ground. “I want to help, like I did with Asriel before...but I don’t think my voice is going to reach him again. Not with Chara in the way.”

“I only got to meet him for a minute and now he’s fighting all by himself...”

Papyrus frowned. “PERHAPS WE SHOULD GO BACK TO THE FRONT AND SEE ALPHYS. I DON’T BELIEVE THERE IS ANYONE ELSE INSIDE THE BUILDING.”

You nod. “Yeah...yeah alright. C’mon Frisk.”

You could hear the sounds of the fight as you trekked back to the front of the building. The resonance of fire and spears whizzing through the air met your eardrums. You could feel the magic radiating off of the room even though you were on the other side of the building.

It didn’t sit right with you.

“Mom!” Frisk ran to Toriel as soon as they saw her, grabbing onto her dress in a hug that was warmly returned.
She ran her paw through Frisk’s hair. “My child, thank goodness you’re alright. All of you are alright?”

“We couldn’t find anybody else in the building.” You tell her. “Is everyone out here safe?”

“We’re alright.” Alphys replies. “I did a head count and everyone’s here. W-well...except for Sans...and Asgore...and Undyne.”

“And Gaster.” You tell her. “He disappeared after Chara merged with Flowey. Have you seen him?”

She nodded “He was here for a minute...asking about the magic scrap he left me...and then he was gone. I think he took your friend with him? The purple one?”

You raised an eyebrow. “He took Chi? Why?”

A loud throat clearing to your left made you turn to find them both, standing there calmly as if nothing had happened. Well...Gaster was standing. Chi was floating. A wave of relief flooded through you.

“I appreciate your concern over my well being.” He smiled at you. “And the well being of this young lady here.”

“He is fine!” Chi reassures you with a smile. The aforementioned magic scrap sits comfortably inside a container in her hands. The yellow glow radiating off of it hurts your eyes and brings up bad memories, but that’s not what it’s there for. “We are both fine! We have actually been talking quite a bit and I believe we have developed a strategy to rid us of the awful monster inside.”

“It does not come without some risks, as all plans do.” Gaster said. “Though, I believe one hundred percent that if this were to work, you will never have to worry about Chara in your lives ever again.”

Papyrus fidgeted “IS IT DANGEROUS?”

“Possibly.” He says, striding to the front of the group. “I will need a decoy for the monster. Though it may have many vines and tentacles and the like, it only has one face and can only focus on one person at a time. Distraction is the key to making this work.”

Your brows furrow. “What are you going to do?”

He smiled. “Simple. I am going to teleport them out of existence and banish them to the void I was trapped in for the past several hundred years.”

You raised an eyebrow. “You can do that?”

“I can do many things.” He said, as if that was the explanation. “I have, in my time alone, been reconstructing the machine that cause me to appear here in the first place. Your flower friend popped in on me several times and accused me of ‘making something stupid’. Little did he know.”

“I DON’T UNDERSTAND.” Papyrus chimed in. “WHY DID YOU MAKE SOMETHING LIKE THAT? HOW IS THAT GOING TO HELP US?”

“I originally made it with the wish to return to the universe that I had once abandoned.
However, I quickly abandoned the sentiment.” He explained. "The machine’s coordinates are currently set to the exact plane of existence that I found myself trapped in for a significant time. I am going to teleport Flowey and myself to the machine and force him inside, closing the pathway behind him.”

“You will do no such thing.” Toriel stepped forward. “That thing has both my children inside. I will not allow you to take them away from me.”

He frowned. “With all due respect, Queen Toriel, while you call them your children, you do not fully understand exactly what one of them is.”

“Toriel please.” You step between them. “I know you want to see your kids. I know you want them to be okay, but things aren’t going to be okay this time. I’ve seen what Chara can do. If we don’t stop them...if we don’t get rid of them somehow, everyone’s going to die. I don’t want to watch all of my friends get killed by them again.” You plead. “Sans, Asgore, and Undyne are already fighting but they can’t hold Chara off forever. We have to do something or the whole world could be in danger.”

She wanted to fight you. You could see the spark of aggression in her eyes as she went to retaliate against you...and then the sag of her shoulders in defeat. “...A mother must do what is best for her children. Even if that means...stopping them when they get out of hand.” She straightened herself out. “And a queen must do what is best for her people. Especially if that means stopping a threat. I will accompany you.”

Gaster held up a finger. "No. No you will not. My sincerest apologies Your Majesty but do you really think it wise to run headfirst into a fight when all of your people are standing right behind you?” He gestured to the crowd. “Your husband is already fighting. Do you want to risk the loss of both of you?”

Frisk tugged on her paw. “Mom...stay here. Gaster can handle it.”

She frowned. She wanted to fight. You could see it in her eyes. “Alright. I will stay here and reassure my people that everything is going to be alright. But, I am trusting you, Doctor Gaster.”

“And I will do nothing to betray that trust.” He bowed. “I leave monsterkind in yours and Alphys’ capable hands. Now, onto the matter of the decoy...”

“I’ll do it.” You step forward. “I’ll be the bait. I’ve got the best chance at distracting them. They tried to take over my body, after all.”

He gave you a disapproving look, clearly not wanting you to go into the fight. “It will be dangerous.”

You smirk. “Sans is in there. I’m gonna bring him home again. I’ll jump into danger to save him, just like he did for me.”

“AS WILL I.” Papyrus stepped forward and placed his hand on your shoulder. An act of camaraderie. “IF WE ARE GOING TO FIGHT, IT WILL BE AS A TEAM. I WILL NOT LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO ANYBODY. I SWEAR ON MY FANCY NEW CLOTHES!”

“So be it.” He said, moving towards the door. “If we are to move, it will be quickly.”

Chi and Papyrus go to follow him. You turn to Frisk and the rest.
“We’ll be fine.” You tell them “And when we get back, you can open that present I got you.”

They nod and you race after your friends into the building. The sounds of the fight have died down and the walls are no longer shaking. You’re not sure whether or not it’s a good or a bad thing.

“It’s too quiet.” You say as you approach the doors. “Is it over?”

“Doubtful.” The scientist says. “We’re going in. Be on your guards.”

You were right to be wary of the silence. The four of you pushed in the doors to find carnage behind them. The pillars supporting the room were dented and broken, the tables were trashed, craters littered the dance floor, and in the middle of it all was Chara-Flowey, holding Sans hostage in its prickly grip. Undyne and Asgore lay unconscious on the ground mere feet from him. Spears scattered the walls and Asgore’s trident lay broken beside him.

“Well, well, well.” It taunted as soon as it realized you were there. “The cavalry’s finally arrived. I was getting bored. Mister one HP over here put up a pretty good fight with his comrades, but I fixed that real fast. Figured you’d want to be here to send him off.”

“SANS!” Papyrus yelled. You yelled right along with him but were muted due to the sheer volume of his voice. He clenched his fists and took a step forward but was stopped as the demon held up a vine to your group.

“Ah ah ah, don’t even think about it.” It teased, coiling it’s vine around Sans to a point that made him grunt. You feel like you heard a crack, but it could have been worst case scenario hallucinating “One wrong move and bone boy here gets a one way trip to skeleton hell.”

You clench your fists in anger. “What do you want?”

“Revenge.” It said quickly. “Revenge is all I ever wanted. Revenge for my parents. Revenge for my misfortune. Revenge on you and Asriel and Asgore and everyone around me for lying to me. I suffered my whole life and when I wanted to end it all I couldn’t, and I suffered more. Every waking moment was torture for me. Nobody noticed. Nobody cared! Why did I have to suffer while everyone else got to be happy!!” It raged.

“Asgore took you in.” You argued. “He treated you like his own family and you tried to murder him!”

It glared at the king’s body on the floor “Nobody would be happy living with the person who slaughtered their family. My parents were medics. They wanted everyone on the battlefield to live. So did I, at one point. I watched his trident go through my father’s heart with my own two eyes. Do you think that I would just sit back and accept him after that?!”

“That doesn’t matter anymore!” You took a step forward. Chara didn’t seem to think anything of it. “It’s a different world here. Things have changed! You don’t need to get revenge or be alone anymore because we can help you.”

It guffawed, and outright laughed. “Help me...Help me? The only thing I ever wanted to do was kill the monster who took away my family, and even in the end I wasn’t the one to deliver the final blow. My chance was stolen by this good for nothing flower I once called a friend. He betrayed me, and now it’s my turn to get revenge on everyone who wronged me. Including you!”

A vine shot towards you and you screamed as you braced for impact, but it didn’t come. A loud CLACK sounded as a wall of bones stopped the vines in their tracks. Papyrus silently ‘nyeh-heh-heh’d behind you.
“DO NOT THINK THAT IT WILL BE THAT EASY TO GET RID OF US.” He said. “AFTER ALL, WE ARE ALL DETERMINED TO DEFEAT YOU!”

“Papyrus why are you so cool…” You clutch your hand to your chest and whisper in relief.

He smirked “I HAVE TO BE COOL. I HAVE TO KEEP UP WITH MY BROTHERS!”

“One of which I still have.” The demon reminded you, dangling Sans by the back of his vest in front of it like a toy. His eyes were open but he was weak. Far too weak to fight back or teleport out of Chara’s hold.

“Yes. About that.” Gaster clapped his hands together. “Chi, if you would be so kind.”

She tilted her head. “What? Oh, yes! Right!” She glowed, yellow magic surrounded her body. “I’m afraid I can’t let you do that...whoever you are.”

The flower monster snarled and went to wrap its vines around him but were stopped as yellow enveloped them, freezing them in place. It growled. “What the hell???”

“You know,” Chi started “the wonderful thing about having telekinetic based magic, is that i can apply it to things other than myself. It really is terribly convenient.”

The same yellow magic surrounded Sans, yanking him from the monster’s grip and floating him over to your party. He landed in front of you softly and you immediately went to hold him up.

“Honestly, I just made those clothes for you and you’ve already ruined them.” Chi said, crossing her arms in front of her. “I do hope you’re prepared to apologize.”

“sorry…” Sans’ voice was strained as he lay nearly limp in your arms. You frown.

“Papyrus, take him to Toriel.” You scooch him over so he’s in the younger skeleton’s hands. “He needs to get healed immed-” You’re silences as one of Sans’ hands grips onto your dress. His breathing is hoarse. He clearly needs medical attention.

“not gonna leave you.” He panted. “not like this.”

You put a hand on his face. “It’ll be okay. I promise it’ll be okay. Trust me. Trust us. I’ll see you when it’s all over.”

He sighed. There was no energy behind it. Papyrus huffed.

“WHY AM I ALWAYS THE ONE WHO HAS TO TOTE YOUR LAZY BONY BUTT AROUND.”

Sans tried to shrug. “guess i gotta build up my muscle…”

“EVEN IN TIMES OF CRISIS, YOU STILL HAVE THE STRENGTH TO MAKE TERRIBLE JOKES.” He picked Sans up in a princess carry and hauls him out of the room with a loud 'I'LL BE BACK'

The demon snickered as it watched them run away. “So you got him from me. Big whoop. I’ve still got the other two right here!” It moved several vines in front of it to grab the bodies of Asgore and Undyne off the ground...but came up empty handed.

“You really have a very short attention span.” Gaster said, walking around from behind you.
“Fear not. I have relocated the remaining two members of our party and they are currently in very capable hands.”

“You teleported them out, thank god.” You sigh. “Well..guess it’s just us now.”

He nodded. “Ah yes. The three of us who did not initially exist, fighting the monster that should have never existed in the first place. There is some irony here.”

“We’re gonna end this.” You take a stance and brace yourself.

This is it.

This is what everything has been building up to.

This is what you came for.

The thin silence in the moment between rest and action rang in your mind as the world stilled before you.

And then all at once, the world moved, and you moved with it.
Dear Flowey,

How are you?

It’s been a year since the Monster Week Monster Party. A lot of things have changed. I’m sure you want to hear all about it.

“I really wish you were there. I wish I was there.”

“You won’t believe what happened next! Go on, tell him!!”

“I’ve been fine. I’ve been going to school like a regular kid. I haven’t been doing very much ambassadoring.”

“That sounds incredibly unhygienic…”

After the party ended and everybody recovered, Asgore asked Angel if she could be the ambassador instead. I think he knew how much stress it was putting me under.

“WHY DOES ALL THE FUN HAVE TO HAPPEN WHEN I’M NOT AROUND?!?”

She accepted on the spot. I think she knew too.

She’s better suited to it than I am. She’s an adult, and everything. And she spent more time with the monsters underground than I did, even if nobody remembers it.
“I ran to one side, Gaster ran to the other. We tried to confuse it but it just had so many vines.”

“I can’t believe I was knocked out for this!!”

_I think she’s been doing a good job. She had to quit her job at the restaurant she worked at, but Grillby offered her a job too, which she also took, and he understands. He doesn’t schedule her too much, which is good. I don’t think I’d be able to work and be an ambassador at the same time, but being an ambassador doesn’t really pay a lot, so Grillby is helping._

“Chi was so great though. She was able to stop its attacks completely a few times.”

_She got me a diary, by the way. That was the gift. She said that since I wasn't able to save the world anymore that I should at least be able to save my own memories._

_I use it every day._

“GASTER DID AS WELL! I REMEMBER WALKING BACK IN TO SEE HIS BLACK MAGIC ALL OVER THE PLACE!”

_Papyrus is doing okay too. Mettaton hired him to be his ‘personal security detail’. I don’t know what that means but I think it’s an excuse for them to go on dates when nobody’s looking._

“bro, let her tell the story, jeez.”

_Sans is Angel’s ‘personal security detail’ now, and they go on dates all the time when everybody’s looking._

“BUT THE STORY GETS SAD AFTER THIS!”

_Such is the price of an epic_

“It is rather melancholic, all things considered…”

_Gaster is the new Royal Scientist now. He’s working on revolutionizing cars and transportation type stuff. Sans says he’s ‘staying in his lane’, which I guess is a good thing? I don’t know. I do know that his jetpacks last longer than Alphys’ did. I have three of them now._
“Can I tell the story guys? I mean, I was there.”

“I was also there!”

“Yeah, and you were fantastic, but Grillby hasn’t heard this part yet.”

“…..”

_He hired Chi as his assistant. Apparently her magic does all the kinds of things his magic couldn’t, and he likes having that around. He’s been doing that thing where he hold out his hand less and less. I haven’t seen him do it all week. She still makes clothes though. I’m wearing one of her shirts right now!_

“Okay so anyway, in the middle of it all Flowey? Asriel? One of them. They ended up fighting off Chara for like, a full minute of control.”

“HE WHAT?!?”

“**Papyrus you were there, don’t act so surprised.”**

“**EXCUSE YOU, I AM ENGAGING IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE STORY, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.”**

“let him be, gas.”

_Alpys isn’t the royal scientist anymore. She doesn’t really do a lot of sciencing very much after the whole party thing happened. She started traveling the world with Undyne and they do a documentary show now on dangerous animals that she fights!_

“I managed to successfully convince him to shrink down to a size we could transport.”

“Back to his flowerpot size, basically.”

_Undyne fights them, not Alphys._

“That must have b-been difficult…”

_I’m pretty sure if Alphys tried to fight anything herself she’d pass out._

“I helped with the containment, just a bit.”
“You were an invaluable asset to the team, my dear. Do not doubt yourself.”

She runs a popular anime critiquing blog too. I think she has fans in Japan.

“So what happened next?”

“Gaster explained what our plan was and that he was going to send Flowey to the void.”

“It was...a sad moment.”

“Poor Flowey…”

Undyne punched a shark last week and got it on camera. I think she apologized afterwards though. She also has a lot of fans.

“It was really sad. I almost cried.”

Mom’s doing alright. She’s still teaching, but now she’s teaching online classes to people around the world! She’s really busy sometimes, but I help her grade so it makes it a bit easier.

“After explaining to him that it was the best possible outcome he agreed to go with the plan. I suppose as his last true act of good will.”

“Asriel was definitely there for that.”

Dad still does kingly stuff sometimes. Mostly he just spends time with the bea...borocr...the fancy official national people that do all the monster rights paperwork.

Byurocrats or something. I haven’t learned that word yet. They all wear a lot of grey and are really boring.

“And then?”

“And then I did what I had to. I teleported to my machine, said goodbye, and shot him off into the void before turning it off. It was...melancholically anticlimactic.”

Things have been really calm since you’ve left. Nobody’s magic has broken down and Sans seems happier.
Like, really happy. Not the fake kind of happy he was when I first met him. It’s a good look on him.

“But that doesn’t mean he’s necessarily gone.”

“Oh hell no it doesn’t!!”

He’s actually the one who suggested I write this. He suggested all of us write letters to you, just in case.

“And...and you’re sure you still have the coordinates you sent him to?”

“As sure as I am of my title, my dear Alphys.”

I wanted to send you one right away, but Angel said that there’d be more things to tell you if we waited.

“Frisk, are you done yet?”

“Almost!”

Anyway, I’m gonna see if I can send you something once a month. I don’t know if you’ll get it, but i’m gonna send it anyway.

“I FINISHED MINE LAST NIGHT. IT’S SEVENTEEN PAGES LONG!!”

“What could you possibly have to tell him that would take seventeen pages to write?”

“EVERYTHING!”

I miss you.

“Sans wrote like, three sentences and then fell asleep.”

“Typical.”

“writing is not my forte.”
**Everybody misses you.**

“I made a sweater for him. I don’t know if it’s cold where he is but I hope it fits…”

“The true question is whether or not it will fit, and whether or not he will get it.”

*You really changed, you know?*

“Do you think we should sent him something to eat? Oh jeez what if he’s starving?”

“Fear not. I have made a cinnamon-butterscotch pie for just such an occasion.”

“You are always so well prepared.”

*I think everyone else changed too, for the better.*

“WE SHOULD SEND HIM A PEN AND PAPER, SO HE CAN WRITE BACK!”

*And, for what it’s worth…*

“he can’t hold it pap, he doesn’t have any hands.”

*I think you redeemed yourself just fine.*

“We could send him a cell phone.”

*And Chara…*

“He can’t type either!!”

*I’m sorry*
“W-well, actually. He can. You see, if he still has control of his vines…”

_“I’m sorry that we weren’t able to help you.”_

“I believe he did steal Angel’s phone once.”

_“I’m sorry that you had to suffer so much.”_

“Grillby, do you think you could make some food so we can send it to him?”

_“I’m sorry you had to be alone for so long.”_

“He can put it on my tab.”

“NO!!”

_But if you ever do come back, i’m sure we can find a way to help you again._

“I will gladly pay for any and all food if it means my brother never racks up a tab as exorbitant as his last one again.”

“I think we should be leaving…”

_And then we can all live happily ever after_

“Yeah let’s get outta here. It’s getting cramped.”

“Frisk are you coming?”

“Yes, one sec!”

_I’m not going to give up._
"I think Grillby is getting annoyed that we’re so loud all the time."

“.....”

I’m gonna find a way to bring you back. Maybe not now, maybe not in the next ten years, but I’ll find it.

“Grillby you should expand your bar, man.”

So if I’m not giving up here, then you shouldn’t give up wherever you are either.

“SO THAT WE CAN FIT EVEN MORE OF OUR FRIENDS IN IT!”

Take care of yourself, alright?

"Thanks for the food grillby! We'll tell Flowey you said hi!"

And P.S.

"Is everybody ready?"

I’m proud of you

"As ready as we'll ever be."

I'll see you soon

"Well then. I believe it's time for us to go."

Sincerely, your best friend, Frisk
If you had told me one years ago that I would have written something like this, I would have laughed.

What started out as an innocent self indulgent short story quickly grew and became one of the most complex things I've ever created in my entire life. I had absolutely no idea how much time I would spend making this, or how much other people enjoyed it. I didn't even think that exactly one year later would be when I brought it to a close.

I took a break halfway through. I ran into a few bits of trouble that I couldn't get myself out of. I got into some arguments with people, got kicked out of my house, lost my job, and had a general tough time, but I still pushed through. I pushed myself to finish this because if there was one thing I was going to have, it was going to be something complete to leave behind.

A year of work brought me here, and as many twists and turns as the story took, as far as it deviated from what I had originally planned, I'm happy.

I'm genuinely happy that I was able to make this and get this far.

I'm glad that I was able to inspire other people to write. I'm glad that I have had such loyal readers throughout the course of this story, and I'm glad that I was able to create a whole new world from one that already existed. I'm glad I got to put my ideas out there and I'm grateful that other people enjoyed it as much as I did. Even if it's not perfect.

A story can't go on forever. I didn't want to drag it out and make it too long. I think I succeeded.

Thank you for reading this. Thanks for being a part of the ride.

I hope you're as happy as I am.

And now, on to the next project.

I'll see you guys around.
One Year Later

Chapter Summary

It has been exactly two years since I started this story, one year since I ended it, and as I promised, one year later I am here with the epilogue that I believe will make everyone happy.

Thanks for sticking with me on this wild ride guys. It's been a blast.

This rounds out to around 5k words. I did my best.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"Do you think we did the right thing?"

The black void of the machine has become a familiar if oddly comforting sight to you in the previous year. Flowey’s absence had the effect of a funeral on your group. He was gone, as far as all of you were concerned. You didn’t want to think of it as an absolute end, you didn’t want it to be. Part of you expected him to pop up at inappropriate times with that smug grin on his face, accompanied by a well placed one-liner. It never came.

“I don’t think we did.”

It seemed to stare back at you, ominous and foreboding in a way that made your skin crawl. This machine. This stupid fucking machine that had been the cause of all of your suffering, the machine that put Flowey and Chara god knows where. Goosebumps started in your arms and sent a chill up your shoulders and down your spine. It was always like this when you came here. Always cold and silent.

You and the rest of your friends, monster and otherwise, had been writing letters to Flowey throughout the curse of his absence. The feeling of throwing them out there with the hope that they were keeping him company in your absence….

It helped you get through the tougher moments, at least.

There were no indicators that showed whether or not they reached him, but that didn’t stop any of you.

Undyne, in a surprising twist, came down here as much as you did, if not more. When she was on this side of the world, anyway. She called Sans sometimes for help, but teleportation technology was made readily available to the world thanks to Gaster’s genius so, most of the time she didn’t have to. The amount of letters she’s already thrown out were staggering. Then again, she’s never been one to hold back, and you suspected a good number of those were from Alphys anyway. One day you worked up the courage to ask her what was in them and she shrugged, saying they were ‘things she needed to get off her chest’. A quick text to Alphys showed that Undyne, as happy as she was traveling the world, still felt guilty in not believing that Flowey had the ability to change. About not believing in you or Frisk, or Gaster to some extent.
Everyone was handling Flowey’s absence differently, you supposed. You just didn’t expect
Undyne, tenacious and unwavering, to feel guilt about it, of all things.

Though in a way, you felt it too.

You spoke into the black pocket, praying somehow your words would somehow reach him. That
they always reached him. That he was out there somewhere warm and comforting, surrounded by
the love and apologies and well wishes that all of your letters conveyed. He wasn’t alone, not
really, he had Chara, but being trapped in a void with someone you hated had to be worse than
loneliness.

“WHY NOT?”

A second voice stunned you out of your lamentations. It wasn’t the snarky sarcastic voice of the
yellow flower monster that you had been longing to hear for the past 365 days.

It was Papyrus.

Sans must have sent him down to get you. He was probably too lazy to teleport all the way to
Hotland. His brother, you knew from experience, had energy to spare. How long have you been
down here anyway? A quick glance at your phone revealed that you’ve been standing in front of
the portal machine for two hours, and that you also had three missed calls. It didn’t feel like that
long though. You didn’t even hear your phone go off.

Papyrus moved to sit beside you, cross legged and jovial as was his nature. You could tell he was
worried though. He was very bad at hiding his emotions. Stupidly bad at it. You and Papyrus had
become ridiculously close throughout the whole ordeal. Part of you expected Sans or Gaster to be
the ones to pull you out, but this was just as expected.

“I don’t like how it ended.” You confessed to him. “I feel like there could have been a better
ending.”

You didn’t look at him, but you could feel him nodding. “HM. PERHAPS. THERE ARE
ALWAYS A MULTITUDE OF OPTIONS IN LIFE. WHAT ELSE DO YOU THINK YOU
COULD HAVE DONE?”

“I….I don’t know.” You admit, putting a hand on your head. ‘We could’ve...fuck we couldn’v
saved him somehow. Taken Chara out of him and stop him from rampaging. We could have….we
could’ve done something other than banish the poor guy. I mean, he just learned what it was like
to have friends and to care about people and we took that away from him. Papyrus we could have
saved him.”

“We COULD HAVE.” He agrees. “BUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SAVING HIM WITHOUT
KILLING HIM WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY LOW. I AM AN OPTIMIST, AND EVEN I
ACKNOWLEDGE THIS.” He puts a gloved hand on your head, over your own. “I WILL ALSO
ADMIT THAT I DO NOT LIKE THE OUTCOME EITHER, BUT, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT
SIDE! FLOWEY IS NOT ALONE. EVEN IF CHARA IS NOT THE NICEST PERSON, THEY
WERE FRIENDS ONCE. THEY ARE TOGETHER NOW, AND THEY WILL HAVE HAD
ENOUGH TIME TO WORK OUR DIFFERENCES. PLUS, OUR OWN FAMILY AND
FRIENDS ARE SAFE FROM HARM, AND WE ARE ALL DOING VERY WELL FOR
OURSSELVES HERE. THIS MAY NOT BE THE BEST OUTCOME, OR ONE THAT ANY OF
US AGREE WITH, BUT ALL THINGS CONSIDERED IT IS ONE OF THE BETTER ONES.”

“But what if he’s in danger?” You ask, squeezing his hand through his glove. “What if Chara took
over completely? What if he was spit out somewhere? What if we’ve been throwing these letters into an empty space pocket and he hasn’t even been getting them?”

“I THINK.” He says after a brief lull “THAT THIS IS LESS ABOUT THE ‘WHAT IF’S AND MORE ABOUT YOU BLAMING YOURSELF AGAIN.”

You frown. “I….probably?? I mean, it is my fault, right? None of this would have happened if I had just stayed in my lane. Chara wouldn’t have done all of this if I hadn’t have gone through in the first place. It’s only natural that I’d feel guilty, right?”

He removed his hand from your head. The warmth of it’s comforting presence went with it. “YES YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY ALLOWED TO FEEL GUILTY. YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH A LOT IN THIS ORDEAL, MORE THAN THE REST OF US CERTAINLY. MAYBE NOT AS MUCH AS ME, BECAUSE I AM STILL TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR MY OWN LOSSES, BUT!! YOU ARE ONE OF THE STRONGEST HUMANS I KNOW. EVEN IF YOU ARE FEELING GUILTY OVER YOUR ACTIONS, ALL OF THOSE ARE IN THE PAST! THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT NOW, AND WORRYING ABOUT IT WILL ONLY MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE. WHAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING IS FOCUSING ON THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE, BECAUSE THESE ARE THINGS YOU CAN STILL CONTROL. AND PRESENTLY, YOU ARE GOING TO MAKE A HOLE IN THE BUTT OF YOUR PANTS IF YOU KEEP WORRYING TOO MUCH!!”

You chuckle and look down at your knees. “Stupid happy go lucky skeleton and his stupid perfect pep talks.”

He smiled. “THIS ‘STUPID HAPPY GO LUCKY SKELETON’ WILL DRAG YOU OUT OF THIS ROOM IF HE HAS TO. HE ALSO LIKES TALKING IN THIRD PERSON AND REQUESTS THAT THE TWO OF YOU DO IT MORE OFTEN.”

You smile back. “Well, this stupid depressed human wants to stay.”

“ABSOLUTELY NOT.” He stands and reaches over, easily picking you up and throwing you over his shoulder in a fireman's carry. “YOU HAVE A LOT TO DO TODAY. YOU ARE THE AMBASSADOR FOR MONSTERKIND, AND IT IS YOUR BIRTHDAY. YOU ARE NOT GOING TO SPEND ALL DAY DOWN HERE MOPING.”

“I am not moping!” you playfully whack the back of his battle body torso piece in a mock attempt to escape his grip. You won’t, but it’s always fun to pretend to put up a fight. “I’m being a realist!”

He chuckles. “WELL, I AM ‘REALISTICALLY’ REMOVING YOU FROM HOTLAND. TAKE THAT, BIRTHDAY GIRL!”

You laugh and hit him again. “I can’t believe i’m being abducted on my own birthday. I didn’t wish for this.”

“YOU DIDN’T WISH FOR ANYTHING YET!” He says, easily carrying you into the elevator. He...more than likely wasn’t going to put you down. “WE HAVE A CAKE, AND PRESENTS, AND EVERYONE IS THERE! WELL, EXCEPT FOR UNDYNE AND ALPHYS. THEY’RE IN PERU FIGHTING JELLYFISH. I THINK. IT’S VERY HARD TO KEEP TRACK OF WHAT THEY’RE DOING.”

You pull out your phone and text Sans to meet you at the entrance to Hotland. You didn’t want to be carried all the way to your house. Thats was like….an hour and a half walk. “Alphys posts all of their adventures on her Instagram. You don’t keep up with it?”
He frowns. You can’t see it but you can feel his head tilt down, which usually means he’s frowning. “UNFORTUNATELY, DUE TO MY FULL TIME JOB AS METTATON’S PERSONAL GUARD—”

“Boyfriend.”

“PERSONAL GUARD!! I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO KEEP UP WITH ALL OF MY FRIENDS LIKE I USED TO. I EVEN ASKED IF I COULD HAVE THE DAY OFF FOR YOU!”

“I’m honoured and flattered.” You say as the elevator doors open and he briskly walks out of it into the Old Lab. Alphys doesn’t use it anymore, but you still have sleepovers there every once in a while. “If it makes you feel any better, I asked Sans if we could play pin the tail on the skeleton donkey.”

“THAT’S RIGHT! HALLOWEEN IS ALMOST HERE!!” He says, carrying you out of the building into the searing heat. Monsters still lived down here so, The Core was still fully operational. “WE WILL HAVE TO GET YOU A COSTUME! I’VE ALREADY GOT MINE! WANT TO GUESS WHAT IT IS?”

You roll your eyes. “Are you going to be a Royal Guard?”

He pulls you from over his shoulder and instead just sort of...holds you in front of him by your arms. He’s so tall. Why is he so tall. Your legs dangle a good foot off the floor. “HOW DID YOU KNOW?!”

You shrug, knowing full well that he knew you would know, because he hasn’t been anything else for the past two halloweens “Lucky guess. I texted Sans.”

He puts you down, thank god. “GOOD. HAVING HIM WILL MAKE TRANSPORTATION A LOT EASIER. I AM VERY GREAT, AND I HAVE A LOT OF STAMINA, BUT I DO NOT WANT TO WALK ALL THE WAY BACK TO OUR HOUSE. IT WOULD TAKE UP VALUABLE PARTY TIME!”

You shove your hands into the pockets of your jeans and start walking towards the entrance to the MTT resort. It was there ‘for the fans’, according to Mettaton. “You guys don’t have to throw that big of a party.”

Papyrus caught up with you and put a hand to his chest in mock offense. “NONSENSE. YOU ARE A FRIEND. YOU ARE TECHNICALLY FAMILY. I CONSIDER YOU FAMILY. YOU ARE GOING TO GET A PARTY WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT. I ALREADY BLEW UP THE BALLOONS!”

“With what mouth?” You laugh as you approach the entrance, a very comforting and familiar sight of a blue hoodie, and the skeleton in it, greeting you.

The first thing you do is give him a running hug, which he didn’t seem to expect because he stumbled backwards into the wall. You hit your forehead on it by accident and the two of you rebounded off of it awkwardly. Thank god for his sturdy frame or the two of you would have fallen over.

“nice to see you too, angelface. even though I saw you three hours ago.” he said, wrapping an arm around you to steady you. Yours was too busy rubbing at your forehead. “Me being away from you for a short period of time has absolutely no indication on how happy I am to see you next.” You tell him, putting your pained forehead against his. “I’m always happy to
see you and you’re going to have to live with it.”

“Oh no, what a disaster.” His sarcastic tone was a relief from the silence and intrusive thoughts. “Having to deal with the unconditional love of my girlfriend at any waking moment. The horror.”

“Isn’t it just the worst?”

“What ever could I do to retaliate?” His grin shifts into something you know is mischievous.

You freeze as you recognize that smirk. “Sans no. Don’t you even-”

With no warning, his hands move to your sides and he’s tickling you, like an asshole. If you weren’t laughing so hard you’d punch him.

“SANS!!” You squirm in his grip between giggles. “Sans we-we’re in p-public!! Papyrus tag me out!!!”

You looked over to find the taller skeleton eye-ing the broken Mettaton statue that was still spouting water all over the ground. He seemed entranced by it and was inquiring to the doorman whether or not it was new. It wasn’t. He should have known that. They were both conspiring against you, the heathens.

“SANS IF YOU DON’T STOP RIGHT NOW-” Was all it took for him to actually stop. He knew your boundaries.

“gee i thought angels were supposed to be nice.” He teased you, nuzzling the side of your face. “Even though i know from firsthand experience that you’re pretty naughty~”

“Papyrus we’re leaving!!” You yell over his shoulder, face flushed from the sensitive onslaught and the suggestive banter. He was being oddly forward today.

The taller skeleton ran back over to the two of you and with barely a warning at all, the three of you were displaced in front of your own house. Part of you wondered how much party preparation they got done while you were gone. Part of you already knew the house was already fully decorated.

The three of you stepped inside and you were met with the warm inviting smell of a very familiar Butterscotch-Cinnamon aroma. Toriel was here. Which meant Frisk and Asgore were also here. This assumption was proven true as you walked in on Asgore, Frisk, and Gaster playing a game of Uno. By the looks of it, Gaster was winning, as he had only three cards. Asgore was, by the looks of the absolute mass of cards he had on his side, losing, but the sight of him in a pink hawaiian shirt put you at ease. He was taking the day off too, apparently.

You walked up behind Frisk and pointed to a random card. “Play this one.”

“Angel!!” They immediately dropped their cards and turned around, wrapping their arms around your neck in an embrace. They had gotten a bit taller in the past year. “Happy Birthday!!”

“Thanks kid!” You ruffle their hair as they move to sit back down, frantically picking up the cards they dropped. “Asgore, Gaster.”

“The woman of the hour graces us with her presence.” Gaster says, pulling a card from his hand and adding it to the growing pile in the middle. “Welcome home.”

Asgore pulls three cards from his own hand and places them down, a red 9, a reverse, and a draw four. He had been planning that one, you guessed. He turned to you. “Welcome Back. I hope you
don’t mind us taking up the space on your coffee table. This is a very important game.”

You sit down between him and Frisk, pulling Sans down with you. He sits behind you instead, scooting forward to put you between his legs. Lazybones. “So would you say its your number one objective?”

Frisk stuck his tongue out at him, Asgore chuckled, Gaster rolled his eyes.

“Really, brother, that one was a stretch, even for you.”

“Can’t blame a guy for trying.”

“We’re betting on who gets to give you a present first!” Frisk says, watching Gaster have to draw four cards. “Whoever wins this round is the champion.”

Sans moves to put his chin on your shoulder, opening one eye to look at Frisk “Can I opt to give my present last?”

“You’re not even playing!”

Gaster plays one card. “I wasn’t interested in playing but, it’s rare to get to spend time with an old friend.” He tilts his head towards Asgore, who chuckles.

“Life is quite hectic these days, for all of us.” He replies. “Being a king, a scientist, an ambassador, a bodyguard. All of these things are draining.”

“School’s draining.” Frisk draws a card. “Homework is draining.”

“Homework’s always draining.” You agree with them. “I remember hating it growing up. Though...I guess I didn’t really do any homework? Does that work? Hating something you have no experience with?”

“No.” Sans reaches over and pulls one of Frisk’s cards out of their deck and throws it on the pile. It doesn’t match at all. He snickers. “If you hate something you don’t know anything about that just makes you an idiot.”

“True.” You agree, stifling your own chuckle. Frisk shrugs, and Asgore takes his turn. Playful banter is allowed. You turn to survey the rest of the house and notice two things. One, there’s streamers and balloons everywhere (How did you miss that coming in?), and two, Papyrus was gone. More than likely in the kitchen. You lean back against Sans. “So Papyrus told me there was a cake?”

“I bought the cake.” Gaster said, watching the king throw down another card. Another reverse. “Toriel is also making pie, which is no doubt something we are all looking forward to.”

“I appreciate all of this.” You say, reaching up to cover Sans’s hands with your own. “I really do. I don’t even know when my birthday is but, just having it means a lot to me. Having you guys all here for it means a lot.”

“That is why we came, isn’t it?” Asgore asks, watching Frisk struggle with a strategy. “You, of all people, deserve your own birthday.”

“Thanks big guy.” You elbow him, and then double take. “I mean, Your Majesty. Wait, i’m out of work, do I have to-”
All four of them chuckle before you can finish your sentence. Guess not. Frisk throws down a ‘reverse’ card with a grin.

“The food will be done in a few minutes.” Asgore says, also smiling. “After that we can sing happy birthday, you can open presents, and we can enjoy one regular day together.”

“One regular day together, huh?” You nudge Sans’ head with your own.

He nudges back. “Sounds like a plan to me. As long as I don’t have to do anything. Like get up.”

“What about the food?” Frisk asks, watching Asgore put down another two cards, and then a Draw 2.

“Oh this is preposterous.” Gaster says irritably, drawing another two cards. “The two of you are conspiring against me.”

Asgore and Frisk are smiling at each other, absolutely conspiring against him.

“Why, whatever do you mean, old friend?”

“Gaster don’t be a sore loser!”

“I think this game’s about to go from Uno to 52 pickup.” Sans pipes up.

“Guess he can’t handle the cards that were dealt to him.” You add.

“Enough, both of you.” He says. He tries to look angry but there’s a smile on the edge of his lips and a purple tint under his glasses. “Honestly, I try my hardest to pick out a good present and now I have to fight to be the one to give it first.” He says as he places down a card.

“Just because you got it doesn’t mean she’ll like it.” Frisk says, putting down a wild card, and then a blue 4. “Uno.”

You chuckle “Frisk don’t be mean. Gaster i’m sure whatever you got me for my birthday will be great.”

“I will admit, I did not know what to get you.” Asgore puts down yet another reverse card, a wild card, and then a yellow 7. “Which is why I asked Frisk to pick something out from all of us.”

Frisk beamed and slapped down the yellow 1 they had in their hand. “YEAH! IN YOUR FACE SMARTYPANTS!”

Gaster dropped all of his cards. “Absolutely not. The two of you were working against me the whole time!”


“We’re playing Uno” He protests, but his inevitable tirade is cut off by Toriel entering the room with what you know for a fact to be a Cinnamon Butterscotch Pie in her hands. Papyrus followed behind her with a rather nice looking Oreo cake. Thank god it wasn’t spaghetti. Like last time.

“Welcome back, Angel.” She says to you. Frisk and Asgore move to get all of the cards off of the table for her to place down the pie. Now that it’s in front of you, your mouth is watering. God she’s so good at baking. “I hope you are ready for an evening full of fun and family bonding!”
“Undyne and Alphys won’t be joining us, right?”

Frisk also looked like they were about to start drooling. “Undyne found out she was immune to Pit Viper poison so she’s in Peru doing the next episode of her TV show. Alphys is there with her.”

“But!” Papyrus interjected, placing the cake down on the table and taking a spot next to Gaster on the couch. It had a ridiculous number of candles on it, at least twenty. You were surprised they all fit. “They said they will ‘call you on Discord’ later. I don’t know what a ‘Discord’ is but the word itself sounds horrible.”

Toriel sat down on the other side of the couch, between Gaster and Asgore. “It’s nice to see them traveling the world and doing what makes them happy. I’m proud of them.”

“We are all proud of them, but we are here tonight for Angel.” Gaster redirects, as blunt as ever. “I do believe a song is in order?”

“Wait! Lemme get my camera!” Frisk reaches into their pocket and pulls out their phone, configuring it and focusing it on the group. “Okay go!”

EVERYBODY! 3, 2, 1-

You did it.

“Happy Birthday To You~”

You made it all the way here. Through trials and tribulations, hardships, fights, good and evil and your place in the world. You made it.

“Happy Birthday To You~”

Here, surrounded by all of your friends, celebrating the anniversary of the start of your journey, your redemption, and theirs.

“Happy Birthday Dear Angel~”

It took a long time, but all things considered, this wasn’t so bad.

“Happy Birthday To You~”
You just wished Flowey was here to see it.

You blow out the candles to a chorus of cheers and grinned, immediately reaching over to pluck the candles from the cake before the wax ruined the nice frosting.

The rest of the night went well. The cake was delicious, the pie almost made you cry. Toriel had also prepared some chicken, and Sans had somehow grabbed food from Grillby’s for everyone. Everyone except Papyrus. He wouldn’t touch it if you paid him.

The gifts were nice. Frisk had gotten you a diary, just like the one you had gotten them for their birthday a year prior. “We can write all of our stories and then share them with each other in these!”

The gift was apparently a group gift from their whole family, but Toriel added onto it with a beautifully knit scarf with the delta Rune symbol on it. Which was helpful because it’s the middle of October and you’re going to need it.

Papyrus got you a ‘100 different ways to use noodles’ cookbook. You...didn’t really expect anything else.

Gaster, having to outdo nearly everyone, had given you an Instant Teleportation watch. “It can only be used for places you’ve already been.” He instructed you. “So, no teleporting to Japan. If you want that you’ll have to ask Alphys.”

Alphys and Undyne had sent you a birthday gift in advance through the mail. Undyne’s gift was a jar full of different kind of animal teeth. You guessed from all of the wild animal species she’s been fighting around the world. Alphys sent you a full DVD collection of a remastered Avatar The Last Airbender. You’d be watching it for the rest of the week.

Sans didn’t get you anything at the party. He was significantly more concerned with trying to stay awake for most of it. Having to do actual bodyguard work in the past year still hasn’t caught up to him. He’s not used to the amount of exercise you’ve been getting daily.
After the party died down everybody said their goodbyes and went on their way. You kind of regretted watching Frisk’s family leave. A normal night together….that’s what you really needed.

You were surprised, however, when Papyrus and Gaster also went to leave.

“UNDYNE HAS PUT ME IN CHARGE OF WATCHING HER HOUSE WHILE SHE IS GONE.” The taller skeleton said as he grabbed a backpack, assumedly full of clothes, but he never changed his clothes? “I HAVE WORK TOMORROW AND IT IS CLOSER TO METTATON’S CURRENT HOTEL. IT WILL BE EASIER IF I SLEEP THERE TONIGHT.”

“I have some paperwork and blueprints I need to get in order for a collegiate trip tomorrow.” Gaster said, waving at you as he walked through the door. “It’s going to be an all night endeavor. I’ll let you know what they say tomorrow morning.”

The door closed behind the two of them, leaving only you and Sans in the house. You both kind of...side-eye each other.

“Am I the only one that feels like they left because they thought we were going to have sex tonight?”

“Nah i’m like, 99 percent sure they did.”

“They….they know that we’re really not like...overtly sexual, right?”

“It is a special occasion…”

“Are we gonna...?”

“Nah.”

“Didn’t think so.”

“Wow rude.”
You wrap your arm around his. “Shut up and come upstairs with me anyway. I still wanna cuddle the shit out of you.”

He smiled and allowed himself to be dragged up the steps. “Whatever you say, birthday girl.”

“And, you still haven’t given me a birthday gift.” You say as you make it to the door, opening it.

He switches around and ends up being the one pulling you inside. “Not yet~”

You smirk. “Sans, were you planning to have sex with me as a birthday present?”

His smile dips on one side. “Ew, no, who does that??”

“Normal people, I guess??” You shrug one shoulder and are left in the middle of the room as he walks away to the closet, grabbing something inside. “People with like, sex drives probably?”

“I just wanted to give this to you away from everyone else.” He walks out holding a box. It looks about a foot wide on all sides. “I’m not really sure how they’ll take it.”

You pluck the box from his arms as he gets closer, noting that it’s not even wrapped. Of course it’s not, that makes it even better. There is tape on the top, though, and it takes you a second to undo it with your nails before opening the box and pulling out…

“Flowey’s pot.” You drop the box immediately, sole focus on the empty clay pot in front of you. “Sans this is Flowey’s flowerpot, how did you-”

“It’s not.”

You manage to tear your eyes away from the flowerpot to look at him. He’s rubbing the back of his neck, bashful. Ashamed.

“It’s not...his pot, technically. He was...well. He was still in his pot when he got sent through the portal so, I couldn’t really grab his pot but uh, I asked Gaster if he had enough left of Flowey’s magic energy in that machine to replicate something from him. Anything. A petal or a leaf or
something, and this is what he got, probably because it’s relatively inanimate. It’s not much but-

He’s cut off as you absolutely suffocate him in a bone-crushing hug, being very careful of the pot itself as you wrap your arms around him.

“It’s perfect. Shut up. It’s the best gift i’ve gotten all night. Fuck you. How dare you do this to me. I love it.” Your words are garbled as tears stream down your face. “I’m putting it on the w-windowsill.”

He wraps his arms around you, rubbing circles in your back. “Okay, alright, take it easy. Jeez If i knew there was going to be waterworks like this I should have gotten you a bucket instead.”

You snort at that. “I would have killed you.”

“Yeah, I know.”

You pull back from him and hold the pot between the two of you. You can feel Flowey in it, even though it’s empty. “I miss him.”

“I know.” He puts his chin on top of your head. “I didn’t think I ever would, but I do too.”

You lean up to kiss him as best as you can. He returns it as best he can, with no lips.

“Thanks Sans. For everything.”

“Don’t mention it.” He says, shrugging, but his smile is real. The realest you’ve seen in a while. “Happy Birthday Angel.”

You smile back and move to set the pot on the windowsill. It’s presence will no doubt be a comfort to you in the upcoming years. You turn to the bed and see Sans already lying in it, shoes off.

“I can’t believe you’re so lazy that you-actually no. I can believe it.” You say, flopping down next to him “Sans the skeleton is so lazy that he would rather teleport himself into bed than walk three feet to it.”
He wraps an arm around you. “Hey, I have a reputation to uphold.”

He’s warm. He’s warm and comforting and he’s a good end to a good day. You find yourself slipping into sleep faster than you normally would as the pitch black of your dreamscape surrounded you.

You were used to the dark. It was a familiar thing to slip into when you dreamed. There were no more nightmares, no more terrors. No more past lives or resets or run throughs, or any of that. You dreamed now. Real, good dreams. But there were still fits of darkness, like this, and that was okay too. Feeling yourself float in the abyss. That was fine.

“Happy Birthday To Me~”

“Happy Birthday To Me~”

“Happy Birthday Dear Angel~”

“Happy Birthd~”

“Happy Birthday To You.”

Oh yeah.

Wishes come true on birthdays.

“It’s been a while.”

As long as you don’t tell anybody.

“Your mailman sucks. He didn’t send a letter opener.”

And as long as you blow out all the candles in one go.
“I guess we’ve got a lot of catching up to do, then.”

As long as you believe they will.

“I hope you saved me some cake. I’m starving.”

As long as you stay determined.

“Or a present. I've been in here more than a year right? Is it my birthday too?”

Your wish might just come true.

“I guess you'll just have to do. So. How’ve you been?”

Chapter End Notes

I hope you appreciate the epilogue and the story that I poured my heart and soul into for the past two years of my life.

End Notes

I would appreciate it if you left a comment and kudos. I write for fun but seeing the numbers shoot up makes me happy inside.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!