Time Marches Forward (Finally)
by tsukithewolf

Summary

Now that Frisk has had their past (for the most part) settled, it's time for the present to move forward into a new future. This is not necessarily an easy thing to do. In fact, it's quite difficult at times.

Notes

Well I'm late with posting this but here's the start of the newest story! This chapter's prompt as well as the next one (it was getting long so I split it into two) is focused on 1. Papyrus and Frisk and 2. Christmas time. I...may have not added enough Papyrus and Frisk. I'll work on that.

I'm trying my hand at describing Frisk's sign language. Let me know if that's doing anything for you.

Again as I blathered about in the tags, they will be expanded as the story continues and tags need to be added. As I explained in the last story Sans and Frisk's relationship will get a little weird but will not be much different from previous stories. It'll make better sense in the next
two chapters. Let's just say Sans is a fucking troll.

For the record this Christmas prompt takes place before the epilogue of "Frisk". So Frisk hasn't been adopted by Asgore and Toriel yet.

EDIT

Okay so this is pretty important so I've decided to add it to the beginning of this. For those of you just reading this series for the first time, you pretty much need to also read "Through Hollow Eyes" at the same time as this. They are two sides of the same coin, and the further you go into the stories, the more necessary it is to read both together so you get the full picture. I never intended for the stories to be read this way and it kind of just happened that way. I'm sorry for the inconvenience, but it will save you the hassle later!
EDIT: So I've noticed that there's a number of people who come randomly into this story (through recs or what have you) and I just wanted to say to you newcomers:

**Hi!**

Also

This is not the first story in the series. Although if you want to start here, it's not a bad place to start! I mean, you'll miss a couple of callbacks and character development, but all-in-all it's perfectly fine to read this by itself. But, as an avid fanfiction reader myself, I recommend starting at the beginning with "Night Terrors".

Okay I've held you up long enough. Onwards!

You were at the mall on a Saturday morning with Papyrus a week before Christmas. You weren’t sure why you were there but there you were surrounded on all sides by Christmas lights, wreaths bigger than your room, people, and the faint sounds of holiday tunes. Going along with the spirit, Papyrus was wearing a Santa hat and had put a pair of reindeer antlers on you. He had burst into Sans’s room (where you had been sleeping that night) and had practically dragged you half asleep into his car declaring you were going on an adventure together. Beside you Papyrus was wearing his new jacket that announced in block letters “I got this shirt as a gift from someone who thinks I’m pretty amazing”. He had gotten the jacket for himself.

You were still trying to blink the sleepiness out of your eyes. Papyrus seemed to be waiting for something but you didn’t know what. Instead your eyes drifted over to the single largest Christmas tree that you had seen. You marveled at the sheer size of it. You had seen some big trees before but even the ones near Snowdin had nothing on it. It was covered in garland and lights and miscellaneous decorations. A man dressed as Santa was sitting at the foot of it surrounded by humans pretending to be elves. Children were coming up to sit on his lap in order to tell him what they wanted.

You tugged on Papyrus’s sleeve to get his attention. When he finally tore his sparkling eyes away from everything he looked down at you. You put your hands close together and then moved them away before pointing at the tree.

“OH!! SIGN LANGUAGE!!” Papyrus cried, excited. You nodded. “ER….AGAIN?” He hadn’t caught it. You did the same motion. You had been gradually teaching your friends little things in sign language (since you’d had time to practice so you were far ahead of them all) but it had only been about a week so there was still much to learn. You weren’t even at sentences yet. Toriel and Asgor were your most valued students as they quickly tried to accommodate your signing on top of the few words you spoke. You were fairly sure Sans actually knew far more than you had taught anyone, though. He was probably teaching himself.

You laid one of your arms flat and then took your other arm and rested the elbow on top of the first arm. You then waved that hand back and forth before doing the first hand sign again.

Papyrus squinted then his eyes widened in realization. “YES!! THE TREE IS BIG!!” He looked up
at the Christmas tree. “I DIDN’T THINK OVERWORLD TREES COULD GET SO LARGE!!”

You nodded in agreement and then, a little more awake now, you looked around. You were fairly sure you both were at the mall because Papyrus wanted to get some shopping done…but why did he call it an “adventure”? You supposed that shopping could be an adventure but why had he woken you up so early? Also why were you both standing in line to sit in Santa’s lap? You voiced your question out loud for him.

“Yes! Of course you don’t know…we are gonna meet Santa!!!” Well you had figured that out already. There were some children in line that were gaping at Papyrus and there were a few parents glaring at the yelling. For the most part it seemed these people weren’t too shocked to see a monster but this was a city that was fairly close to Ebott. You knew that monsters lived in this city even if it was mostly on the outskirts.

You made the hand motion for “why”. You used it quite a bit with Papyrus so he understood it immediately.

“Because…” He seemed a bit bashful, “I have always sent him letters! But humans. Humans can meet him in person!! That’s amazing!! Surely Santa must want to meet me!! Why, he must know me personally from all of my letters!!”

You weren’t cruel enough to even consider telling him it was a fake Santa. Or to tell him that this was technically for children. So instead you asked if this was the “adventure” he was talking about.

“Yes!! Well. No. Actually yeah!!” He settled for yes. “I wanted to make sure Santa would know to visit us monsters up here on the surface now. Because. I don’t know who tells him these things or if he got our letters yet…But I’ll let him know personally!! Everyone’ll be happy then!!”

You wondered what you guys would be doing afterwards. You yawned. Behind you there was a stage whisper from a child, “Daddy! Daddy, that guy is like Jack Skellington!” You bit your lip in amusement. You hadn’t yet shown that movie to your friends. You had actually forgotten about it. Judging by the way Papyrus hadn’t reacted he must not know he was being talked about. Maybe you should buy that movie as a present for him?

Speaking of present, you haven’t done much shopping. It had only been a little over a week since your birthday (and since you had reloaded you SAVE) and you had been more focused on spending time with everyone than planning for the holidays. You recalled that you wondered what they would be doing for Christmas (because they had plans that day from what Alphys’s blog had said in the last timeline) but you hadn’t even considered getting presents. Christmas had always been a background event to mark the end of the year to you. You never got presents (although in the last timeline you did get some new clothes but really thinking about it now that might not have been because of Christmas) so you never really thought about getting presents for others.

Well that wasn’t completely right. For the past two years on Christmas you spent the day with the homeless. You were too young to really do anything but spend time in their company and give money but that always seemed to be enough.

Now though, you had friends and family. You had an allowance given to you by Toriel and Asgore that wasn’t a whole lot but certainly enough to get a few gifts. Maybe you should convince Papyrus to actually go shopping after he has his sit-down with Santa. You would just need to buy Papyrus’s gift at another time.
“Papyrus…” You called quietly. You were near the front of the line now. “Can we…shop after this?”

“OF COURSE!!” Papyrus said. “WE NEED TO GET PRESENTS FOR THE GYFTROT!!”

Oh. You had forgotten about that monster. That’s right, apparently Gyftrot was the reason Christmas started in the Underworld. It wasn’t even called Christmas there (and you had to explain to your classmates and many other monsters why it was called Christmas) but the monsters had adopted the name anyhow as a way of integrating with the humans. It shouldn’t surprise you so much that they would keep up the tradition of giving gifts to Gyftrot. However you didn’t actually think the monster would appreciate the gifts. You didn’t know if it still lived in the Underworld or not but it certainly preferred to be alone. So the presents were a little pointless.

But who were you to say anything? Humans had silly traditions too.

“All.” Papyrus added. You two were next in line. The elves didn’t look happy with Papyrus’s yelling. “WE NEED TO DECORATE WHEN WE GET BACK! SANS, HE. WELL. HE’S TOO LAZY TO DECORATE!! I HAVE TO DO IT EVERY YEAR!! BUT THIS TIME I’VE GOT MY COOL FRIEND WITH ME!!” You nodded in agreement. You didn’t mind helping decorate. “WOW, IT’S FINALLY OUR TURN!!” The elves called you both forward and Papyrus charged ahead. The Santa looked rather shocked to see a skeleton after Halloween. He looked at you fully expecting you to sit on his lap (despite the fact that you were too old to do so) but Papyrus instead made himself comfortable. It couldn’t feel good to have bones digging into your leg.

“O-Oh, ho! Hello!” The Santa made a valiant effort to stay in character. You were impressed.

“HI, SANTA!!” The Santa surprisingly didn’t wince at the yelling. You guessed that crying kids must be worse. “IT IS I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS!! TELL ME. HAVE YOU GOTTEN MY LETTER YET??”

“Ah, Papyrus!” Santa cheerfully played along. You sat down in a nearby chair and kicked your feet while watching the exchange. “Of course I know you!” Papyrus looked delighted. A flush of pleasure tinted his cheekbones. “But I haven’t read your letter yet. I have so many I need to look at! However, when I get back to the North Pole this evening I will make sure to read it! But…” The Santa gave him a secretive smile. “Why don’t you give me an idea of what you want?”

These Santas were crafty.

“WELL! THIS YEAR I WAS HOPING FOR SOMETHING FOR MY CAR!! I DON’T REALLY KNOW WHAT. JUST. SOMETHING!” Papyrus nodded like his idea was fantastic. You already knew that Sans had probably gotten exactly what Papyrus was expecting. After all, his wish had come true in the last timeline. After snooping you had also found Papyrus’s most recent letter to Santa buried in the trash in Sans’s room. The smaller skeleton had made you promise you would clean up the room for being a snoop.

You weren’t looking forward to it. You had asked Toriel for a gas mask for Christmas.

“ALSO I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT ALL OF US MONSTERS ARE ON THE SURFACE NOW!! WE’RE SPREAD OUT SO IT MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO FIND US. BUT. PLEASE CONTINUE TO DELIVER US PRESENTS TOO!!”

“I am aware! I will be extra careful to remember where all of you are.” Santa promised solemnly. Papyrus’s grin was blinding. “Now, why don’t we take a picture?” He pointed to the camera where a slightly-disgruntled elf was waiting. They must not be a morning person.
“YES!! FRISK!” Papyrus motioned you over. “COME JOIN US!” Santa happily waved you over as well. You climbed to your feet and sat on Santa’s other leg (and felt a little ridiculous in doing so). Papyrus decided to stand and point cheerfully at Santa. The elf snapped a picture as you all smiled. “THERE!” Papyrus said triumphantly as he waved goodbye to Santa and went to go get the picture. You hurried after him. He had really fast steps. It was always a workout with him. “NOW WE HAVE PROOF WE HAVE MET SANTA!!” He handed over the money and you both waited while the picture printed. He also bought a frame to go with it. “NOW LET’S SHOP!!”

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Although Papyrus had said you two would decorate that day after shopping, you had to beg off because you were utterly exhausted and you wanted to get your presents back home before you forgot them. Together you and Papyrus had picked out gifts for everyone –Papyrus had even bought presents for humans he barely talked to at some of the grocery stores- you both wanted to give gifts to. You even managed to buy and sneak “A Nightmare before Christmas” into your bags before he could see it.

The next day you woke up and waved goodbye to Toriel to head over to Sans and Papyrus’s house. The two skeleton brothers were standing outside as Papyrus was already hanging out lights. There had already been lights outside of the house –everyone who had lived in Snowdin had decorated with the first snow- but now it seemed Papyrus had kicked into the holiday overdrive. You could see a tree inside the house ready to be covered with miscellaneous ornaments and there was the giant inflatable snow globe Papyrus had bought yesterday. It was snowing both inside and outside of the decoration.

You waved hello to Sans. It appeared that Papyrus had gotten him with the silly headwear as well. While you were wearing your antlers again, Sans was wearing a pointed hat in the shape of a Christmas tree. It even had a star on top. He was also wearing the “Free Hugs” hoodie that Papyrus had bought him because his other one (the one you didn’t borrow) had been ruined in a tragic spaghetti incident.

“sup, kid?” The smaller brother asked looking amused. His hat was covered with snow. He appeared festive.

“FRISK!! FINALLY YOU ARRIVE! YOU ARE LATE!!” You were fairly sure you weren’t but you didn’t know a time you were supposed to arrive anyway so whatever. Papyrus grabbed you and
lifted you onto his shoulders. “CAN YOU PIN THE LIGHTS HIGHER?” He handed you a strand and a nail. You were hesitant because you had never done this before but you did as he asked. It stuck well.

“so.” Sans said from where he continued to stand and not help whatsoever. There was a box of bones next to him. The bones were covered with garland. “hey bro….where are we celebrating this year?”

“What DO YOU MEAN?” Papyrus asked. He stood on his tip toes to lift you a little higher. You had to shove some snow out of the way to properly nail in the lights.

“well…it’s not just us this year.” He explained.

“YOU’RE RIGHT! HMMMM….” You brushed off some of the snow you had accidently knocked onto his hat. You then readjusted the hat. “I DON’T KNOW!” He finally decided.

“Party?” You suggested.

“THAT SOUNDS GREAT!! WE’LL THROW A PARTY!!”

“sounds good. where?”

“HERE, OBVIOUSLY!!” That was kind of exciting. But the house was kind of small. It was only built for two people. You looked at Sans and made a house with your hands. You then held your spread hands out before bringing them closer until there was a small gap between the two.

“kid has a point. it’s, uh, kind of small here.”

“But our house will already be decorated!!”

“Yo!” The three of you turned to see Undyne approaching. She was bundled up tightly in a snug snow coat that barely hid her muscles. She was wearing a headband that had green and red lights blinking on it. She looked a little miserable to be outside when it was so cold but you weren’t surprised considering she wasn’t very warm-blooded.

(Actually, monsters didn’t even have blood did they? They never did when Chara-)

“HI, UNDYNE!!” Papyrus waved. He kept his other hand on your knee to keep you steady. You waved as well.

“I heard something about a party?” She asked.

“yeah. christmas party.” Sans said.

“What the hell are you wearing?” She guffawed at the sight of Sans’s ridiculous hat. “Looks like Papyrus got to you two too, huh?” She put her hands in her pockets grinning.

“FESTIVE SPIRIT EVERYWHERE!!” Papyrus crowed. You put the last nail in and tapped the side of his skull. He lowered you back to the ground and you all stood back to admire your handiwork. It…well. It looked festive at least. Christmas lights were pretty no matter how much they dangled.

“heh heh heh. looks great.” Sans ruffled your hair and messed up your antlers. You righted them.

“I WILL FIX THEM LATER. I MEAN, YOU DID GREAT FRISK! BUT…IT’S KIND OF…MESSY. BUT STILL GOOD! BUT IT CAN BE BETTER!!” He was trying to make you feel
better. You didn’t really care how it looked. Papyrus could fix it as much as he wanted. It was his house after all. And he hadn’t given you a hammer for the nails.

Suddenly Undyne let out a shriek which caused all of you to jump. “HOLY HELL, THAT’S COLD!!” She twisted and turned and opened up the back of her jacket. A bit of snow fell out. She also needed to get the snow off of her scarf and hood. “Alright, which one of you punks did it?” She demanded.

“it was the roof.” Sans said. You looked up. He was right. Undyne didn’t seem to care, though. She scooped up a handful of snow and pounded it into a sphere before she chucked it at Sans. He dodged out of the way and you unfortunately ended up with a faceful of cold. You were thrown a decent distance but the snow was soft so your landing wasn’t too bad. Sans laughed but Papyrus gave a delighted cry.

“A SNOWBALL FIGHT! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, HAVE NEVER LOST A-” You didn’t get to hear him finish as you saw him land in the snow beside you. His hat was sent flying and Undyne was cackling.

This meant war.

You stood up and felt determination fill you. You had never been in a snowball fight before but you knew the rules. You also had training with dodging. You wouldn’t lose. You scooped up a handful of snow and jumped behind Sans to wrap your arms around him. He looked startled by your sudden hug. You gave him a wicked grin.

“hey, what are you-” He started but you knew what you were doing. You jumped out of the way as both Papyrus and Undyne’s snowballs slammed straight into the short skeleton. Sans fell to the ground and just laid there. “oh no.” He said. “that situation sure snowballed.” Papyrus and Undyne pelted him with snowballs in retaliation. Sans quickly began to look like the “snowman” he had made back in the Underground. He didn’t bother to get up.

You took advantage of the distraction and chucked a snowball. It hit Undyne in the back. She spun around to face you but was hit with Papyrus’s snowball. “A-ha! Teaming up on me, huh? WELL I WON’T LOSE!” She started gathering up an absurd amount of snow. It would take her two turns. You shot a terrified look at Papyrus which he returned, sweating. The two of you ducked behind the Sans pile and started pushing more snow onto him, forming a barrier.

“Sans?” You asked breathlessly even as you continued. You were scared he wouldn’t be able to breathe so you left his head exposed.

“don’t worry, kid. i don’t need to breathe.” He winked at you. “it’s snow problem.”

Papyrus covered Sans’s head with snow in retaliation.

Between the two of you a decent wall was formed…for you. Papyrus was still pretty tall. “HERE IT COMES, PUNKS!!” Undyne cried.

“OH NO.” Papyrus whimpered and Undyne crashed through your Sans pile. She must have forgotten he was in it, though, because she tripped on him and with a yell the four of you were assaulted by her huge snowball. Your head spun from where you were buried under the limbs of Undyne and Papyrus. Everyone groaned but then Papyrus started laughing which made Undyne laugh and before you knew it you all were in fits of giggles.

The snowball fight ended in favor of the snow and you all retreated inside so you and Undyne could
warm up. Inside another impromptu cooking lesson occurred. Today’s theme: cookies. You and Sans sat on the couch together with you all bundled up in dry clothing you had borrowed from Sans and watched a Christmas special. Sans fell asleep part way through completely uninterested after the grandmother was run down by Santa’s sleigh. You were glad Papyrus hadn’t been there to see it.

Despite the explosions and the cracking of what you were sure was a counter, the cookies didn’t turn out completely terrible. Or at least, not all of them did. There were a significant amount of burnt ones, ones that resembled Sans’s pet rock, ones that looked completely inedible, and then there were the ones Papyrus had experimented with to try to make spaghetti cookies. You went with the few chocolate chip cookies that you could scrape most of the burnt parts off of. It was pretty good otherwise! The four of you discussed a Christmas party and all agreed on having the party at Asgore’s. All of you were certain he wouldn’t care.

It would be fun to actually have a Christmas party that wasn’t full of people you didn’t know. You wondered if your parents would still be throwing their party. You considered calling them Christmas day to at least wish them well for the holidays. Would that be a good idea?

Oh wait. You couldn’t do that. Your parents…didn’t know you were with the monsters yet. Or…at least they hadn’t acknowledged it yet. You needed to keep quiet and not contact them until it was – hopefully- time for them to sign your adoption papers.

You were saddened by it, though. You wanted to at least say Merry Christmas to your mother but…it looks like this year you couldn’t. You had to comfort yourself with knowing you technically already did say merry Christmas this year to her…in a different timeline. Next year you hoped to be able to call her. Maybe send a present or something. A picture of you so she knew you were well? Would that make her sad? Would she care?

“hey.” Sans nudged you and you looked at him. You could tell he knew you were thinking sad things. he pointed with both of his fingers at his eye sockets and pointed them at something behind you. He was grinning. You did as he signed and looked only to come face-to-face with Papyrus with Christmas lights blinking in his eye sockets and the hole where his nose would be. You couldn’t resist the yelp of laughter that burst from you and you giggled. He looked like Rudolph with that red light in his nose!

“HEH HEH HEH NYEH!” Papyrus laughed too. Sans was muffling his laughter behind you. You could feel his body shaking with it.

“What are you doing?” Undyne asked and peeked from the kitchen where she had a glass of milk. Papyrus looked at her and she laughed out loud. You grinned at Papyrus’s antics. You couldn’t wait for the Christmas party.

Chapter End Notes

Oh, for those of you who don't follow my tumblr, I made a picture for this chapter. It's not fantastic but you'll get a better idea of Papyrus's radical jacket.

http://tsukithewolf.tumblr.com/post/132705089276/you-were-at-the-mall-on-a-saturday-morning-with

(Picture credit goes to CapnMarco! Thank you so much again!)
Chapter Summary

Papyrus and Frisk keep watch in the middle of the night, a Christmas party occurs, and Sans makes everything weird. Also the author is an asshole.

Chapter Notes

So, uh...gotta tell you guys. Feels real fucking wrong to be writing Christmas shit in November. Real wrong. Nasty. Which accounts for the assholeishness.

(Kidding. I'm always an asshole. :3c)

Btw I forgot to mention that these chapters will range in size. They could be huge or rather short but I'll make sure the minimum is 1000 words.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A soft pinging noise disturbed your slumber. At first you ignored it and rolled over to curl up more in the warmth of your bed but it pinged again. You had a text message. You opened your eyes and glared at the wall. Who was possibly texting you this late? It was Christmas Eve! Or, well, you suppose it was probably Christmas by now. Still. Who the heck was texting you and disturbing your sleep?

Reluctantly you reached out to pick up your phone. The screen blinded you and you groaned and squinted with one eye to look at the screen.

HUMAN!!

HUMAN ARE YOU AWAKE?

It was Papyrus. You closed your eyes to blink away most of the stinging before slowly typing a response.

I am now.

I'M SORRY. DID I WAKE YOU??

Yes.

OH...WELL I'M SORRY. IT IS...NOTHING IMPORTANT ANYWAY!
GOOD NIGHT!

You stared at the screen for a moment. That was strange. Papyrus didn’t seem like the type to back down from whatever idea he’d had in his head. You texted him to tell him to just tell you what he’d wanted.
I HAVE PLANS. THAT I...WOULD LIKE YOU TO PARTAKE IN!

GET DRESSED! I WILL MEET YOU OUTSIDE OF YOUR WINDOW!

Looks like you just got roped into something in the middle of the night. You sighed and climbed out of bed to pull an extra pair of pants over your sleep pants. You also took off your jacket to add another layer underneath it before pulling the jacket back on. By the time you had put on your socks and snow boots there was a rapping at your window. You yawned and kneeled on your bed (careful of your shoes so they wouldn’t dirty your sheets) and reluctantly opened the window. Papyrus’s beaming face greeted you. He was still wearing that Santa hat and that hoodie. The cold didn’t seem to bother him.

“HI, FRISK!” He greeted and you winced at the noise. He lowered his voice some but it was still fairly loud. “READY?”

You yawned again and wiggled your forefinger back and forth in a question.

“IT’S A SURPRISE! OH. BUT. BRING BLANKETS SO YOU DON’T GET TOO COLD. I MADE SOME HOT COCOA!” You eyed him. “FROM POWDER! I DIDN’T HAVE TIME TO MAKE IT FRESH.” You could deal with powdered cocoa. You grabbed your blanket and maneuvered yourself onto your window sill. You were on the ground floor so you just slid out of the window and into the snow. You shuddered and your teeth immediately began to chatter in the chill. The air was still and the skies were clear but it was freezing. You wrapped the blanket tightly around you and pushed your window closed.

He motioned for you to follow him which you did. Your blanket was dragging so you made an effort to wrap it more around yourself. It made it a little difficult to move considering Papyrus rushed wherever he went. You had to jog after his footsteps. He seemed to be vibrating with excitement. The cold air was doing much to awaken your senses enough to see him leading you to…Sans’s moped? You didn’t even know that Papyrus had the key to Sans’s vehicle.

He must have seen the question in your face because he said unrepentantly, “I TOOK THE KEYS FROM HIM WHILE HE WAS SLACKING OFF!! WHO NAPS FOR OVER FIVE HOURS??”

“Sleeping.” You said. Which is exactly what you had been doing. You climbed onto the seat behind Papyrus and held him tightly. He would be a good wind breaker.

“HUMANS ARE EXCEPTIONS!” He huffed. “SANS DOESN’T NEED TO SLEEP THAT MUCH!” You actually thought much different considering how you knew Sans didn’t get much sleep at all. He napped so much to make up for the night terrors that he couldn’t keep away as well as the hours he spends working on that machine. Sans didn’t look too sleep-deprived which meant that Papyrus was back to scolding him for sleeping so much. You had asked Sans why Papyrus heckles him about sleeping so much but then heckles Sans to sleep more when he looks tired. Sans had only told you it was because Papyrus was secretly a worrier and that of course his cool brother would worry about his sibling.

Papyrus zoomed off down the street. Although he could easily talk to you over the wind you both knew that he wouldn’t be able to hear your voice to respond so he didn’t talk. You watched the streets pass by and noticed that you two weren’t actually heading towards human civilization but actually towards Mt. Ebott. That caused you to frown. Why were you two traveling to Mt. Ebott in the middle of the night? It seemed dangerous. There was a semi-paved road leading up to the entrance of Mt. Ebott –one that led down through where the barrier had been and into New Home-
but it was still rather dangerous to traverse a mountain at night. Papyrus drove confidently with the single headlight on (actually it was just a flashlight attached to the front of the moped; Sans had broken the actual headlight in a mysterious accident) and he was very careful with his steering.

The air got colder the further up you two climbed. You hadn’t been up here in many months. The view was astounding. The white of the snow in the trees glittered in the low moonlight. In the distance you could see a city that towered over the landscape but it was far enough away that it didn’t disturb too much. Unfortunately it blocked some of the view of the stars but it was clear and cool enough out this high up that you could look up and see tons more stars than you had experienced anywhere else. You clung tighter to your blanket as Papyrus slowed to a stop.

Looking around you saw that you two were at the entrance to New Home on the same ledge you and your friends had stood to gaze at the sunset for the (countless) first time. Papyrus parked and turned off the ignition. You climbed off with him and followed him close to the edge and you both sat down. You curled up tighter in your blanket. Your ears were chilled but the sight was beautiful. You still didn’t know why Papyrus had brought you all the way out here but you didn’t regret joining him. You leaned against each other’s sides and sat in silence for a long while.

Finally Papyrus spoke but it was with his voice lowered enough that it just sounded like he was talking loudly rather than shouting, “YOU’RE WONDERING WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE, RIGHT?” You nodded in agreement, watching him. He gave a small nervous chuckle. “WELL, IT IS NOT A DATE. I AM SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU ONCE AGAIN, HUMAN. I STILL ONLY HOLD PLATONIC FEELINGS FOR YOU!” You resisted the urge to roll your eyes. “IT IS….ACTUALLY, THE REAL REASON WE ARE HERE…..IS TO KEEP A LOOK OUT FOR SANTA!!” He relaxed back onto his hands to gaze up at the sky.

Oh. Well, you could deal with that. You never had the heart to tell everyone that you didn’t believe in Santa. You knew that Asgore and Toriel were really looking forward to playing the holiday spirit up now that they had a child again. You had even seen Asgore airing out the Santa outfit you had found in his closet. So you had decided to hold off on telling anyone that you stopped believing in Santa a long time ago.

You hunkered down into your blanket. It would be a long wait. Papyrus didn’t mind that you used him as a rather uncomfortable pillow. The two of you watched the sky in silence for the longest time that you had ever heard Papyrus quiet when he spoke up again. “WHEN SANS AND I WERE YOUNGER…WE WOULD STAY UP TOGETHER WAITING FOR SANTA. LIKE THIS.” His voice sounded wistful. “I ALWAYS FELL ASLEEP FIRST. IT WAS VERY VEXING!! BUT, SANS WAS ALSO ASLEEP FIRST. IT WAS VERY VEXING!! AND SANTA SOMEHOW SNUCK INTO OUR HOUSE!” He laughed. “I STILL DON’T KNOW HOW HE GOT PAST ALL OF THE TRAPS!”

You wondered if it was just the usual traps in the Underworld or if it was traps specifically set up for Santa himself.

You two lapsed into silence again. You yawned and closed your eyes. You didn’t know how long the two of you stayed out there but you were startled awake by your phone ringing. You found yourself sleeping on Papyrus’s ribs listening to his rumbling snores as the sun rose behind the mountain. Oh no. You had stayed out all night! Your nose was runny and you were chilled but comfortable. You were wrapped up in Papyrus’s arms where he had fallen asleep as well. You carefully extracted yourself and pulled out your cell.

“Frisk!” Toriel gave a sigh of relief. “There you are, my child. I had called Sans but he said that you were not there and I was worried!”
“I’m sorry.” You murmured feeling bad for scaring her.

“I thought we talked about running off in the night!” She scolded gently but firmly. You winced. Papyrus’s snoring had stopped and you felt his hand pry the cell phone carefully from your fingers. You let it go and allowed him to answer.

“HELLO? …OH, TORIEL! …YES IT IS I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS! …FRISK IS WITH ME! WE WENT…WELL WE FELL ASLEEP ON MT. EBOTT! …WHAT FOR? WE WERE WAITING FOR SANTA!” You climbed to your feet and stretched to get the blood flowing through your limbs. You were aching all over and you had a crick in your neck. “SORRY!” Papyrus was wincing. He was no doubt being scolded. You both had forgotten to leave a note or something. “WE WILL BE RETURNING RIGHT NOW!” He assured her quickly and said goodbye before hanging up. “ER…LET'S HURRY. YOU HAVE, UM, PRESENTS! WE BOTH MISSED SANTA AND HE BROKE INTO OUR HOUSES!” He was upset by this for .2 seconds before he was grinning again and leading the way back to the moped.

When you were dropped off at Toriel’s you were scolded again before given a hug that warmed you through. Toriel wished you a Merry Christmas and led you to your presents. You gaped at how many there were wrapped up like jewels with their silken bows. You looked at Toriel starry-eyed in amazement before she chuckled and waved at you to start unwrapping. You did so. Amongst your presents were some sewing tools, a laptop (wow! A computer just for you!), some knitted clothing, books, and the gas mask you had asked for. You had been delighted with all of your gifts and had hugged Toriel with as much love as you possibly manage before you dashed off to get her gifts.

The gifts themselves weren’t wrapped well. You had to get a box which made the wrapping easier but it was still messy. There was an art to wrapping gifts that you just hadn’t developed yet. However Toriel looked pleased either way. You watched nervously as she carefully tore open your work and opened the box. She gasped and first pulled out the homemade picture frame that contained the picture you both had taken together. That day you had been covered with flour and she covered in the goop of a failed snail pie and it had been so funny you had run to your room to take a picture of it with your camera. There was a huge mess all over the kitchen. That was what happened when you startled your goat mother and her fire magic heated up so fast. It had been hilarious even though you hadn’t meant to scare her.

Thrilled already with a giant grin on her face, Toriel then pulled out the biggest sweater you could find at the mall. It was…kind of ugly, but ugly Christmas sweaters were a must! You informed her of this fact as you opened up your jacket to reveal your own ugly sweater. The two of you giggled at the terrible designs and Toriel pulled her sweater on before you went off to make breakfast together.

You spent the morning with Toriel and as lunch time came the two of you dropped your presents off for Gyftrot at the tree in the center of town (they would supposedly be taken down to the Underworld later) before you retreated to Asgore’s house to help set up for the party. Asgore’s house was much more decorated than anybody else’s that you have seen. The inside was all red, green, and white and the large Christmas tree in it made the house smell like cedar. You could smell from the kitchen some kind of meat cooking and Asgore was using his fire magic which meant it would be delicious. He greeted both of you cheerfully already fully decked in Christmas regalia. He reminded you of the Holly King that you had read in a book once what with his horns, his cloak that looked like ivy and his Santa outfit underneath. He had even frosted his beard. You laughed at the sight of him.

“Would you like to open your presents now or later?” Asgore asked as Toriel took over his kitchen. Asgore was a fine cook himself but Toriel had things that she wanted to take care of so she had commandeered the kitchen. Which was fine with you two because now you could spend the
afternoon with Asgore before everyone came over for the Christmas party. The updated statuses you received this morning confirmed that everything so far was the same as the last timeline. Together you and Asgore finished the last bits of decorations.

As the two of you were preparing to move into the living room together he caught you. “Ah, look little one.” He pointed and you looked up to see a mistletoe. You looked at him surprised and made the sign for “why”. He smiled. “Humans have the tradition of mistletoe, correct? Not to eat but for kisses! Do you know it?” You nodded. It was very common. “Well then!” He beamed at you and kneeled down to your level. You realized what he was doing and, feeling a little bashful, you gave him a kiss on the cheek which he returned.

Toriel, who had watched the whole thing, had given Asgore a dubious look. “Are you trying to get kisses from someone, Asgore?” She demanded coolly. Because he was facing towards you you got to see the tiny wince. You grinned. He was caught.

He played it off though. “It is the holiday spirit! Besides,” he chuckled nervously and stood again to look at her, “I received a kiss from Frisk. I am content.” You could see Toriel didn’t fully believe him but he wasn’t lying so she allowed it to pass. She would be keeping a wary eye on the plant now, though.

As the sun began to retreat further down in the sky your guests started arriving. Sans and Papyrus were first, of course, because they didn’t live too far away. Undyne and Alphys were in their city home so they would be taking longer. You had spent a portion of the day on your phone texting your friends and rearranging the pile of presents under the tree so that they were in no particular order. It was really easy to see which presents were yours but once Sans and Papyrus added their gifts to the pile you felt a lot better. You could tell Sans hadn’t even tried with his because bits and pieces of boxes and plastic stuck out. You were fairly sure that Papyrus had forced him to redo whatever wrapping he had done the first time. Papyrus seemed to have mastered wrapping gifts, though, because his were flawless. It was worth envying.

You handed over your first presents to each of them and encouraged them to open them. Inside were more ugly sweaters which, once you told them about the “tradition” of ugly sweaters, Papyrus quickly took off his jacket to replace it with his sweater. It was god-awful but somehow suited him. Papyrus with his cheerful attitude matched the ridiculous reindeer prancing around on it. Sans however just continued to hold his waiting. You encouraged him to put it on again.

“i’m good.”

“SANS! IT’S A TRADITION!”

“ok.” Sans took off his jacket to reveal another jacket underneath. You hadn’t even noticed that he looked bulkier than usual. His new jacket revealed words on it that read “Do You Even Science, Bro?”

“SANS!” Papyrus scolded. “I DO NOT ‘SCIENCE’! I WOULD MUCH RATHER DO PUZZLES THAN DEAL WITH…SCI-FI STUFF!” For whatever reason he seemed offended. It was probably the font on the jacket. “TAKE THAT OFF TOO!”

“ok.” Sans pulled off that hoodie to reveal a sweater underneath that said, “I Make Horrible Science Puns but Only Periodically”. You were beginning to giggle. You could hear Toriel behind you laughing as she spotted the shirt.

“SANS!! ENOUGH WITH YOUR JOKES!! YOU CAN’T WEAR A SWEATER OVER A SWEATER!”
“why not?”

“IT’S TOO HOT FOR IT!” Papyrus was sweating at the sight.

“ok.” Sans took off that sweater to reveal a tee-shirt. Again there were words on it which you couldn’t even muffle your laughter as you read it: “My Head Hertz From the Frequency of These Puns”. Toriel was gasping behind you. Sans looked like he was barely maintaining his stoic façade.

“SANS!! I DON’T GET IT. BUT I KNOW IT’S A PUN!” Papyrus said.

“well bro, a hertz is an si unit of frequency. that’s the joke.”

“OH.” Papyrus grinned. “THAT’S ACUTALLY PRETTY- WAIT!!” He caught himself in his amusement. “NO!! I WON’T ALLOW THIS!! TAKE IT OFF!!”

“ok.” He pulled off his tee shirt to reveal one final shirt. It was a tank top that said “You Left Me an Opening for Science Puns and I Lepton It.”

You had to sit down because you were in fits. Toriel had to leave the room where you could hear her howling from the bathroom. Asgore was even giving a couple chuckles but he was shaking his head in good humor. Sans finally dropped the stoic face and beamed with pride now that his skit was complete. He held out his hands and shrugged proudly while Papyrus groaned and dropped his face into his hands in defeat. Sans, after everyone had calmed down, finally put on the ugly Christmas sweater while Papyrus gather up his spare clothes and went out to the car to toss them in the back.

As the sun set and dinner was finished, Undyne and Alphys finally arrived. Alphys was wearing a blinking Rudolph nose on her face and had little bows with bells on them on each other her head points. She blushed as she was complimented on them and she ducked away to go added some cookies –helpfully made between Undyne and Alphys which means they were for the most part edible- to the desserts. Undyne was in a particularly good mood today and you unfortunately wondered if it was because of her status from this morning. Nobody brought it up and you certainly weren’t going to be the one to do so.

After dinner you handed over Undyne and Alphys’s ugly sweaters so that all of you were dressed in a horrible motley of colors. It was fantastic. There were a few run-ins under the mistletoe which had Undyne and Alphys kissing (Toriel covered your eyes) multiple times because you were fairly sure they kept walking under it together on purpose. Asgore and Toriel were never under it at the same time but hilariously Undyne and Papyrus were at one point. The reluctance with which Undyne had kissed his cheekbone and the delight in Papyrus’s face were worth the picture you took as well as the struggle you had running away from the rampaging Undyne.

“hey kid.” Sans said as you were coming back with a plate of pie. You paused and tilted your head. He looked like he was smirking. “look up.”

Oh no.

You looked up and saw the mistletoe hanging ominously but innocently above you two. You looked back at Sans and if he had eyebrows he would be wiggling them. You embarrassingly found your cheeks heating up. This was. Well. This was weird.

“i would kiss you but…” he winked at you, “i don’t have any lips.”

Rude.

Why was this so embarrassing? It’s not like you haven’t done this before. You’ve kissed his cheek in
the past but the stupid mistletoe implied the kiss to be something more. You weren’t sure how you felt about that but the rules were rules. You steeled your determination and kissed his cheekbone soundly before you hurried off with your pie.

Later you all sat by the fire and talked about your gifts while dinner and dessert settled before you would go to open the presents. You all began to talk about your pasts some. You mostly avoided some of the questions but your monster family now knew that you actually had a family and you had to sate their appetites somehow. Even though it somewhat hurt to admit.

“I…we didn’t really….celebrate.” You admitted. You were picking at the fuzz on your sweater. It was kind of itchy. It was far too hot to be wearing the sweater and the jacket and sit in front of the fire so you decided to hand the jacket over to Sans for now. He wore it over his sweater as he relaxed against the couch near Toriel’s leg. “My parents….would throw parties.” You made a face. “But…they were…grown up parties. Weren’t fun.”

“No kidding!” Undyne agreed.

“Were they, um, fancy parties? Or…just parties with a lot of, er, drinking?” Alphys asked. She was casually braiding your hair. You liked the feeling of the soft tugging that came with the braiding. Her hands were surprisingly dexterous but then again she built things. She must have clever hands.

“Both.” You said.

“ME AND SANS WERE NEVER ALLOWED AT PARTIES LIKE THAT!” Papyrus said. “EVERYONE ALWAYS SAID I WAS TOO YOUNG. BUT I’M AN ADULT!”

“Actually.” Asgore asked curiously, “Papyrus, Sans, which one of you is older?”

“Hey YEAH!” Undyne sat up a little more attentive. “I never thought to ask!”

“CLEARLY I AM!” Papyrus announced proudly. Then he paused. “WAIT.” He turned to his brother who was relaxing with his eyes closed. He was still awake you could tell. “SANS, WHICH ONE OF US IS OLDER??”

“You don’t know?!” Undyne asked incredulously.

“IT NEVER CAME UP!”

Sans thought about it for a moment before he shrugged. “dunno.”

“Oh.” Toriel said surprised.

“THERE WE GO! WE DON’T KNOW!” Papyrus announced cheerfully.

“Isn’t that kind of important?!” Undyne asked.

“why?” Sans asked.

“Because!! BECAUSE!!” She paused. “…..huh. I guess it doesn’t.” And that ended that topic there.

You all decided to move onto the gifts. With everyone having presents for each other the next few minutes were mostly spent with the sound of tearing and noises of delight. You were happy with everything you had gotten. Papyrus had been overjoyed when he got to your present and saw the skeleton on the cover. He had demanded to watch it right away which you all agreed to do after the presents had been opened and everything cleaned up. To you shock and slight horror Sans had given
you forty-five pairs of socks a present. You stared at him baffled and he had just sent you a grin before he opened his gift from you which was a single sock and a new lightbulb for his lamp. The two of you giggled like loons. His sense of humor had ruined you forever.

“Look at these two!” Toriel said shaking her head. “You two are like two peas in a pod!”

“IT’S HORRIBLE!!” Papyrus lamented glaring at the single sock that Sans would no doubt leave somewhere around the house.

“Are you two dating or what?” Alphys asked jokingly from where she and Undyne were practically cuddling now that their presents were opened.

“Dating?” Asgore asked, alarmed in the way only dads could get over their children.

“yeah.” Sans said and everyone froze including you. You stared at him with wide eyes. You two were dating? Since when? Did this start with the mistletoe thing? You hadn’t agreed to anything! You couldn’t get your mouth to work to protest. Sans winked at you. You wanted to find out the answer to your questions but it was the end of the chapter. Looks like you would have to wait.

Chapter End Notes

I did say this story was going to be sillier than the previous ones, right? I couldn't resist that ending. It won't happen often. What's with these fucking characters breaking the fourth wall? Why is this story turning into a RomCom? Oh well. See you next chapter!

(I hope you're happy, Otter! You did this.)
Chapter Summary

Frisk enters the world of dating. (It's...not what they were expecting. Actually. They weren't expecting any dating at all.)

Chapter Notes

Goddammit this chapter makes me want to write the date from Sans's POV but that would ruin the fun.

I can't name the person who suggested this prompt off of the top of my head (and I'm too lazy to look) but I hope you enjoyed it!

Oh right. It's also officially my birthday.

It was the day after Christmas and you were in your room at Asgore’s staring at your laptop and considering getting on it. Morning had already passed and Asgore had gone into town with Toriel to talk to a lawyer so you had some time for yourself. Unfortunately this meant that you had far too much time to think. Although, you did have much to think about.

Last night Sans had confused everyone with his announcement that he was dating you. In fact, your mind was still reeling because when did this happen?? There were a mixture of reactions from your friends. Alphys had dropped her mug of tea in shock and had gaped unable to speak. Undyne flipped and between her and Papyrus you hadn’t been able to hear much. Papyrus himself had been absolutely thrilled. His eye sockets didn’t stop sparkling the whole night.

“What the HELL?? SANS, WHEN WERE YOU DATING FRISK? Hey PUNK! Why didn’t you tell me you got a boyfriend?! Isn’t that what friends are supposed to tell their besties?!”

“This is great!! Frisk, I told you after our date that I would help you settle for second best. And you did!! You really chose second best!! I’m so happy for both of you!!”

You still had a headache from it.

Toriel and Asgore had quite different reactions. Asgore, being Asgore, couldn’t bring himself to get angry but he certainly seemed uncomfortable with this new information. He had broken the mug in his hand send eggnog all down the front of his sweater. He had escaped the room to clean up. Toriel had stared in shock for a little while before she’d turned to you.

“Is this true, Frisk?” She asked. You shrugged. You were just as confused as she was. She turned to Sans then. “Sans, when did this happen?”

The whole time Sans had been sitting back with his usual smile just watching the chaos unfold. A
part of you wondered if he honestly had only said he was dating you to stir up trouble. It didn’t bother you a whole lot (it was just like him to prank everyone like that) but it did hurt your feelings a little bit to be used as a joke. You had looked to him as well as Undyne and Papyrus continued to shout around you two. Undyne seemed torn between happy for you and angry she hadn’t known. Alphys, being the smart one, was listening instead to your conversation. Papyrus was on a monologue about possible weddings and parties and all the friends he could tell online about Sans’s new “taken” status.

So when you, Alphys, and Toriel were all waiting for a response Sans finally looked at you and gave a shrug and said simply,

“don’t worry about it.”

You were worrying about it.

No matter what else happened that evening Sans didn’t really answer any more questions. He dodged them with an unerring accuracy that astounded and humbled you. It left you discontent and more confused than ever. The party ended before you could get Sans alone to talk to him. Papyrus and Undyne had given you hardy slaps on the back in congratulation that you could still feel this morning.

Last night Toriel had called you over to her before she left for the evening and had kneeled before you with a serious expression on her face.

“Frisk, if you do not want to date Sans then you do not have to.” You blinked at her. Your head hurt. She continued though, touching your cheek. “I know you two are very close friends, but Sans also likes to joke around. We both know this. Do not let him hurt you, my child. And if he does,” She tightened her grip on your shoulders. The look on her face was indescribable, “I will talk with him.” The way she stressed the word “talk” was unnerving.

Toriel had a good point. Sans did like to joke around a lot. Admittedly you had been on dates with him before (even though you hadn’t considered them dates) but you had been on dates with others too. You had technically dated his brother! You didn’t think that whatever he was doing was to hurt you. He had messed with you before with his pranking and making you say things like how you’re the fartmaster and such but he would never actually pull a trick to hurt your feelings. You two were too close for that.

That just left you wondering more what he was doing then. You wanted to say that he was just joking but…..what if he wasn’t? You really needed to talk to him.

Asgore had also pulled you aside last night before you had fallen asleep and sat down on your bed to talk to you. It was probably the most awkward conversation you’d had with him to date.

Asgore cleared his throat. “Frisk…I had not really realized that you were…at the age of dating. Of course there are people you would no doubt find attractive…” Oh no. Please don’t let this be what you think it is. You didn’t need this talk. You already knew about sex and such. You were a thirteen year old who’d had access to television without restriction most of your life, after all. “…but I had been hoping you would wait a while longer before dating. You are young, my child.” He frowned into his lap. You watched him warily. “Sans is…a good skeleton. But. But he’s not good enough for you.” You could’ve sworn Asgore was pouting. The way he made it sound you had a feeling nobody would really be good enough for you.

You had appreciated what he was saying and hugged him tightly. You’d never had a father before but to see him get protective of you was cute. You wondered if you really did get a boyfriend or
girlfriend (you didn’t have a preference) how he would react. For now you would hold off on his poor heart and not tell him that you and Sans weren’t actually dating (as far as you knew).

You rolled over on your bed and stared at the ceiling. But really what is dating? When two people go out together and have fun? You do that all the time with many people. Even your date with Papyrus had been fun despite it being typically silly. You and Sans also went out together a lot—Grillby’s being the main place—so technically those were dates? So by definition you two were dating...

Was Sans just being super literal about the whole thing and wasn’t referring to the romantic part of dating?

You really should talk to him.

The doorbell rang which made you sit up. Who was here? You climbed out of bed and trudged to the door. You were too short to see who it was so you just opened it. Outside stood Lansot all bundled up in their winter gear and hopping in place.

“Yo Frisk! Can I come in? It’s super cold!” You opened the door wider for them and they came in. They had forgotten to stomp the snow off of their feet and had dragged it in. You would need to clean that up later. “Thanks, dude! So!” They immediately got to the point as the kicked off their boots near the wall, “I totally saw Papyrus’s post! You and Sans are dating huh?”

Great. You couldn’t seem to escape it. You sighed and shrugged in response. It didn’t seem to matter to Lansot.

“Man that is so cool! Papyrus said you dated him too once! Is it, like, just okay to date you then? Yo….I just had the best idea!” Lansot always seemed ready to go off on their own tangent. It was useful because you didn’t like talking anyway. “How about we go on a date? Hey, can I date you too Frisk? It’s cool, right?”

You stared at them. Were you just…asked out on a date? Officially? That was. Well. That was something. How did you even feel about Lansot? They were your friend but what was a crush even supposed to feel like? You’d never had one before. You found people attractive certainly (you had found the monsters in a way attractive too) but you had never considered actually being with anyone. But here Lansot was very obviously asking you out.

Well.

You held up a finger and ran to your room to grab your cell phone. Lansot followed after you. You sent a text to Sans.

I’ve been asked on a date.

You waited. Lansot leaned over your shoulder to read it though. “Ohhhh! You’re asking Sans? That’s cool! I’m sure he’d want to know!” Were you not technically supposed to date others if you were dating Sans? Your phone pinged.

who?

Lansot.
	nice kid. have fun.

You were left even more confused than before. He didn’t care? Maybe everything he had said before
really was just a joke? You felt a little more hurt. You didn’t like the thought that Sans was just messing with your emotions (even if you still weren’t sure how you felt about the situation). You felt a little angry and you turned to Lansot to nod. You would go on this date. Your first real date.

“Awesome! Like…like yeah!” They looked both stoked and confused by what to do. “Oh! You need to get dressed, dude! I’ll wait in the living room and think of where to go!” They dashed out, stumbling on the rug and falling but they recovered quickly. You shut the door and went over to your closet to pick out your clothes. You weren’t exactly sure what to wear. What did one wear on a date? Usually something nice, you guessed, but you had a lot of nice clothes!

….Would it be appropriate to wear Sans’s jacket on someone else’s date? It felt a little…possessive. But you did like this jacket. You doubted Lansot would care. Somewhat reluctantly you decided to leave it behind. You were a bit angry at Sans anyway (it wasn’t nice to play with someone’s heart. You would give him a stern talking to when you next saw him) so you tossed it onto your bed and changed. You actually put on the dress that your mother originally didn’t like. You also brushed your hair (it was still wavy from the braids Alphys had put in yesterday) and pulled on some thick tights. The last things you grabbed were your boots, (a different) snow jacket, gloves, and anything you would need like your cell phone and some money.

You thought you looked rather cute today!

Your confidence boosted you made to exit your room when suddenly your phone rang. You frowned and picked it up. “HELLO HUMAN.” It was Papyrus. He sounded a little upset.“I AM NOT CALLING FOR ANY PARTICULAR REASON. EXCEPT. SANS SAID YOU WERE GOING ON…A DATE? BUT NOT WITH HIM!” You waited for him to continue when he paused for affirmation. “I ADMIRE YOUR DATING PROWESS! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, AM STILL FLATTERED TO HAVE BEEN YOUR FIRST DATE! BUT….MY DATING MANUAL SAYS THAT USUALLY PEOPLE DO NOT DATE OTHERS WHEN THEY ARE DATING MY BROTHER! FRISK…ARE YOU CHEATING?” He asked the last part with hesitance.

You huffed a little. Great. Now you were being accused of being a cheater. You were feeling a little angry about all of this. “Ask Sans.” You said.

“OH. DOES HE KNOW?”

“Yes.”

“THEN I WILL!” He hung up on you. You were fine with that. You put your phone away and joined Lansot out in the living room. They grinned at the sight of you and hopped off of the couch.

“You ready? Alright let’s get some Nice Cream!” They suggested and made for the door. You paused long enough to leave a note for Asgore before you followed. You opened it for both of you as they put their boots back on. You eyed the wet floor with a mental sigh. You hoped that Asgore wouldn’t get too upset. The two of you left and walked together along the cleared sidewalk.

“Why Nice Cream?” You asked. It was cold out but you could always go for Nice Cream.

Lansot made their approximation of a shrug. “Dunno, dude. It’s, like, a common thing to share ice cream on dates right?” They gave a somewhat shy grin that threw you off. You didn’t think that Lansot had chosen to ask you out because they actually had feelings for you. You had thought it was just in response to Papyrus (and because Lansot liked to jump into things feet first) but maybe they actually did like you?
(Your heart was beating wildly in your chest.)

“Share?” You asked.

“Yeah! D’ya wanna?” You didn’t see why not so you nodded. Lansot gave a delighted grin.

Just then your phone in your pocket rang again. You picked it up. “HELLO?” It was Papyrus again. It sounded like Undyne might be in the background. You could hear her voice, anyway. “AGAIN FOR TOTALLY NOT SUSPICIOUS REASONS…BUT….WHERE ARE YOU GOING ON YOUR DATE AT?” Well that was suspicious. “ALSO WITH WHO? SANS DIDN’T SAY.”

You didn’t really see the harm in telling him what he wanted to know no matter how suspicious it was.

“GREAT! THANK YOU FOR BEING PATIENT!” He hung up on you again. Did monsters not know how to say goodbye? Then again Papyrus didn’t like goodbyes (only see-you-laters) so you could disregard it.


You were being followed by your friends. They were trying to be subtle about it, you knew, but it wasn’t working.

You and Lansot were standing in line to get some Nice Cream. It had become actually very popular in the Overworld and had expanded outside of its usual ice cream stand. Now the friendly monster you had met in Snowdin had a whole Nice Cream shop and even had one in the next town over. It was good to see the monster so happy. Even when it was cold there were people standing in line for Nice Cream to try all the new flavors. There were even fire ones which some monsters loved. They honestly looked delicious but you had been warned not to eat it by Toriel. She could handle the flames because of her magic but she also knew that the Nice Cream had real flames and so would not be good for humans.

Despite the fact that you and your date were standing inside of the building, you could hear Papyrus and Undyne outside. Undyne’s voice was lower than Papyrus’s but she often got worked up enough to yell. You were able to gather from their “sneakiness” that 1. they were following you, 2. Alphys was with them, and 3. they were not all very happy about your date.

Well. Who cared. It was your date.

Lansot wasn’t so oblivious as to not realize Papyrus was following you both. “Dude…are they trying to be sneaky?” They looked like they were barely resisting the urge to look over their shoulders to spy your tagalongs.

You sighed and shrugged.

“…They’re not mad, are they?” You looked at Lansot. They were starting to look upset. You grabbed the hem of their sweater and they looked up at you. You smiled.

“I’m having fun.” You told them. They instantly brightened.

“Yeah, man! This dating stuff is pretty cool!”
You thought you may have heard muffled screaming from outside. “I DON’T GET IT!!!!” That sounded like Undyne. You ignored it.

You and Lansot bought a large triple scoop Nice Cream to share. The wrapper had a picture of a hug so you hugged Lansot. You were having fun. Together the two of you walked over to a park bench and sat down together to watch people walk up and down the park trails. You took a lick of the Nice Cream first and then held it to Lansot so they could have some. You made sure to bring it back and forth between you two as you chatted.

In truth you weren’t sure what you were expecting from a date. Maybe kissing? Holding hands? (But Lansot didn’t have any). Something cute? You supposed sharing Nice Cream was cute. Instead you actually just enjoyed sitting in the sun talking about school. You two also talked about each other’s Christmases and what to do with what was left of your winter break. The both of you firmly ignoring the talking in the bushes, especially when you heard something about a fanfiction. Your life was enough of a fanfiction without Alphys adding to it.

Your phone pinged then. You opened the text. It was from Sans.

**having fun?**

You didn’t respond to it.

When the Nice Cream was finished you helped to wipe off Lansot’s face before you two took a walk along the trails. You were having a good day. You were actually rather glad you were asked out on this date. There wasn’t too much pressure and Lansot was your good friend. You both walked close together sharing your body heat.

Your phone pinged again.

**you’re being followed.**

You already knew you were being followed by your friends. It was kind of annoying especially because they kept tripping over each other. At one point Undyne had even sent Alphys and Papyrus off to jog in a random exercise. Alphys was still under Papyrus’s training it seemed. However that left Undyne with nothing to do so she had followed after them.

Wait, how did Sans know you were being followed?

Your phone pinged again. You ignored it. It would be rude if you kept answering your phone when you were with someone. It was then that your phone began to rapid fire ping with texts. You pulled to a stop, annoyed.

“Yo Frisk, you’re sure popular! Who is it anyway?” Lansot asked. They didn’t seem to mind that you were being texted. You pulled out your phone with a sigh.

**you never paid for our dates.**

**you ignoring me now?**
You glared at your phone. Why was Sans being so annoying today? If he was jealous or something then you were going to be angry. He had no right to mess with you. You were having fun without him. If you gave him space when he couldn’t stand to be near you then you deserved the same courtesy.

“Whoa…Sans really wants your attention!” Lansot said as they read the texts over your shoulder.

“Annoying.” You muttered.

Lansot gave a nervous look. You’ve never been this upset before. “You okay?” You shook your head. “Well…why don’t you talk to him?” Lansot rocked back and forth on their heels. “We can end
You felt guilty suddenly. “I was…enjoying myself.” You said, disappointed.

“I was too, dude!” Lansot reassured you. “But…you’re not now, right? We can do this again! It’s real fun hanging with you! It’s like Waterfall all over again!” They nudged you with their head. “Let me know how it goes, dude! I’ll see you later, alright? We should all build a snowman like we talked about!!”

You nodded acquiescing and Lansot gave another grin before they darted off. You were left by yourself not too far from Asgore’s house. It was after lunch but you weren’t ready to go home. You had another thing to deal with first. You returned your attention to your cell phone.

Go away.

angry, huh

You’re rude.

that’s nothing new

I thought you hated texting.

i do

You waited and soon enough Sans was standing next to you. Your suspicions had proven true. You couldn’t even look at him as you fumed silently to yourself. “…thought i told you not to worry about it?” He started.

You glared at him.

“s’not a big deal.” You were getting hurt. He must’ve noticed it on your face because he began to sweat. “kid…it’s honestly not a big deal. i’m not kidding.”

“What do you want from me.” You demanded. You felt more tired than angry now. You never could stay angry long. Usually the fuel for your flame burned out quickly. You were too forgiving. It was like this even with Flowey too.

“nothing.” You waited. “frisk, what we have is fine. but…well. did you ever think about how others might see it?” You frowned a looked him. He was wearing his neutral smile. “really think about it for a moment.”

You stared across the street and thought about it. Again, you didn’t really understand dating. Papyrus’s manual was sketchy at best and the only other experience you had was playing Alphys’s Mew Mew game and that wasn’t very informative. You didn’t give presents to increase love points or anything. There weren’t any sparkles or bubbles and although Sans had caught you many times before it had been because you needed to be caught not because of romantic tension.

However you did sleep in his bed and you often visited his house in the middle of the night. There wasn’t a single soul who knew you as well as he did (and vice versa) and besides your surrogate parents he was always the one you went to when you had trouble. You loved spending time with him and there was a level of comfort between you two that you could easily see people mistaking for some kind of romantic partner scenario.

You looked at him. He winked. “get it now?”
“…Are we dating then?” You asked, still confused.

“Who cares.” He said.

“Everyone, apparently.”

“Let ‘em think what they want.” Sans yawned. “Pap’s happy, you’re happy, everyone’s happy. Who cares about labels. We’re ‘us’, got it?” He held out his jacket –the one you had left on your bed- to you. “Grillby’s?”

You smiled at him and nodded. You replaced the jacket you were wearing with the one he gave you. He took your hand and led you towards a shortcut. Yeah. “Us” worked just fine for you.
Cowardice is Relative

Chapter Summary

A moment between Sans and Frisk.

Chapter Notes

For the people who wanted: -cuddling, -more moments between Sans and Frisk, and -angst.

(I knew that angst tag would come in handy)

This is kind of a filler chapter. But then again they're all prompts without real overarching plot so maybe they're all filler chapters.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

As of this day, your name was Frisk Dreemurr. You were the adopted child over both Toriel and Asgore Dreemurr. Your parents were monsters and they were two of your closest friends. They loved you dearly (even if both had tried to— and had sometimes succeeded to— kill you) and although the three of you did not live together in one house you all were happy. Where you lived was split between the two depending on who you wanted to live with at the time. They did not live far from each other. Both houses were warm, provided love and care for you, and your parents wanted you. It was one of the best days of your life that you were now officially Toriel and Asgore's child.

But it was nearly three in the morning and you were crying in your bed. You couldn’t sleep because all you could think about was the guilt that sat like sludge in your chest. Despite knowing that it was the best for everyone that you now lived with the monsters legally and officially, you still felt like you had betrayed your human parents. Your mother had given you her blessing when she had signed those papers but….but you could tell she wasn’t happy about it. She loved you and you had left her. You should be happy. You were right where you wanted to be but you couldn’t stop the tears. Even Mr. Harrington and his dancing wasn’t cheering you up.

You needed to get out of here.

You climbed to your feet and gave a tiny sob before you forced yourself to suck it up. You pulled on your boots and grabbed your cell phone before you opened your window and climbed out into the cold. The dampness of your cheeks made the slight wind sting in the cold. You yanked up the hood of Sans’s jacket and closed your window before trudging your way down a familiar path. You didn’t even need to look up in order to know where you were going.

When you arrived at Sans and Papyrus’s house, you pulled out your keys from the keychain you kept inside of your jacket to unlock their door and go in. It was already unlocked. One of them— most likely Sans— probably forgot to lock it. It gave you pause. That could mean that Sans was outside at the moment or it could mean he literally forgot to lock up the house. You went inside and stomped off the snow from your shoes before going upstairs. You could hear Papyrus snoring from his room.
You were a little surprised to hear him asleep considering that his sleep schedule was also a little wonky. He preferred not to sleep but by choice rather than any deeper reason. It was good he was asleep.

You knocked quietly on Sans’s door but didn’t receive an answer. You tried the knob but it was locked. You didn’t think he was inside. You decided to try back outside. You crunched your way through the snow to the basement door. You unlocked that and once again stomped the snow off of your boots before walking down the stairs. You could see the lights were on.

Downstairs you peeked around the corner to see Sans dressed in his lab coat wearing some safety goggles and gloves. He seemed to be pouring some strange amorphous sludge into a glass and was hyper focused on it. You sat down on the stairs and watched him. He was muttering to himself in that strange language you never understood. You had a feeling it may be the same language his notes were taken in. Sans had once told you that the writing was mostly Dr. Gaster’s but he had picked up on it so people couldn’t just read his research whenever they wanted.

The sludge plopped into the glass where it began to fizzle and turn into a gas. You covered your nose. Sans made a face at it and turned on an overhead fan. The gas shrieked as it was sucked up. The sludge seemed to deflate and became a liquid. Sans gave an annoyed sigh and dumped whatever it was in the sink before taking off his gloves and tossing them in a bucket. His goggles went next. “I know you’re there.” He said.

You stood up and walked a little further into the room but didn’t say anything. You tried to gauge his mood. He turned to you and his grin was back on his face. You relaxed some. He wasn’t upset by anything in particular. He was probably just frustrated with his work.

“Sup, buddy?” He asked.

You opened your mouth and then closed it. You had been so caught up in everything that you had managed to tramp down on your emotions from before. Now, though, it was coming back. You swallowed twice and felt your eyes threaten to well up again. Sans watched you silently. You inhaled shakily. “A-am I….a bad person?” You whispered and then you couldn’t hold back the sobs.

“Aw, Frisk.” Sans said and you heard him take off his coat before he approached you. “C’mere, kid.” You allowed him to pull you into his arms and you cried into his shoulder. He didn’t say anything while you cried, allowing you to get it out. He gave a soft sigh. “Alright, where to? Couch or bed?”

You pulled away and placed your hands together before bringing them to your cheek. “Gotcha.” He released you and you held onto the back of his shirt like a child and continued to quietly cry despite fighting the tears. He led you out of the lab and locked up the stairs before he led you into the house. You tried harder to muffle your sobs so as to not disturb Papyrus—who could recognize the sound of crying from anywhere like he had an uncanny ability—and you two entered Sans’s room. You released his shirt and he kicked off his slippers to flop back onto his mattress. His room—thanks to your efforts—was currently clean. Even the trash tornado only had the sock you had given him for Christmas flying around in it. He shoved his blanket to his side of the twin bed and held his arm out.

You climbed into the bed and curled up against his side with your cheek pillowed on his sternum. Your body trembled from resisting your sorrow but now you let it go fully. Your tears and cries flooded out against his shirt. You couldn’t speak for a long time. You could only think about the sorrow on your mother’s face and the ‘what ifs’ that you always seemed to have. You hated that you had to make so many tough choices all of the time. You were only thirteen! What thirteen year old had killed people countless times, could rewind time, had been abused by their parents, and had to
make the choice to break so many peoples’ hearts and didn’t get messed up by it? And you were positive you were messed up.

“hey.” Sans said and you realized you had been muttering your thoughts out loud. So much for not being able to talk. You disliked the mucus you were getting on his shirt. You were sweating. “kid, you need to stop beating yourself up so much.” He rolled over until the both of you were face-to-face. You probably looked horrible even in the darkness but you knew he didn’t care so you tried not to as well. The lights in his sockets were bright but they were small. “you were in an abusive situation and you got out of it. that was…it was real brave of ya. did a good thing. don’t ever regret saving yourself. for once in your life think selfishly.”

“I don’t wanna!” You whimpered. You didn’t know how to think of yourself first. It felt like everything you did was for someone or another. Even when your mother left you alone you always found someone you could help.

He tapped his skull against yours in frustration and just stared at you. He seemed to be thinking. Or maybe he was waiting for the waterworks to stop. You were running out anyway. You disliked crying because of how gross it made you feel. You were calming down but the tears still leaked out. “listen. your mother didn’t want you. tori and asgore? they love you to death. you’ve got it made here, pal. your mother is probably happy wherever she is. she seemed to be fine on her own before.”

“I broke her heart.”

“the world is give and take. there are no perfect endings. you and me? we know that well.” You did know that well. The tears reminded you of Asriel.

“I just….it seems like no matter what I do…I’m hurting someone.” You confessed.

“yeah.” He didn’t say anything more. You didn’t know if you were expecting any more than that but the validation somehow made you feel better. His tone of voice implied he knew that same pain. You ducked your head down and under his chin. In response he rolled back over and wrapped an arm around your shoulders to hold you close. You breathed in tandem with him for the next few minutes. You were calming down. There was a part of you that still wasn’t satisfied. It seemed to be the same side of you that still wished you could save Asriel. Maybe if you could just….RESET and…..

………no. That was stupid to consider. As Sans said, everyone was finally happy.

His hand came up and he ran his fingers through your hair. You shivered at the sensation and couldn’t help the tiny smile that broke out upon your lips. “You remembered.” You said.

“You’re just saying that,” you yawned, “because you don’t have hair.”

“At the end of the day. It was a low blow,” he said, “I’m hurting someone.” You confessed.

“hey.” He tugged lightly on your hair. “sarcasm isn’t funny, pal.”

“hey.” He tugged lightly on your hair. “sarcasm isn’t funny, pal.”

You couldn’t help the giggle that escaped you. He didn’t say anything but you could sense his confusion. “…You’ve told me that before.”

“man, those other sans-es are stepping on my toes.” His fingers returned to playing with your hair.
You wondered what it felt like for someone who didn’t have skin.

“Pity.”

“Alright, kid.”

“Sorry.”

“Alphys’s snark is rubbing off on you. you’ll get yourself into a hairy situation.” You snorted and then were mortified by your snort. You could feel his chuckles at your expense. You closed your sore eyes and sulked against him. Silence fell around you again. You listened to the sound of air entering and exiting his chest. Papyrus’s snores were muffled from here. The strangest thing you found about most of these monsters was that they didn’t have heartbeats…at least, not what you were used to. Monsters had physical forms but their anatomy wasn’t the same. You weren’t sure which ones had hearts but the skeletons sure didn’t. It was strange knowing the person under you was alive even though there was no heart.

“…why do you breathe…” you murmured, “if you don’t have to?”

“habit.” His chest stopped moving. You waited, unconsciously holding your own breath, but you needed to breathe long before he did. You gasped once to get air back in you and then yawned while patting his chest.

“Breathe.”

His chest started to move again. “also need it to talk.”

“Stop breathing.”

“…you’re rude when you’re tired. you came to me.”

You laughed a little and hugged him in apology. He muttered something in that strange language. “How do you breathe without lungs?”

“do you honestly want to go into monster anatomy when you’re half-asleep?”

“…No.”

“didn’t think so.”

You really were starting to fall asleep though. You trailed your fingers idly along his ribs feeling the ridges under his shirt. His fingers stopped moving through your hair and his arm dropped away. In your hazy mind you wondered if he had fallen asleep as well when you noticed a tension in his body. You waited.

“frisk…” You were a little more alert. His tone of voice was carefully neutral. “…….i think……i remember more of the last timeline.” You blinked in shock and shook yourself to wake up a little more. You shifted to show him you were still awake. “…..it’s not much.” He admitted. “but. ….did i….call you at all? on new year’s?”

You nodded.

“thought so.” He paused. “when we were…celebrating. i got confused. thought for sure i was supposed to be in my lab but…i was with all of you. i remember being pissed off and tired. knowing me i wasn’t getting much sleep. but you were at the party.” He was beginning to sound frustrated.
You could understand how the déjà vu was probably confusing him. It confused you sometimes too. It was difficult to explain. “kid, i was falling apart. i remember that. i would wake up from a nightmare and expect you to show up at my place. or i would go to your window but…your room was dark. you didn’t live in ebott anymore.”

His hand gripped the blankets tightly. You could hear his bones creaking.

“it’s…it’s real messed up. this thing we have? this dependency? it’s real twisted. frisk, you get me? we can’t…this can’t keep going on. this emotional dependency. if one of us leaves…the other is going to fall apart. you’re thirteen. you’re just a kid and me? i’m supposed to be the adult. and i’m running to a fucking kid for comfort!” He sat up and you tumbled off of him. Your eyes were wide as he dropped his skull into his hands. You’d never heard him curse like that around you before. There was a thin layer of sweat on his skull.

You sat up as well but gave him space seeing that he needed it. You didn’t know what to say about this situation. Perhaps it was messed up. You hadn’t really considered that you were emotionally dependent on Sans or vice versa. The closeness of your relationship stemmed from both of your knowledge of past timelines. There was nobody else who could understand you. Of course you both would rely on each other.

Hesitantly, you told him this.

“…..when you were sick….i read a medical book about humans.” Sans dropped his hands into his lap. He was facing away from you so you couldn’t see his reaction. “…there’s this thing that people get when they go through traumatic experiences. ptsd. heard of it?”

It sounded familiar. You didn’t respond.

“post-traumatic stress disorder.” He explained for you. “people with it can help other victims because they’re experiencing the same thing. ‘s probably what we got. you, the kid who’s been emotionally abused all their life and me, the guy who ruined someone’s fucking existence. between the two of us you learned to care too much and i all but lost the ability to care.” He scoffed. “messed up.” He muttered.

You pulled your knees to your chest and stared at your socked feet. They were fuzzy socks that were part of the forty-five pairs of socks Sans had bought for you. They were extremely soft. And you were avoiding the bad thoughts. It’s funny how you unconsciously developed the mindset to avoid thinking about sad things. You didn’t know when that started. You couldn’t avoid it right now.

But what were you supposed to say? “…who else would we talk to?” You asked. It felt like he was trying to leave you. It seemed like even when you were just trying to help you only hurt people. Flowey was right. No matter how good you are, someone always ended up hurt. Your mother left you, your father left you…and now it seemed like Sans wanted to leave you too.

You buried your face into your knees. You wouldn’t keep him if he wanted to go.

“…i don’t know.” Sans responded. You heard him shift. You couldn’t even bring yourself to cry. You never could seem to cry for yourself often. Whenever you really needed the tears they never came.

“…You’re all I have….for this.” You admitted. “You…already hate me for what I did. And…and maybe i could tell mom…or dad…but how could they forgive me? I left their son a…soulless husk. Still down there….in his own hell.” You swallowed. “Papyrus…would forgive me. He never stopped believing in me. And…if you told him everything…he would forgive your sins too. But…”
You lifted your head and looked at him. His face was scrunched with pain. “you don’t want to destroy his vision of you. Just like me.” You gave a pitiful form of a smile before staring at the wall.

“Undyne….may not forgive me. Alphys…I wonder how much she would hate me….if she knew how often I had killed her friends? She…she doesn’t blame you for Dr. Gaster. I know. Past timelines…prove it. But me? I have dust all over me. It never seems to go away.”

You looked at him again. “Sans. We are…emotionally dependent on each other…because neither of us are strong enough to rely on anyone else. We’re…both broken. But…our broken pieces…kind of fit together. Almost. And…and maybe we can fix ourselves. Carefully. We have a whole future ahead of us.” You reached towards him. He captured your hand in his. You took this as an invitation and came closer to kneel in front of him on the bed. “When we’re stronger…we can share our burden of knowledge with others. We have time.”

Sans sighed and pulled you towards him. You clung to him tightly where you both refused to let go. “frisk, how are you so smart?”

“I’m not. I’m a coward.”

“you’re the bravest person i know…next to my bro. i’m the coward.”

“If you’re a coward…then I’ll be brave for both of us.” You buried your face into the hollow of his shoulder and collarbone. “One day…we’ll forgive ourselves.” You kissed his cheekbone. Another promise. He may hate making promises but you didn’t. You gave a small smile. “And hey…if things go bad…I could always reload a SAVE?”

Your joke fell a little flat but it wasn’t completely unappreciated. Sans shook his head. “let’s not mess with time anymore if we can help it. gotta learn to live with mistakes.”

“That’s brave.”

“heh. maybe you’re right.” You tugged him down until you were laying down with him again. You tucked your head under his chin. He felt more relaxed. You weren’t sure about him but you felt a little pathetic. That whole conversation was pathetic. The two of you really were messed up. But you had hope for the future. You both finally had one, after all. Time was in your hands and you didn’t have plans to rewind it ever again.

You both really were broken with far too much history on your shoulders. It was unbearable. Maybe true bravery was overcoming your own shortcomings. Maybe you escaping your human parents for a better life was considered brave…or maybe it was cowardly that you never confronted your parents. Maybe facing all of those monsters in the Underworld that were unhesitating in killing you thousands of time was brave. Maybe so was sparing their lives despite it. And maybe killing them was cowardice. Maybe hiding your secrets from your parents and best friends was cowardly. Or maybe it was brave of you not to have your friends face the terrible knowledge of past timelines.

Who really knew?

Sans’s breathing was deeper. While you were thinking, he had fallen asleep.

You closed your eyes. Tomorrow was another day.
Sorry if they seem a little OOC. You know how the later it gets the more truthful you are? Same with these guys.
Sledding

Chapter Notes

Just a quick chapter!

“I’m, uh, n-not sure this is a good idea!” Alphys said as she gazed upwards with Sans next to her. You were currently on the roof of the tallest home you could find along with Papyrus and Undyne. You were tucked and held firmly in Undyne’s lap with Papyrus’s legs bracketing both of you in. You three were sharing a piece of plastic that most children would call a sleigh if it were other circumstances.

“Don’t be a wimp, Alphys!” Undyne called down. You stared at the drop not too far down. There was a ramp made of snow waiting to catch you three and lead you down a large hill not too far off. There weren’t many obstacles in the way other than one or two trees and maybe a passerby. Some of the monsters had stopped to watch the set up. A human had called the police but Greater and Lesser Dog were just watching with excitement rather than helping out.

“it’ll be fine.” Sans agreed. He was grinning but he hadn’t volunteered to join you three on the roof. Papyrus was keeping the three of you steady as he made sure the angle was right. Undyne was moving around also judging the distance and speed with which you all would need to make the jump. “you can’t spell ‘frisk’ without ‘risk’, after all.”

“OH MY GOD, SANS! I CAN’T CONCENTRATE OVER THE SOUND OF YOUR JOKES!!” Papyrus yelled. You gave Sans a thumbs up and he returned it.

“Get ready, punk! We’re gonna go!”

“This doesn’t look safe...” Alphys whimpered.

“You did the calculations right, yeah??” Undyne called down to her.

“J-Just make sure you push off fast enough!” Alphys agreed.

“ALRIGHT! PAPYRUS, YOU READY??” She grinned at her friend. You felt the blue magic wrap around the sleigh and back you three up to the peak of the roof. Undyne wrapped her arms tightly around you and you leaned back into her so to make you guys flatter.

“READY!” Papyrus agreed.

“ANNNNND…..!” Undyne started when you all heard a terribly familiar voice.

“FRISK!!” You turned in shock to see Toriel watching horrified from the crowd.

“Uh-oh.” Undyne said.

“GO? GO!!” Papyrus shouted not hearing Toriel.

“Wait Papyrus-!” Undyne tried but suddenly the sleigh shot forward and the three of you went with it. Undyne shouted and Papyrus cheered. You were so in trouble for this. You hit the ramp and you
were very nearly thrown from the impact but Undyne kept you in. You had only a moment to lock
eyes with Sans before your sleigh was barreling off down the ramp and past everyone. The
bystanders were cheering for you. You had never seen Toriel so angry.

But this was so fun!

You threw your arms up as the sleigh twisted left and right while Undyne directed where all of you
were going. Papyrus was hooting. You started laughing as wind rushed past your face and before
you knew it you three reached the peak of the hill. The sleigh slowed down only briefly and you all
stared as you realized the grave error you had made. There were trees **all over** the hill and no straight
way through.

Oh no.

“Shit! Shit SHIT!!” Undyne cried.

“UNDYNE!!” Papyrus scolded despite the circumstances as his hands were digging into the snow
but it was too late. Momentum had gotten a hold of you and with a scream the three of you sped
down the hill.

“Dodge!!” You cried out and the three of you tried desperately the twist the pathetic plastic sleigh
around the trees. There were hairpin turns. Papyrus’s magic could do nothing but make sure that
your sleigh didn’t fly and flip during the turns. You could hear the people chasing after you.

The bottom of the hill was approaching fast along with another road. The road had been cleared of
snow so there were huge snowdrifts. You would not be able to slow down in time. Undyne
summoned up her spears and was about to throw them but there were people on the sidewalk. She
had no choice but to put the spears away.

You could feel the moment you all accepted the fact that you were going to crash. Undyne’s arms
wrapped tighter around you.

“HANG ON!!” Papyrus said and the next moment you slammed into a snowdrift. You all were
thrown hard over the sidewalk and you had a horrifying feeling of weightlessness. It was like falling
into the garbage dump all over again only now you were flying. You couldn’t even bring yourself to
yell even as the ground rapidly approached. You could hear Undyne and Papyrus slamming into the
ground. You were lighter and went farther.

Suddenly you felt blue magic wrap around your soul. The heaviness of your body lightened and
when you hit the ground you barely felt any damage. You bounced and slid lightly across the snow
as if you were as light as a feather. Gravity had been lightened on your soul enough that you were
sure this is what it felt like to be on the moon.

Laughs broke from you and you spun around while in air to see Papyrus—despite being face down in
the snow—holding his hand up. The slight glow around his hand showed that he had been the one to
save you. You called out a thanks to him.

Undyne shot up from her impromptu crash-snow-angel. “That was AWESOME!” She shouted. You
were still twirling in midair. You could see people rushing down the hill. You were so grounded
from this but that had been great.

“Let’s go again!” You suggested.

“LET'S NOT.” Papyrus groaned.
"Dog"'s Day Out

Chapter Summary

Sans is up to some familiar shenanigans.

Chapter Notes

Another chapter! This chapter, plus the last chapter, make up the usual 3000+ words I usually type in one day! Enjoy!

You had never really considered in the last timeline the things your monster family had to go through in order to get to a meeting. This meeting was the same meeting where you had reunited with the monsters in the last timeline. You all needed to take a flight to get there and there had been a plane set up for your family. That was all fine but being at the airport with monsters that had never really been on an airplane before was hectic.

First Papyrus had marveled at the airplanes with Alphys. They had seen airplanes before on television but had never seen one up close or been in one. The only public transport (that you knew of) they had in the Underground was the boat. You all weren’t even on the plane yet and they were already talking about what it would be like to fly. You wondered to yourself not for the first time if Papyrus could use his blue magic on himself. Admittedly that’s not actually flying but you knew from (unfortunate) experience that it was similar. Papyrus also kept stopping to chat with incoming and outgoing passengers around the airport. If not for his voice he would’ve been hard to track.

Undyne had been charged with making sure Papyrus didn’t run off all of the time but she herself was getting distracted. There were shops inside of the airport full of tourist-y stuff from the particular city you were in. She would go in to look at clothes and would run out sometimes with an item in her hands. She forgot that humans had actual security alarms for the items (they didn’t have that in the Underground because all of the Underground shops were humble places full of trustworthy people) so you all had to deal with security three times total. And that wasn’t even counting the noise complaints.

Sans was being no help whatsoever. He would follow after his brother and the two of them would joke around. Sans discussed with Alphys and Papyrus the process of aerodynamics and how the airplanes stayed in the air but he got into the talk of everyone’s survival rate if it crashed and Alphys had started to panic. Undyne had not been happy. When Sans wasn’t following them around he would sit down and your group would move on (it was slow progress trying to traverse such a large airport with everyone running around) forgetting Sans because he fell asleep in the chairs. Papyrus would go back and carry him until he woke up. You didn’t think the chairs were comfortable enough to fall asleep in.

Toriel also had a hand in causing problems though not on purpose. She seemed to like visiting the restaurants and introducing you to silly trinkets. She had bought neck pillows and snacks for the flight despite you trying to explain that they would be given to all of you because you all were flying
first class. The monsters were also scaring many of the people because a lot of the tourists were not used to the sight of such hyper monsters. Children were baffled and amazed by the friendly creatures. You also had to deal with the pictures.

Asgore didn’t cause any problems until you all actually got onto the flight. He was extremely tall and the airplane was not. He had to hunch over for most of the way and even then his horns would occasionally scrape against the roof. The hostesses and the hosts were in a mild panic with worry that the plane would have issues. Toriel even had to lean over some because of her own horns. It didn’t help that the aisles were ridiculously small so your parents had even more issues considering they were not only tall but kind of wide. Especially Asgore.

It was a relief when you all were finally sat down and the plane took off without complications. The only issue after that was dealing with the hostesses constantly coming to hush Papyrus. Papyrus, however, managed to sweet-talk them to the point that they stopped bothering you all and became very friendly indeed. Sans had hinted that they may have been flirting with his brother. You didn’t get it because you thought they were only being friendly. Papyrus seemed to be just as oblivious as you.

The hotel rooms you were given were just as nice as the ones you had stayed in with your parents. It was even in the same hotel! Just in a different building. You hadn’t even known. There were three rooms each with two queen-sized beds and a small kitchenette. The view from them ranged from overlooking the pool (which it was too cold to swim in anyway) and overlooking the city not too far in the distance. That left sleeping arrangements to be made because it hadn’t been discussed before. You had assumed you would be staying with Asgore and Toriel but Sans, being Sans, decided to throw a wrench in the plan for the giggles.

“well.” He cut in while everyone was discussing the sleeping arrangements, “since we’re dating, frisk can sleep with me.”

You stared at him. And then you looked to your parents to see their reactions. Something funny was happening with Asgore’s face. He looked like he wanted to protest. Toriel’s wasn’t much better but she hesitated in objecting right away. You were surprised.

“It’s not like the kid hasn’t slept with him before.” Undyne pointed out, her tone considering. Sans just continued to grin neutrally.

“YES! AND I WILL BE IN THE ROOM TOO!!” Papyrus added. “WE CAN HAVE A SLEEPOVER!!”

“Er, but.” Asgore said, “This…um, isn’t your house. It is a hotel. Things are different here.” He appeared nervous.

“How so?” Papyrus asked, honestly confused.

“hotels make people get up to things.” Sans said.

“Like pillow fights!” Undyne added.

“A-and late night dates.” Alphys added with a small blush. You could tell she was thinking of previous anime you had watched together. There always seemed to be a romantic hotel episode. Usually with hot springs and accidental shenanigans. There weren’t any hot springs around here and you were fairly sure neither you or Sans would either care or want to see each other naked accidentally or not.
That was super weird to think about.

The discussion seemed to be leaning towards you being okay to stay in the skeleton brothers’ room because nobody could think of an adequate reason as to *not* let you stay until Toriel realized she would have to stay alone in the same room as Asgore. Papyrus offered to stay with them but the number of beds meant he would have to sleep with Toriel considering Asgore would be taking up his whole bed. That left Alphys and Undyne offering their extra bed (because you supposed that they had decided to sleep in the same bed) but Toriel seemed embarrassed to stay in the same room as the couple. She would’ve still accepted thought but you felt bad for letting Asgore sleep alone so you decided to stay in his room. This led to Toriel deciding that it was really okay if she stayed as long as you slept in the same bed as her.

So that left the room arrangements as: Asgore, Toriel, and you, Sans and Papyrus, and Undyne and Alphys. In the end the whole discussion didn’t matter. Sans seemed pleased though. His pranking was getting ridiculous. At least he hadn’t resorted to physical pranks in a couple of days. But that was just worrisome.

Now that all of you had your rooms finally settled, you unpacked and then decided to explore the city. It was late afternoon and the meeting was tomorrow morning. They had flown all of you in early so as to be sure that the monsters would be accommodated and no issues would spring up. So far the humans had been pleasant but the number of stares all of you were getting on your walk around the city was unnerving.

You didn’t like being back in the city. It made you think of your human mother. No matter what city you were in, staring up at the towering buildings was the same view everywhere. You wondered about the homeless that were probably here. You didn’t have enough of an allowance to give it out as you did back then.

“whoa hold up.” Sans said and your whole group stopped. He winked at you and pointed at a hot dog cart. “who’s hungry?”

“OH! I COULD EAT!” Papyrus said.

“There is a restaurant not too far away.” Toriel suggested.

“i’m really digging a ‘dog. yeah. apostrophe dog.” Sans said grinning.

“What does the apostrophe stand for?” Undyne asked.

“up dog.”

“What’s... ‘up dog’?” Alphys asked.

“not much, you?” You snickered and Alphys rolled her eyes. Papyrus groaned.

“I CHANGED MY MIND! I DON’T WANT ANY GREASY FOOD!”

“then me ‘n frisk’ll get some. come on, kid.” You followed him over to the hot dog cart. You held up two fingers. The hot dog man asked if you wanted any condiments. You shook your head before Sans could say yes and take all of the condiments from others. The hot dog man put the hot dogs on the buns and handed them to you. You smiled and then put them in your pockets. You looked at Sans.

“keep ‘em coming.” Sans said. The hot dog man hesitated and then made another one. You also stuffed that into your pockets. Your pockets were full. “more.”
“Look, if you’re not-” The hot dog man started but Sans held out money for the hot dogs. Reluctantly the man made more hot dogs. Sans took them this time and stacked them on your head. You stood there without expression on your face.

“What are you two doing?” Toriel asked.

“breaking frisk’s head dog record.” Sans said and motioned for more dogs. He received and then stacked them on your head.

“What the heck?? Why???” Undyne asked.

“it’s a game.”

“OH!! I AM GREAT AT STACKING HEAD DOGS!! I HAVEN’T DONE IT BEFORE BUT I KNOW I AM GREAT!!” Papyrus said and joined you two. “GIVE ME HOT DOGS AS WELL, HUMAN!” The hot dog man was starting to look uncomfortable. Papyrus and Sans both stacked hot dogs on your head. You weren’t sure how many you were up to but you guessed at least ten.

“You two are so weird.” Undyne said but she was grinning. “I want in on this!! Alphys! Come here and-”

“U-um, no. I’m okay watching. I’ll…I’ll keep count.” Alphys suggested.

“Yeah!! Keep count!” Undyne agreed and now you had three people stacking hot dogs on your head.

“Frisk, you look so silly!” Toriel laughed merrily.

“Indeed! May I join?” Asgore agreed.

“go for it.” Sans said. You now had four people stacking hot dogs on your head. You pulled one of the hot dogs out of your pockets and started to eat it. The hot dogs were actually pretty good.

“I-I don’t think I can keep giving you more!” The hot dog man protested.

“KEEP GOING!!” Undyne commanded.

“WE WILL PAY FOR THEM ALL, HOT DOG HUMAN!” Papyrus agreed. He had swept Sans up so Sans was now sitting on his shoulders.

“Um…twenty-one.” Alphys announced how many head dogs there were.

“What are we going to do with them when they are stacked?” Toriel asked.

“Good question.” Alphys said. She was looking nervously around at the crowd that was gathering. There were many people taking pictures. You moved onto your second hot dog.

“I’m so gonna get fired for this…” The hot dog man lamented but kept them coming.

“This is a formidable tower of head dog!” Asgore complimented looking pleased. He looked down to check and see if you were fine. You could use a drink but other than that you were enjoying yourself. This was the kind of attention you could handle. It was a good distraction.

“Ah….twenty-nine.” Alphys announced.

“check it out. we’re at frisk’s current head dog record.”
“ADD ANOTHER!” Papyrus commanded. Sans stood up on Papyrus’s broad shoulders and Undyne handed the hot dog to Asgore who reached up to give it to Sans.

“thirty.” He counted. “looks who’s the top dog now.”

“NYEH HEH HEH HEH!” Papyrus laughed, holding onto his brother’s slippered feet and stepping back.

“Another!” Toriel called.

“T-that was all of them.” The hot dog man said glumly.

You offered up your last hot dog. Looks like it would be a head dog.

“A worthy sacrifice!” Asgore chuckled and took the offering to hand to Sans. Sans placed it on the top and then was lowered back to the ground. Your crowd erupted into cheers. You finished your current hot dog.

“Impressive!” Alphys snapped a couple pictures and you could tell she was rapidly blogging them.

“Now what?” Undyne asked, staring up at the hot dog tower.

“we blow this hot dog stand.” Sans said. You stood up and moved to the left. The head dog tower toppled.

“Doggone it.” You said as everyone nearby was covered with hot dogs.

“heh heh heh good one, kid.”

“SANS!!”
A light snow was beginning to fall as you took a break from your sewing to stare out of the window. The view from your hotel room really was very pleasant. You could see the front of the hotel with its Christmas lights still up. Cars seemed to be constantly flowing through the entrance and people scurried along to get out of the cold. You were fairly warm up here in your room but you were more chilled than earlier. Sans had his jacket back with him so you were left relying on the only other thing that helped you when you were doomed to have bad dreams.

Mr. Harrington looked quite dapper in his new get-up. Toriel had plenty of access to nice materials for you to practice your sewing on and you had no problem with making a new outfit for Mr. Harrington. You had missed the opportunity to dress him up in a Christmas outfit but he looked mighty fine in his tuxedo. He even had a little bowtie with spider webs on it for design that you were certain Muffet would love if she ever saw it. He was still barefoot, though, which was strange in the fancy get up but there was really nothing you could do about that. The ‘Spoopy’ background seemed less scary than usual. What a silly Halloween decoration.

The door to the bedroom opened and you looked up to see Asgore come out of the bedroom wearing his pajamas and rubbing his towel through his beard. Both of your parents had issues when it came to bathing because of all of their fur. It took forever to dry it all. Thank goodness you didn’t have to share a bathroom with them normally. Asgore took a seat next to you on the couch with a sigh before he placed his towel in his lap and he summoned up flames into both of his hands. You reached forward and he gave you a smile and held out one of the flames to you. It landed in your palms and you grinned.

This particular flame was much like the one that Toriel had used in her fireplace when you had first arrived at her house meaning it was warm and completely harmless to you. You liked holding the flame because of the very slight resistance it gave you when you rubbed it between your hands. It would flatten and melt through your fingers and would always reform back into its normal shape. It did well to heat up your slightly chilled hands. They also relaxed your sore fingers.

Asgore used his flame instead to help dry his fur. It was a lot faster than waiting for it to air dry and it made his fur soft and poofy. You had made jokes with him about it in the past. Toriel did the same thing with her own fur. It was useful because the fire magic didn’t burn anything.

You cupped the flame and brought it to your face to feel its balminess. “Oh-ho! Look at how handsome Mr. Harrington is!” Asgore said and with his free hand he lifted Mr. Harrington to spin him around and get a good look at him. You smiled proudly and Mr. Harrington looked quite smug indeed. He was really pulling off that outfit. “You have become so good at sewing! Will you make something for me next?” He was teasing you. You put the flame on your head (where it stayed) and you gripped his sleeve imploringly. You would take him up on his offer. He guffawed. “Wonderful! I expect a full suit by Wednesday!”

“You can’t pay me in flames.” You pointed out with a laugh. He pretended to check his pockets and then gave you a fake frown.

“Ahh, I am afraid I do not have my wallet.” He lamented.

You narrowed your eyes and then pointed to his beard. He gasped. “You think I am lying?” He patted his beard and nothing popped out. “See! No money!”
“No suit.” You huffed managing to bite back your grin. Asgore sighed heavily and slumped down in his seat.

“Oh dear. I suppose I must wear a non-Frisk suit then.”

“A tragedy.” You said.

Another sigh. It sounded even more burdened. “Indeed.” You were both silent for a long stretch of a minute during which the flame on your head fizzed out. The moment it did (making a little popping sound along the way which you knew was an optional noise that Asgore made it do just for fun) you both started giggling. Your dad could be so silly sometimes.

Asgore returned to drying his fur after you two calmed down. You took back Mr. Harrington and turned on his light. He looked pleased and you were as well. “So Frisk. Where is Tori?”

Toriel had gone out with all of your other friends to drink, apparently. They wanted to check out a human bar. You didn’t see the appeal and you had a feeling that you were possibly missing out but your friends were all admittedly adults so that seemed like something even monsters would do. Sans hung out at New Grillby’s enough, after all, even if you had never seen him drink alcohol. You wondered if there was much difference in human and monster alcohol. Monsters didn’t seem to find it necessary to eat human food either way because of their physical properties but they enjoyed it well enough. Perhaps it was the same with human alcohol?

You informed Asgore of her whereabouts.

“I see. So I am stuck with babysitting.” He was only joking and you understood but that was a little annoying. You were thirteen and you had practically raised yourself. It wouldn’t bother you at all if Asgore decided to join everyone else down at the hotel bar. You currently weren’t allowed to do much considering you were grounded from television and your computer because of the sledding incident. Toriel even had Alphys turn off your texting and internet access on your phone (which you didn’t know that could be done but apparently so). You couldn’t even use your jetpack. That left you with limited options but you would find ways to entertain yourself.

You told Asgore that he could go join the others but he shook his head. “Fret not, little one. I am not bothered by it.” His hand came up to rub your hair affectionately. “I often was left watching over Chara and Asriel when Toriel went shopping.” You barely hid your wince at the sound of the names of those children. Asgore appeared to be thinking of the past again. “I wish you could have met your siblings, Frisk.” He murmured wistfully. “I am sure you would’ve all gotten along well. Playing in the garden…having a real family…It….Well.”

Your dad looked close to tears. You couldn’t look at him. You wanted to comfort him but the shackles of your guilt held you back. You disliked when those children’s names were brought up. You wanted to tell Asgore and Toriel the truth behind the fates of their children…but it was more of a kindness not to. You were aware that in past timelines Flowey had contacted his parents and they were accepting of him but you didn’t doubt that it was painful on all sides. And you didn’t even wish to begin to tell them all about Chara. You were too cowardly. So instead you sat there quietly staring at your lap.

“…I’m sorry, Frisk.” Asgore said and you looked up at his sad smile. “I know it is not pleasant to talk of ‘what-ifs’ and possibilities. Forgive me for I am an old monster. I tend to get wistful.” You leaned against him in a show of forgiveness, tucking your hands between your thighs so he would not see their shaking. He placed his large paw on your head and mussed up your hair. “Tell me, young one,” he made an effort to change the subject, “are you prepared for tomorrow?” You looked up at him. “It is the first time the public will be seeing our meeting!”
You shrugged. You hadn’t liked the meeting in the last timeline but that was mostly because you had felt the tension your parents held. They didn’t like the monsters at all and talking about them had probably been distasteful. You didn’t like all of the interviews either but perhaps with your parents not directing everything you would do better.

This time you at least had a better idea of what would be asking and discussed. You would make an attempt to be more vocal tomorrow. Many of the things you had stuttered out had been misconstrued by the protesters to “monster rights”. It seemed not everyone in the world agreed with having monsters around. Many of the arguments were worry towards children. Horribly there had been a question about the “mysterious disappearances” on Mt. Ebott. It would be difficult discussing that again.

“There will be…mean people.” You said softly. “Not everyone will like monsters.”

“No.” Asgore agreed sadly. He held you to his side. He was very warm. “And you must be prepared for that, my child. Come,” He surprised you by ushering you to the small table near the kitchen. He sat opposite in the (thankfully) metal chair and faced you seriously. “Let us practice. I will need to be cruel to you but it is just to prepare you.” You nodded seriously and shifted into a more concentrated pose. The next few minutes were spent with Asgore assuming a rather rude persona. He would ask you question after question and sometimes would blow off or blatantly insult you. Your lack of speech skills as well as your age were brought up. Possibility of mind control and Stockholm Syndrome came up as well (you had to look up the last one in the last timeline because you had not known what it was. This time you did. You were surprised that Asgore knew what it was). There were times you felt attacked and wanted to shrink away but Asgore would encourage you. He reminded you of Undyne’s fighting lesson: “Face me with your eyes open and your head up and you will be ready for any attack I will throw at you.” It made sense considering Asgore had trained Undyne.

An hour passed and you were mentally and emotionally exhausted by the brutal interrogation. Even the actual meeting hadn’t been as tiring. You were ready for some food and sleep. But Asgore praised you for a job well done. “Never forget, Frisk,” he reached forward and gently cupped your face in his hand, “that your family and friends shall be here for you. You need not face everything alone. You are not alone, my child.” You nodded in understanding and your stomach growled loudly. Asgore laughed heartily and stood. “Come! Let us see what there is to snack on!”

Chapter End Notes

I'm gonna admit that I sort of kind of bailed out of this chapter. I honestly didn't know how to rehash a meeting I kind of sort of wrote in "Frisk" and I didn't feel like approaching it again. Instead have the "Asgore trains Frisk in politics" prompt (even if it probably wasn't as descriptive as you were probably wanting, I'm sorry prompter). I will definitely be having more "Ambassador Frisk" just not now. Later, I promise.

Um...Well I have a VERY EXCITING next two chapters planned that I sincerely hope you'll enjoy. It is VERY EXCITING. My friend Otter (who I bounce ideas off of, if you've been following my tumblr) ALREADY WANTS TO CRY. So. Get ready. ;3 I will PROBABLY have another chapter out tonight so check again in a few hours. Maybe even TWO CHAPTERS.
Gaster

Chapter Summary

It seemed you had stumbled across something dangerous. Again. It really was the story of your life.

Chapter Notes

I'm kind of nervous because I tried something here...
Anyway 5000 fucking words. I hope you guys like this. I'll read this myself and fix any mistakes along the way.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

This morning you woke up feeling strange. It wasn’t anything you could really explain except something felt…off. It was similar to that feeling of just having your phone in your hand and then realizing that you had placed it somewhere without thinking. It was that unerring certainty you were right and then ended up being wrong. But you couldn’t understand what it was. What were you right about? And what is it that you were wrong about? It left you feeling unbalanced.

You stared at Sans fast asleep next to you on the small mattress and tried to place the feeling. Today was Saturday and it was February. But tucked under the covers with the skeleton you couldn’t shake the feeling you were wrong. But you were right. Yesterday you had school. So today was Saturday. There was a sick twisting in your stomach. Something was wrong.

“Sans.” You called softly. There was a thin line of drool running from the corner of his mouth. He didn’t stir. You didn’t recall falling asleep next to him. You had been certain that he had decided to stay up all night. He’d had a gig at the local hotel with a stand-up act. He would usually stay there until late and then would pass out on the couch rather than wake you up. He liked to drink at the hotel on those nights because it made him funnier. So why was he in bed? He was even half-dressed which meant he had bothered to take off his clothes to go to bed. He never did that unless he planned to sleep in the bed.

“Sans?” You tried again. You grabbed one of his ribs and shook him a little. He yawned widely and stretched before slumping back down and opening his eyes. The lights in his eyes always flickered on last like the lights themselves were blinking before they would slide to look at you.

“sup?” He asked. “nightmare?” You sat up and looked around the room feeling uncomfortable. You had read that gut feelings shouldn’t be ignored. You tugged on the hem of your nightgown and stared at the treadmill before facing back towards him. You shook your head.

“…What’s today?” You asked.

“that’s what you woke me for?” He yawned again and rolled away from you. “kid, com’on. it’s not even noon yet.” You were insistent though and shook him. Sans turned back to you and gave you a hard stare, studying you. Finally he relented, “it’s sunday.”
You shook your head. “Saturday.”

definitely sunday.” That wasn’t right. You were beginning to worry. He had noticed and sat up. “’s the matter?” He asked sounding more awake. You hadn’t let go of his rib yet. You were more confused than scared but this didn’t seem right. Surely he was mistaken? But you felt like you were. “frisk.” He said again.

“…Saturday?” You asked even quieter than before. Sans studied you and didn’t respond. You looked away from him. “What did we do yesterday?”

“we went into the underground.” Sans answered neutrally. “to check on the core with alphys.” You didn’t remember that at all. You were starting to get scared. You slowly looked back at him and your fear must have shown on your face because his eyes darkened some as you shook your head.

“I…I don’t remember…” You said.

“…you didn’t do anything?” He checked. You shook your head again. His hand came up to cover his mouth as he thought. Why did he remember but you didn’t? Why didn’t you remember yesterday at all? Had something happened? Sans gently disengaged your fingers and stood up to go get dressed. You stared at the bed while he changed. When he finished he tossed your clothes –you didn’t remember wearing them at all yesterday- at you. “get dressed. i’ll meet you downstairs.”

You grabbed his arm to halt him, though. “What happened?”

He was smiling but it wasn’t his happy smile. He looked more troubled than angry which was good. “nothing significant. that’s the problem.” He answered and you released him. When he had left the room you went ahead and changed into your clothes from yesterday before leaving the room. Papyrus was up and was chatting with Sans. Sans was putting up a good normal front. Papyrus greeted you cheerfully.

“WOW. YOU BOTH ARE ALREADY DRESSED! GOING ON A…” Papyrus gave a slightly-embarrassed smirk, “DATE?”

“we’re headed back to the core.” Sans said. The fact that he wasn’t even trying to play your trip as a date exposed a bit of his no-nonsense attitude that he was hiding. You went to the fridge and dug out a glass of milk to at least get something in you before you go. You didn’t doubt Sans already had snacks packed for the trip. He could work very quickly if he wanted to.

“What for?”

“just checking.”

Papyrus whipped off his apron –he hadn’t even started cooking- and put his fists on his hips. “I’LL JOIN YOU IF IT’S NOT A DATE THEN!”

“What for?” Sans asked.

“BECAUSE I’M BORED!!” Papyrus said without any shame. “EVERYONE IS BUSY TODAY AND THERE’S NO SCHOOL!!” You had no idea where Undyne and Alphys were. Did they go somewhere after yesterday? Were you supposed to be aware of this? You were still shaken that you had lost a whole day.

Sans looked to you then shrugged. “’s fine with me.”

“GREAT! LET ME GET MY SHOES!!” He ran towards the opening to the kitchen, spun excitedly
around in a couple of circles, and then dashed out to get his boots. You drank your glass of milk and watched Sans.

He signed at you: “Girlfriend. Remember?”

You shook your head. You had no idea where Alphys and Undyne were. He didn’t seem surprised. You signed back quickly before Papyrus could rejoin you both: “Need know?” He shrugged. It wasn’t important then.

Papyrus rejoined you two and he carried with him the small bag that you had gotten for Christmas. It looked like it now contained your snacks. You held your arms up and he handed you the bag to carry. You stuffed a couple of the popato chisps into you pockets and the three of you departed. Papyrus kept up a steady stream of chatter as you looked at your phone. Sans was much better at pretending than you were so you allowed him to distract Papyrus with jokes as you looked at your phone.

There were messages from Toriel and Asgore that you didn’t remember seeing. The two of them were currently staying in two different cities: Toriel dealing with leftover legal action of your adoption to make sure it was all settled and Asgore setting up agreements with the closest city about getting cable in your house. Sans and Papyrus had their own cable that you were fairly sure was stolen or hacked but nobody else in Ebott had human cable. So only monster channels were shown…which meant it was mostly Mettaton shows because no matter what human shows Mettaton was on, he managed to get a copy onto monster tv.

There were conversations typed out that you had no memory of. But at least they were alright. You looked up and something grey caught your eye. You turned to look and saw a monster you had never seen before. You had seen plenty of monsters in your adventures and your life in Ebott but you had never seen a monster like this before. They were completely normal in terms of monsters but they were completely greyscale. They also seemed frozen in their spot not moving at all.

You stopped and stared. You had never been nervous to talk to strangers before so you walked straight up to the monster. When you called out a soft hello they didn’t hesitate in responding, “Ah, to be young again. I would have loved to have lived here. So lively. It’s too bad about-” Whatever they were about to say was cut off as you heard a strange noise and they quickly faded away. You shot a look towards your friends but they hadn’t seen a thing. Nobody had. Unnerved, you hurried to catch up to the skeleton brothers.

That wasn’t your last encounter with a greyscale monster. They all looked very different from each other but vaguely similar to other monsters you had seen before. Colored ones, you meant. It was like they were relatives. They always said something short about their problems that all seemed like non-sequiturs before suddenly fading away. Nobody else noticed anything weird. Not even Sans or Papyrus. They never even noticed that you wandered away from them to even talk to these strange monsters.

You were relieved when you finally were back in Mt. Ebott. The closest way down to the Core was through Asgore’s old castle in the capital and to just backtrack through a familiar route. You had just been down here apparently yesterday but you only last remembered being down here months ago. It wasn’t necessary for you to check up on the Core but you chose to join apparently.

The Core was still in great condition so the monsters hadn’t abandoned it when they had moved to the Overworld. Instead the engineers (and Alphys) that worked to maintain it rerouted the power to power Ebott for everyone. There were still power bills to pay but it the machine never broke down with the proper maintenance it received. Although some monsters needed to stay in Snowdin to make sure to send ice to the Core so it wouldn’t overheat. Inspections on it happened monthly while
the monsters explored other options for power. They were particularly interested in solar power considering most of the monsters had never seen the sun and the thought of it being used for power was fascinating.

You hadn’t seen any of the greyscale monsters since entering Mt. Ebott. You were sweating through Sans’s jacket and wished you were back in the cold. You took off the jacket and handed it instead to Sans to wear for now so you wouldn’t have to lug it around. You were wearing your favorite striped sweater today. It felt nostalgic and ominous. Why had you chosen this particular sweater yesterday?

“SO. WHAT ARE WE DOWN HERE FOR?” Papyrus asked looking around the mechanical room. The wires and buttons still hummed and beeped like a song. It made you vaguely think of that game “Mortal Kombat”.

“we were bored.” Sans said and wandered left and right seemingly at random but you had a feeling he understood the readings a lot more than he let on. You and Papyrus wandered together on the walkways past all of the lava. It was sweltering. You didn’t understand how these skeletons could sweat but only when nervous rather than because of the heat.


You gave him a reassuring smile and then paused. There was a door. There was a door where there had never been a door. You had gone through these halls hundreds, maybe thousands, of times over various timelines and you had never seen a door here. It was possible that maybe a room had been added to this part of the Core but the door was wooden. Who would put a wooden door in an area where it would be surrounded by lava?

You grabbed Papyrus’s hand and tugged lightly on it to draw his attention back to you. “Door?” You asked, pointing. Both Sans (who had rejoined you two at some point) and Papyrus looked at where you were pointing.

“…WHERE?” Papyrus asked. You looked at him in confusion and pointed harder.

Sans was sweating. “kid, there’s, uh, nothing there. just a wall.” His eyes were darting back and forth between the door and you. Couldn’t they see it? You stared harder at the door. It seemed ominous now. The wood looked old and water damaged in places. You were inexorably drawn to it. What was in there? Why were you the only one able to see it?

You let go of Papyrus’s hand and approached the door. “I DON’T UNDERSTAND. HUMAN, WHAT DOOR?” Papyrus asked again but you ignored him. Sans’s hand shot out and grabbed your wrist. His hand was surprisingly tight around yours and you looked at him. His eyes couldn’t seem to focus properly on the door. It was like when you tried to put two similarly charged ends of a magnet together. They repelled each other. It was the opposite for you.

“…that doesn’t seem like a good idea.” He told you. You didn’t move and just stared him down until he released you.

“You’re a door.” You said simply and moved back towards it. Before either could stop you, you opened the door and entered. You heard Papyrus’s loud gasp and turned to wave at him when the door slammed shut. You jumped a little and then the banging on the other side began. You could faintly hear Papyrus and Sans both calling for you. The door hadn’t been nearly thick enough to muffle them. You couldn’t hear a sound other than that. Your eyes darted down to the doorknob but there wasn’t one.
You were trapped.

There was nothing for it. You turned away from the door and took in what was in front of you. It was a short hallway and it led into a room. There was a figure further in the room. The walls were completely smooth and blank. The hairs on the back of your neck stood up. Something about this situation very much reminded you of the Amalgamates. You took a steadying breath and walked forward.

The figure in front of you was at least as tall as Papyrus and was dressed in black. Its eyes weren’t open. It seemed like its body didn’t have a defined shape leaving it mostly a tall blob. However you could make out a something like a black lab coat and a white turtleneck. Two circles that may have been hands hung in front of the body. The skin of the figure –was it even skin?- was completely white with one jagged back scar leading up from one eye and the other scar down below the other eye. It didn’t seem to notice you until you stepped out of the hallway and into the room. Then its eyes snapped open. They were completely black. One of the eyes didn’t open completely.

“The Re Yo U Ar E.” The voice was distorted like it was trying to speak through static. You couldn’t understand it but you had heard that voice before. It had called you on your cell phone before. In the air around the figure little symbols popped into existence and then burst like bubbles as it spoke. You recognized those symbols from Sans’s work.

Your heart was pounding in your chest. Your hands shook a little and you signed: “You. Who?” You didn’t expect the creature to know what you were saying but if it was using hands to talk maybe it would understand.

“h An D S. Inter Es Ti Ng.” The creature replied. You understood it a bit more. The shape of the figure was becoming more solid rather than gelatinous. “C H Ar A.” You took a step back at that name and shook your head once.

“Not me.” You said. You also replied with your hands.

“Please.” Was all it replied and suddenly you felt the magic of a monster summon your soul. You hadn’t felt it in a long time. Your body became secondary to your control as a majority of your mind focused in on the little heart that represented your entire being. The room around you was black so the figure stood out even sharper. It was smiling. It didn’t appear to have teeth. You could feel your body trembling in trepidation even if it was only vaguely. You didn’t even have a stick to throw to see if you could distract your enemy. You, as your soul, was trapped in a certain space that you could not move from without breaking the “rules” through sheer determination.

“What…are you doing?” You asked. It was even stranger talking when you were a soul. Your mouth didn’t actually move when you talked. Sound just transferred between souls.

“My n Ame I S Ga Ste R.” The monster said instead. You swallowed. You had already guessed who this monster was. What did he want from you? Couldn’t you both just talk in peace? “C H Ar A. It H A S Bee N A Lon G Ti Me. Yo U Know Al Re Dy Wh O I Am. I Know Thi S. Sans Ha S T Old Yo U.” Suddenly Gaster glitched out. It was like someone had hit a television screen distorting the picture. A shriek rang out from it. Every hair on your body stood on end. From the glitch, perfect squares of glitchy material shot at you. You soul dodged left and your body went with it. You dodged around the attack but they were random and seemed to appear in random places. You felt like you were fighting Omega Flowey all over again.

Then the attacks stopped and it was your turn. Gaster stopped glitching out. You shook your head. “I’m not Chara.” You tried again.
“I-I-I-I” Gaster said and his neck twitched with each repetition before his talking returned to normal. You were terrified. Were Sans and Papyrus still outside? Listening closely you could still hear banging. The door wasn’t far but this wasn’t your realm. You weren’t even sure you were in the same timeline. “I Hav E W A It Ed Lon G. An D I Hav E Watc Hed Yo U On Ma Ny-Ny-Ny-Ny T-T-T-Time Lines.”

This time on his attack when he glitched out, the words he spoke in whatever language he spoke did not pop. They flew at you and exploded. The buzzing sound they made worried you. You had a feeling that getting hit by any of his attacks would be a Terrible Mistake. It made dodging even harder when there was a limited amount of space your body could move. Gaster stood in the middle of the room and would not move except to track your movements. The whole of his body turned to follow you. Even though you could see his soul, his body looked frayed. Is that what being erased from time did to a person? You didn’t want to get hit.

You refused to attack him. Instead you tried pleading. “Please. Let me leave. Sans can help you!”

“Yo U Chil D. Yo U D O N O T Und Ers Tand. Sans Can Not Hel P M E.” Gaster’s face did not change while he talked. It was hard to tell over the sound of the static but he seemed almost a little sad. Everything about him was a little sad but you could tell he honestly cared for Sans. “Th-Th-Th-Tha T M A Ch Ine. It W Ill Ne Ver B E Fi X Ed. I Hav E S E En It.”

His attack was harsher this time, almost angrier. You desperately dodged, sometimes only just managing not to be brushed by these distortions of time. The room around you fluctuated causing you to stumble but you rolled out of the way in the time to not be hurt. Nonetheless you lost a tiny bit of health from the fall. You winced.

Pleading wouldn’t work. You tried talking to him again. “What do you want from me?”


The cycle of attacks continued. The more he talked, the more emotional he seemed to get. And the more emotional he got, the faster his attacks became and the more the room warped. You had to keep him talking. Instead of attacking, you drank some Sea Tea. You felt your soul become faster.

“We Hav E Gr Own Ti-Ti Red. Lonely. Bu T Yo U. Yo U Ca N F I X Th Is.”

You refused to fight him. You were tired. It had been a long time since you had faced an enemy this intense.

“Yo U. Wit H Yo Ur H Uma N S O U L. Yo U Ca N Contr Ol Time.”

What did that have to do with anything? You heard Papyrus scream your name. The banging on the door was getting louder. To them were they just banging on a wall? Could they hear anything happening? The static was getting louder. Your ears were ringing and your head was starting to ache from the constant white noise.

“Yo Ur D E T E R M I N A T I O N. It Is Del Icio Us C H Ar A.”

Why did he think that you were Chara? If he really could see all of time, why did he believe you were Chara? Was it possible for someone who was omniscient to not know? Or did he just not know your name?

“What do you want from me?” You asked again desperately. Sweat was pouring from your head and stung your eyes. You closed them focusing instead on your soul. The static was louder. You almost couldn’t hear him anymore over the sound.

“Yo Ur Bod Y.” You stared at him in horror. “Yo Ur Bod Y W ll Al Low Me To Be-Be-Be-Be Com E Phy S I Cal A gain. I, An D Ever Y Ot Her Monst Er Wh O Disa Ppeared Wit H Me Sh All Ex-Ex-Ex-Ex Ist A gain. Yo U Ar E A G OO D Chil D. Yo U Wan T To S A V E Ever Y One, Rig Ht?”

You shook your head. No! You had your body taken over enough over the timelines! You couldn’t…You couldn’t do that to your friends. You were finally happy. Nobody even remembered those monsters. Would it be selfish of you to reject him?

“for once in your life think selfishly.”

You felt your determination solidify in you. Sans was right; you needed to be selfish once in a while. You couldn’t always make the difficult decisions. You didn’t want to die or stop existing. This was your life. Gaster had made his choices. He would need to suffer the consequences.

“No!” You said. Your fists were clenched and you widened your stance to steady yourself. His eyes widened.

“No?” His body began to glitch out again. “No? N O? n O? N oooooooOO?” His voice was becoming so distorted you couldn’t understand him. You could barely see him anymore. The sound of static was deafening. Your hands covered your ears and suddenly Gaster began to shriek. You fell to your knees. You felt like your head was going to explode. Then he stopped and you looked at him. He was frowning at you with an amount of pity in his face that sickened your stomach. He was the most solid you had ever seen him. “You misunderstood.” That wasn’t his voice. That was…!

“SINCE WHEN WERE YOU THE ONE IN CONTROL?”

Lasers shot out at you from all sides. You barely slid out from most but one managed to slice across your arm. It burned. You cried out for help as the lasers kept coming at you. You couldn’t feel your arm. You fell to the ground and felt the world around you shifting when the door exploded inward and three sets of bones flew past you. Gaster disappeared and the room suddenly righted itself. You heard your name being called but you couldn’t focus.

There were hands on you. You tried to concentrate on the sound of the voices calling your name but you were more worried about why you couldn’t feel your arm. You lifted your head and saw Papyrus and Sans talking to each other over you. You had never seen either of them so terrified. The closest you had come to see that look on Sans’s face was when-

The room around you wobbled and all three of you watched as a different setting materialized around you. You recognized this lighting and the sound of those bells tolling. You could hear Sans’s cold voice. You should be burning in hell.

“SANS, WHAT-“ Papyrus spoke and it brought back memories of Snowdin. He always reminded you of your first meeting with him.

The room shifted again and the three of you were in snow. You shuddered at the sudden cold. The numb feeling was crawling up your arm.
“what is this?” Sans asked.

“SANS!! THEIR ARM!! LOOK!” You and Sans both tried to look. Sans made a horrified noise and you looked to see your arm glitching out much like Gaster’s. Were you…being erased? Many thoughts flew through your mind and the world around you jumped from place to place. You couldn’t concentrate. You heard Sans shouting at Papyrus not to let you go.

“-hold on! if we let go, we’ll lose them!” You had never heard him so scared before. Tears were forming in your eyes. You were going to be erased from time too. You just wanted to go home.

(Toriel’s house in the Ruins appeared. And then your home in Ebott. Then Asgore’s home in Ebott. Then your apartment with your human parents. Then Toriel’s home in Ebott again.)

“focus, kid! listen to my voice!” Sans said and his hand found your cheeks. Your mind was foggy with memories. Different timelines were colliding in your head. So many scenes were familiar to you. Dust was everywhere and then your friends were surrounding you. You wanted to go home.

You gave a sob. “I’m scared!”

“WE HAVE YOU, FRISK! DON’T GIVE UP! WE’RE HERE FOR YOU!” Papyrus held you close to his body. The scent of him reminded you of cooking in his kitchen and suddenly you were in there.

“…this is real.” Sans realized. His voice was trembling. You could feel Papyrus shaking but his hold on you was steady. You took comfort in it. Sans turned back to you and made you look at him.

“Frisk. Think of my lab. Can you understand me? The lab.”

You three appeared in Alphys’s lab in the Underground. And then the True lab.

“My lab!” Sans tried again. “Remember!” You thought of the soft couch and that night you and Sans confessed your pasts to each other. You appeared there. You thought you heard a shocked gasp. No, you couldn’t think of that night. Think of more recent. The lab shifted and nobody but you three were in it. “good! this is good!” Sans released you and dashed to the cabinets. The numb feeling was reaching your heart. You gasped for air. You were losing sensation in your body. You wept harder.

“SANS!! IF WE JUMP AGAIN-!” Papyrus tried.

“i know! i know! just…!” Then Sans rejoined you and he grabbed your hand. He placed a rough metal thing in your numb hand and wrapped your fingers around it. You only knew this by watching it happen. As soon as it touched you, you yelped and tried to toss it away. It burned your hand. It was too hot to hold.

“FRISK!” Papyrus cried.

“n-no, you have to hold it! it will keep you in this time! frisk, listen!” You sobbed at the pain but kept your hand wrapped around the metal. He tucked your arm against your chest and Papyrus cradled you. It felt like you were holding a hot iron. But you were no longer jumping. Sans ran off and you heard him start digging through his stuff. You were losing consciousness. The ringing in your ears was getting louder again. Fear spiked through you. Gaster could be anywhere. He could be inside the room with you.

“Mommy…!” You whimpered and curled up as tight as you could against Papyrus’s chest. “Daddy…someone help me…I wanna go home!”

Papyrus covered your form with his. “I HAVE YOU. DO NOT WORRY. I, THE GREAT
“PAPYRUS, SHALL PROTECT YOU. DO NOT CRY.” He seemed like he was crying himself. It was like he was trying to shield you from the world. “THINK OF HAPPY THINGS! WE WILL GO SLEDDING AGAIN AFTER THIS! S-SANS WILL EVEN MAKE SNOWMEN WITH US! I WILL TAKE US FOR A DRIVE TO THE NEAREST MOVIE THEATRE! A-A-AND YOU CAN WATCH NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS WITH ME FOR THE TWELFTH TIME!”

“stay conscious, kiddo.” Sans said from wherever he was. You heard glass clinking together. “we’ll fix you up. we’re here for you always, you got that? tori would kill us if you were hurt.”

Papyrus laughed wetly. “THE KING AND QUEEN WOULD NEVER FORGIVE US!”

“we’d be royally screwed.” You gave a sob of laughter. Papyrus didn’t even protest the joke.

You were rolled back onto your back in Papyrus’s arms and you opened your eyes to see Sans above you holding a mysterious liquid in a beaker. He was sweating bullets. Both he and Papyrus were drenched. You could see them both trembling. “Medicine?” You asked.

“let’s hope this works. here goes…everything.” Sans poured the liquid onto the spot where you were hit.

You had never screamed so loudly in your life. Your voice had never reached that level before. It echoed around the small lab and you thrashed in pain. Unconsciousness was a mercy. For a split second you wondered if your grandparents were going to scold you for being so loud before you succumbed to the darkness.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter will be fun too. I hope that Gaster's way of speaking wasn't too fucked up. (I am SO sorry to any non-native English speakers who are reading this). If you honestly can't understand it I will add a translation on the bottom.

On a completely unrelated end note:
Holy hell guys the feedback for this is so astounding. TMFF is almost completely caught up in Comments with Frisk even if half of those are my comments responding. I'm so jfdsla;fdjs;afjidasofha;sdva. Yes That about sums it up.
And because I keep getting questions:
1. YES. GIVE ME ANY AND ALL FANART. EVERYTHING. I WANNA SEE ALL. DID YOU DO A DOODLE. DOODLE THAT SHIT OVER TO ME.
2. Follow me on tumblr (tsukithewolf.tumblr.com) for bullshit. And random thought updates on the story. But mostly bullshit. Or don't follow me. I'm not the boss of you.

EDIT:
Okay so now that I'm MUCH FARTHER AHEAD in both this story and Sans's side story, it's come to my attention that it's absolutely necessary for the reader to also read Sans's side story (Through Hollow Eyes) starting from this point. It was kind of an accident that things ended up that way, and I'm sorry for any troubles it causes the reader, but if you want the full effect I'm afraid you must also read Through Hollow Eyes . . . pretty much between every chapter. Again I'm so sorry. I never planned it that way.
You woke up gradually like a machine powering on. First thing you registered was the beating of your heart and then the pain in your arm and head. Your throat felt ripped apart much like it had felt when you had been sick. The light that managed to get through the thin layer of skin on your eyelids seemed piercing as your head throbbed along with your heartbeat. Next to come back online was your senses. You could feel bony hands wrapping something around your arm. There was a faint smell of ozone in the air and a comforting scent of bones. Your head was pillowed in someone’s lap, you realized. Judging by the lack of any sort of padding it was most likely Papyrus. His hand was in your hair which meant Sans was probably patching you up. Your brain finally began to register what you were hearing.

“-just passed out.” That was Sans’s voice. It took a moment to recognize it. “fuck, i’m not surprised. didn’t think it would hurt that much. that scream…”

“I HAVE NEVER HEARD FRISK SOUND LIKE THAT BEFORE.” Papyrus responded and you winced even though his voice was lowered. You could still hear white-noise in the back of your mind. They noticed your wince and both quieted. The hand on your head gently smoothed your bangs out of your face. “FRISK?” Papyrus asked in his quietest voice which was still loud but easier to deal with.

Reluctantly you opened your eyes. You couldn’t have been out too long. You could still see the moisture on both of their heads from their earlier panic. There were stress lines under both of their eyes and both mustered up smiles for you. You hated having your eyes open but you managed to return the smile. They both looked relieved.

“hey kid. how’re you feelin’?” Sans asked. He looked down and tied off the bandage around your arm. You looked at it questioningly. “don’t worry. nothin’ a good healing won’t fix.” He promised.
“Headache.” You rasped and then coughed. Your throat was completely raw. You rubbed at it with your hand.

“YOU, UM, SCREAMED. LOUDLY.” Papyrus explained. You turned to look at him. “IS THERE SOME WATER…?” He asked and Sans nodded towards the sink. Very gently Papyrus slid out from under you and placed your head on the one pillow the couch had. You realized then that you were on the couch in Sans’s lab.

Sans was staring at you. You blinked at him tiredly. He carefully tapped his forehead to yours and breathed, “…what happened to you, frisk?” You didn’t answer. The lights of his eyes bore into yours. “i haven’t seen anything like that since…”

“You’re not helping the…‘dating’ label.” You whispered back, avoiding the topic. Sans scoffed at you and glared slightly, not liking that you were dodging his question. You two could see through each other too easily.

“HERE, FRISK.” Papyrus came back and he was carrying a glass of water. You hauled yourself into a sitting position as Sans sat back on his small stool. Your arm ached but it wasn’t too badly damaged. You had certainly had worse. You took the glass from him and carefully drank. The water was freezing because of the pipes being cold but it soothed your throat even as it made your teeth hurt.

Sans stood up and glanced around. He walked over to the machine and peeked under the cover before returning to you two. “i’ll be right back. you two stay here.”

“WHERE ARE YOU GOING?” Papyrus asked. He was still shaken up, you could tell. You weren’t surprised. While you and Sans were relatively used to time shenanigans, Papyrus didn’t remember anything of the sort. He wasn’t used to his life being this abnormal. You placed one of your hands on his forearm comfortingly. He grabbed your hand and held it tightly in his. It appeared that even the ever-optimistic Papyrus had things that rattled his bones.

“gonna look around.” Sans looked nervous again. The next words he said sounded like they were forced out of him, “who knows when we are.”

“WHEN?” Papyrus questioned.

Sans didn’t respond and shot you a look before he started climbing the stairs to the door. Neither you nor Papyrus moved until you heard the door shut. You looked to Papyrus who was watching where Sans had disappeared nervously before facing you. He seemed downcast.

“I KNOW…” He started, “THAT SANS NEVER TOLD ME MUCH. SANS DIDN’T TELL ANYBODY MUCH OF ANYTHING.” He looked around the room. He appeared lost. “BUT I HADN’T REALIZED HOW MUCH I DIDN’T KNOW ABOUT MY BROTHER.” Your heart clenched in pain. You opened your mouth to try to soothe him but he faced you grinning. “I’M GLAD HE HAS SOMEONE WHO HE CAN SHARE HIS SECRETS WITH! FRISK, I’M REALLY GLAD YOU’RE OUR FRIEND! AND THAT YOU’RE DATING MY BROTHER!” Papyrus sat down on the couch next to you. You leaned into him and he leaned a little into you. “IF I CAN’T BE THE ONE HE GOES TO…THEN I’M GLAD IT’S YOU. YOU’VE ALWAYS BEEN A GREAT FRIEND!”

You closed your eyes and tapped the side of your head against his arm. You were holding his hand tightly. “He loves you.” You tried to reassure.

“I KNOW.” Papyrus said and there wasn’t even a hint of doubt in his voice. It relieved you. “SANS
HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO PROTECT ME. JUST LIKE I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO
PROTECT HIM. I JUST…I WISH HE WOULD RELY ON ME MORE.” He sighed and you
admired him for his good attitude despite everything that he was currently going through. Suddenly
he looked determined. “THIS TIME, HE CAN’T HIDE FROM ME! HE’LL HAVE TO TELL
ME!” He turned to you and then hesitated, “…UNLESS YOU’LL TELL ME?” He seemed almost
hopeful. Sans being reluctant to tell Papyrus anything was obvious, you supposed.

You pulled your knees to your chest. “…It’s not my secret.” You admitted.

“TRUE.” Papyrus agreed and then both of you froze as the door upstairs opened. Had Sans already
come back? The footsteps that travelled down the steps were familiar and then Sans stepped into
view. He was dressed differently and his jacket was missing. He paused on the steps and stared at
both of you.

“um…..” He said sounding confused.

“SANS!” Papyrus called, “YOU’RE ALREADY BACK! DID YOU FIND WHAT YOU WERE
LOOKING FOR?”

Sans was quiet for a very long time. You could practically hear the cogs turning in his mind. You
had a feeling that this wasn’t your Sans but then who would he be? Why else would Sans look so
baffled? You decided to speak up. “What’s today?” You asked.

Papyrus opened his mouth to answer but you squeezed his hand and he shut it. Sans’s eyes darted to
you. “…saturday.” The smaller skeleton said. You stared at him. Why was it Saturday? Had the
three of you jumped time so much? What did it mean for everyone if clearly the past versions of you
still existed? Was this Gaster’s doing? You swallowed thickly. Sans opened his mouth, hesitated, and
then asked slowly, “so…sup?”

“I’LL TELL YOU WHAT IS ‘SUP’, SANS!” Papyrus said. “FREAKY THINGS ARE WHAT IS
‘SUP’!” He seemed affronted suddenly. Sans looked to you for answers. Or rather, past Sans looked
to you. Where was your Sans?

You were going to feel stupid for saying this but you did anyway: “I’m the legendary fartmaster.”
Apparently Sans had a couple of secret code words to recognize time travelers. He had a couple of
them but his secret secret password was the fartmaster one. Or something like that. He had made it
overly complicated. He had told you all of this one night and you two agreed that if either of you
forgot something or stumbled across time bullshit then you would use that code to warn the other.
You had never had to use it before but now seemed like an appropriate time. At least Sans would be
warned not to ask questions just in case. To keep time stable.

Sans’s eyes widened and Papyrus cried, “WHAT? REALLY?? THAT’S AMAZING!”

Sans snorted. “that’s, uh……that’s super immature, kid. but……i gotcha. let me just grab
something.” He walked down the stairs studiously avoiding coming anywhere near the couch and
approached the counter. He paused and picked up a sheet of scrap paper to read. You couldn’t see
his expression but you sensed a change in him. He pocketed the paper and grabbed the NMTT
lunchbox from the drawer before heading back to the stairs. He didn’t turn to face either of you. “i’m
off then. i’ll, uh, take the long way. don’t wanna run into any……paradoxes.” He gave a short wave
and exited.

“…WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT??” Papyrus asked looking even more confused.

“Time shenanigans.” You responded. You were just glad that apparently past Sans seeing you didn’t
affect anything (that you had noticed). Why were the three of you in the past, though? Was that possibly why you couldn’t remember your Saturday at all? Maybe because you didn’t have any magic the distortion caused issues? Or were they just ripples that just erased your memories? You didn’t know. You didn’t understand time enough and your head already ached. You gave up.

“……I REALLY DON’T UNDERSTAND.” He muttered in as low a voice as he could. You leaned into him and the two of you sat in silence. You sipped at your water until the door opened again. This time you recognized this Sans as yours because he was wearing his jacket and looked tired.

“we’re in the past.” He stated immediately. You nodded.

“THERE WERE TWO OF YOU.” Papyrus said. Sans froze, surprised, and then seemed to consider something.

“oh. yeah, i remember now.” He looked at you and winked. “fartmaster.” He glanced over at the table where the scrap piece of paper had been and you realized that he had probably placed it there for his past self. Why had Sans taken you back down to the Core if he knew that something like this would happen? Was he aware of how wobbly time had become? Did he do it just to preserve the time continuum?

…You really hated time. You finally understood why Sans was so grumpy about it.

Sans plopped down on the couch next to you so you were squished between the two brothers. He had his handkerchief out and was wiping down his skull. “….we’re stuck here for a while. gotta wait until our past selves head out to the core tomorrow.” But you really had to pee. What were you going to do about using the bathroom? The couch wasn’t big enough for the three of you and there really wasn’t much to do in the lab.

Papyrus seemed to be taking it well. “EXTENDED SLEEPOVER!” He said happily. Sans gave an appreciative look towards his sibling. You fiddled with the bandages on your arm. It still hurt and you were bleeding some but you would be fine. Still, you weren’t looking forward to this. At least you had managed to get you all to just the day before rather than any other time period.

“so buddy.” Sans finally said and you refused to look at him. “wanna tell us what happened behind that wall?”

“YEAH! HOW DID YOU MAKE A DOOR APPEAR? AND THERE WAS A ROOM BEHIND IT!” Papyrus agreed. “IF IT’S SOME KIND OF HUMAN MAGIC…CAN YOU TELL ME HOW YOU DID IT?”

You didn’t want to tell either of them what had happened. Papyrus wouldn’t understand but how could you tell Sans how his old friend had tried to take your body? Just one hit from Gaster’s attacks had sent you nearly scattered through time and space as well. You don’t know what Sans did to cure it but it probably wasn’t good for your body. You were reluctant to see the wound.

You remained quiet. Papyrus looked at Sans and Sans stared at you. You swallowed thickly.

“….frisk.” Sans prompted. You still refused to talk.

“MAYBE THEIR THROAT STILL HURTS.” Papyrus suggested thoughtfully. “MAYBE INSTEAD….YOU COULD TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED? I SEEM TO BE…OUT OF THE LOOP?”

Sans winced. He didn’t want to tell Papyrus anything anymore than you wanted to tell Sans
anything. You were all stuck at a standstill. One of you had to talk. Sans, being the sneaky skeleton he was at avoiding questions, said, “frisk’s explanation would probably take less time. com’on bucko.” He nudged you playfully even though none of you were really in the mood. You shook your head. Sans abruptly turned serious. “Frisk.” You flinched and lowered you head.

“…You won’t like it.” You admitted.

“I don’t like anything about this situation.” He stated.

“……” You really didn’t want to tell him. You looked to Papyrus for help but he was also waiting for an explanation. You three literally had all day. You wouldn’t be able to resist forever. You reluctantly gave in. “……Gaster.” You said.

Sans next to you stiffened. Whatever good humor he had been putting up as a front was gone now. “what about him?” He asked.

“WHO’S GASTER?” Papyrus asked.

“old friend. …i’ll explain later.” Sans told him quickly.

“OH. ALRIGHT.”

“….The door,” you began to explain, “drew me in. I….I needed to see what was behind it. I’ve never seen it before. In any timeline.” You might as well be completely truthful if Papyrus was going to find out anyway. You weren’t looking forward to the explanations of Flowey and Chara all over again. “And when we were walking…there were grey monsters…” your body was trembling a little. Both brothers were holding your hands reassuringly. You pushed on, “…I think….they were the people….who were erased.” You could only whisper the last part. Sans didn’t visibly react next to you. Papyrus stopped asking questions that he wasn’t going to get the answers to yet. You looked at Sans.

“Inside the room was Gaster…or….some form of him.” You had seen what Gaster had looked like “before”. Sans had a picture in his NMTT lunchbox that was him with people you had never seen before. He had appeared happy. You hadn’t known which one was Gaster but you did now. And the monster you had seen wasn’t Gaster in his entirety. You didn’t think that he was the same person. You personally think that whatever the machine did, it also took away his mind. You couldn’t imagine Sans helping someone who was so cruel.

….Or, a worse possibility, Sans hadn’t cared.

You shook it off and continued speaking. “He….wasn’t all there.” You explained to them the glitching and the attacks and how the room kept warping. “He……….wanted my body.” You admitted quietly. “He said it would make him….real again.” You gripped their hands and Papyrus pulled you closer to him. You accepted his comfort. Sans didn’t release your hand but he still hadn’t reacted yet. You kept watching him to see any sign of anger or…anything at all. “He said if I gave him my form….the monsters would come back. The ones that were erased.”

“did you accept?” Sans asked.

You shook your head. “He snapped. And……his voice changed. It…” you gulped and shuddered, “it was Chara’s voice. I….I think he channeled it. Because he knew it would….” That it would weaken you. Chara terrified you more than anything else. Even Sans scared you less. Chara’s voice was like ink that spilled across a blank sheet of paper and tarnished it. Hearing it made you feel like you were losing control. “….His attack hit my arm. And…..”
“and you started becoming like him.” Sans finished what you didn’t know the answer to. He released your hand and ran his hands over his skull. “he was taking your body. i can’t believe…” he paused for a frightfully long moment and then continued, “………no. no i can believe it.”

You didn’t want to add more but you needed to finish telling him the truth. You shot a look to Papyrus to see his reaction to everything but he was staring at Sans worriedly. You could both see that he wasn’t taking this well. When his eyes met yours he quietly begged you not to add more. You squeezed your eyes shut and ignored the warning. You had to. “Sans….” You whispered.

“What.” He bit back. You flinched and shrank back more against Papyrus. You didn’t like this. You had never seen Sans like this but you recognized this tone of voice. He was getting angry. When Sans got angry, he became a lot less controlled. He was just as passionate with his emotions as Papyrus only Papyrus was passionate in positive emotions. Sans was the opposite. He was laidback with positive emotions but when his metaphorical blood started to boil….he was a force to be reckoned with.

You really didn’t want to tell him. “Gaster…..told me something about the machine.” He looked at you suddenly with wide eyes. “….He said it will never be fixed. He can….he’s seen it….in the time streams….you can’t…” You stopped. The lights in Sans’s eyes had shrunk to mere pinpoints. They barely looked like they were there. Papyru wrapped his arms around your waist and to your surprise he dragged you against his chest and stood up quickly. You looked at him in shock and then felt it. Magic seemed to encase the whole room. You felt the gravity of the situation on you both literally and metaphorically. You realized exactly what you had just done and it made your heart drop to your feet in horror.

You had just destroyed the only purpose Sans had given himself.

“S-SANS.” Papyrus called but Sans was shaking his head and standing up. His whole body was radiating magic.

“i….” Sans whispered and bones began to materialize around him. You immediately froze up in terror. His eye was beginning to burn from behind the hands that were pressed to his sockets.

“never?” He sounded so broken. “i have…worked on that machine for years….day after day…” The bones started spinning rapidly around him. The ground began to shake. You dropped to the ground and fell to your knees unable to support yourself on your shaking legs. “i….that thing….has been my job for….fuck….for so long…and you’re telling me…” His hands dropped and his eye flared blue in his fury. It flashed rapidly between blue and yellow, “that it was all POINTLESS?!”

Bones erupted from the ground like spikes throughout the room and from the walls. The tore through the walls like they were nothing destroying and causing dirt to explode outwards. Only on pure instinct did you manage to dodge out of the way.

“SANS!!” Papyrus screamed and you looked to him to see him rushing at his brother. You couldn’t focus on him long enough as you tried to stay on your feet. The room was being crushed around you. All of Sans’s work mutilated by his magic. You soul wasn’t even out of your body so you had no choice but to stay on the ground. It made moving a lot harder.

Papyrus ducked and dodged the bones and summoned his own the bat his brother’s attacks out of the air. Sans wasn’t even looking as he attacked instead gripping his skull tightly. You could hear a keening noise coming from him like you had only heard one time: when you (or Chara) stuck around long enough to have Sans discover Papyrus’s remains. You were amazed at Papyrus being able to dodge his brother’s attacks and counter them with his own. You were barely on your feet and even then you were being hit. It only took one damage to you but still. You had to dig into your pockets for your popato chisps.
“BROTHER! SANS, PLEASE STOP! Y-YOU’RE NOT IN CONTROL! IT IS I, YOUR BROTHER AND THE GREAT PAPYRUS!” Papyrus called desperately. It was hard to believe that even in this tiny room neither of you could help Sans. The closer he got to his brother, the more wild the attacks became. You were certain the whole house would cave in at this rate. If Sans destroyed this room then would any of you even get to escape?

“Why?” Sans said. He didn’t sound like he was talking to you two. “I worked so hard. I tried so hard to save him. And that bastard tried to, what, take my best friend? Kill them? He almost took everything from me.”

“Sans!” You called and then gasped as a bone clipped you hard in the back and you fell the ground shook under you. A bone was going to come up. You didn’t have enough health-

Papyrus scooped you up then and tucked you to his chest as he rolled out of the way. You clung to his shirt. You could see he had taken some damage as well but he was faring better than you who was currently bleeding. It wasn’t your soul being attacked but your body. Sans had never triggered the magic to summon your soul. Every hit you took physically damaged you. And while your body was stronger than your soul, it wasn’t nearly as fast not as agile. Your soul would not break if Sans accidentally killed you but you would have no choice but to reload your last SAVE rather than clip your soul back together through sheer determination. You couldn’t remember when you had last SAVED.

“He can’t hear us.” You whimpered.

“THEN WE’LL HAVE TO BE LOUDER!” Papyrus responded.

“He almost took my brother. He took my first best friend and now he wants my second? And now…now he’s taken my fucking purpose in life.” Sans muttered.

“SANS! IF YOU HONESTLY THINK YOUR ONLY PURPOSE IN LIFE IS A MACHINE… THEN YOU NEED TO JOIN ME AND ALPHYS IN TRAINING! STARTING TOMORROW! ACTUALLY, STARTING NOW!” Papyrus tried. He swung you around to pull you out of the way of an attack. You both were the farthest away from Sans and were pressed to the machine. So far the bone attacks hadn’t left much more than a dent. The blanket had been torn to shreds. The couch was nothing but wood and stuffing. The stairs were wrecked.

“i….” Sans clenched his fists tighter. “i…”

“YOU’RE MY FAVORITE BROTHER!! WHICH IS GOOD BECAUSE YOU’RE MY ONLY BROTHER!! AND YOU’RE AWESOME SANS! JUST LIKE ME! WE’RE BOTH AWESOME!! SO…SO GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF! IF YOU DON’T….I’LL HAVE TO USE MY SPECIAL ATTACK ON YOU!” You were thrown behind Papyrus. He stood in front of you going all-out now. He matched each of Sans’s attacks with one of his own and had even set bones around the room to support the failing structure. You gaped in amazement. You never knew that Papyrus was so powerful.

“No!” Sans looked up and you went cold at the sight of luminescent tears rolling down from his eye sockets. Like his one eye they were the brightest blue you had ever seen. They looked like liquid flame. “Get out of the way!” He screamed and you felt magic wrap around your soul. You waited to be thrown into the wall but a second layer of magic held you firm. You stared at Papyrus’s glowing hand. He was actually holding not just you but himself to the ground. You could see both brothers sweating as they both countered each other at every turn. “Move!” Sans shouted again. You had never actually heard him yell before. His anger had always been a cool one. This one was
burning hot.

“NO, SANS! YOU CAN’T DO THIS TO YOURSELF! THIS IS…THIS PLACE….I DON’T KNOW WHAT IT IS! BUT IT LOOKS SUPER SCIENCE-Y AND I KNOW YOU LOVE THAT STUFF! WHICH MEANS YOU LOVE THIS PLACE! WHICH MEANS I CAN’T LET YOU DESTROY IT!” Papyrus yelled.

“I am going to destroy that piece of shit machine!!” Sans yelled and your eyes widened in unadulterated fear as four of those blasters he used in his fights with Chara appeared. Their mouths began to glow as their lasers were charged. Was Sans really going to attack you both? You didn’t have enough health to survive an attack like that! You were only a LV 1 with low health!

“S-Sans!” You whimpered in terror. You felt the tears rolling down your face but you couldn’t even sob. Your whole body was shaking. The blue magic was no longer on your soul. You wouldn’t be able to dodge.

In front of you Papyrus was like a stone. He held his arms out like a shield in front of you. As far as you knew, nothing could stop those lasers. Not even the “rules” of fighting could. Sans broke the “rules”. Papyrus didn’t have enough health to survive the attack.

“Move!!!” Sans screamed again more desperately this time.

“NO!” Papyrus shouted back firmly. The blasters opened their mouths. Was this how you were going to die in this timeline? Killed by your best friend as they rampaged? It wouldn’t be the first time Sans had killed you but….but you had honestly thought you would have a happy ending this time.

You closed your eyes and waited for the inevitable. You would just have to load your SAVE and hope you didn’t lose too much time. You heard the blasters go off and your curled up further into yourself…

…

…but they didn’t hit.

You opened your eyes and gaped at Papyrus. His eye was burning with a bright orange flame and around him were his own blasters matched perfectly with Sans’s own. No…they were stronger. Sans had used up too much magic and couldn’t fully control it in his fury. Papyrus’s blasters matched and then tore through Sans’s lasers and annihilated Sans’s blasters. Sans fell down to the ground with wide eyes. His magic had completely disappeared. Only his blue tears remained. He was completely unharmed.

Papyrus dropped his arms and looked in astonishment at his blasters as they circled around him once and then faded away along with the rest of Papyrus’s magic. Only the large bones supporting the basement remained. “I…THAT WASN’T MY SPECIAL ATTACK…” Papyrus said. He was just as shocked and amazed about the blasters as you were. The orange flame in his eye burnt out leaving him covered in sweat and looking exhausted but otherwise okay besides the nicks where he had been hit.

“pap….” Sans whispered. “you can still use the blasters…”

“I DON’T KNOW WHAT THE HECK THOSE WERE!” Papyrus denied. “BUT THEY WERE AWESOME! WAIT.” He paused. “WHAT DO YOU MEAN ‘STILL’?”
“i taught you that attack. but….but you forgot….you can’t….how can you still….” Sans seemed at a
lost for words.

“NEVERMIND THAT! SANS, ARE YOU OKAY? DID I HURT YOU AT ALL?” Papyrus asked, worried. Sans slowly shook his head, still in shock. Papyrus turned to you and gave a gasp of horror. “FRISK! YOU’RE BLEEDING!” You tore your eyes away from him to look at yourself. Your clothes were ripped up and you were indeed bleeding in places. Now that you were paying attention you took stock of your body to realize how sore you really were. You would no doubt be black and blue. Your arm wound had reopened.

Papyrus scooped you up in a princess hold and carried you over to kneel before Sans. “I’M GLAD YOU’RE BOTH OKAY.” He said relief filling his every word. Sans was looking you both over and then his eyes darted to the machine. It was completely fine.

His eyes came back to you. “frisk…” He said sounding remorseful. He reached for your arm to adjust the bandage and you instinctively flinched away from him. You both froze at your reaction and he dropped his hand to look at it and then he looked at you again closer this time. “i….oh my god.” He whispered. His body was shaking from a mixture of exhaust and emotion. “pap… frisk…i….oh god. oh god i almost killed you both!”

“N-NO YOU DIDN’T!” Papyrus denied quickly and he reached for his brother. Sans tried to pull away but Papyrus yanked the three of you into a hug. “YOU WOULD NEVER HURT US ON PURPOSE!”

“fuck! fuck, bro, fuck i almost did, though. i…i didn’t even think…i couldn’t stop….i just wanted to…..!” Sans stuttered out.

“I KNOW. IT HAPPENS TO THE BEST OF US. IF IT CAN HAPPEN TO ME IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU.” Papyrus soothed and finally Sans began to sob. He wrapped his arms around Papyrus and shook violently as he bawled. In response your own body –emotionally wrecked and physically injured- reacted. You gave a soft keen and you wrapped your arms as much as you could around both of the brothers. Papyrus’s size seemed to encompass the both of you as he held you both in his arms. You could see orange tears –leftover coloring from his magic- dripping onto Sans’ back.

“i’m sorry. i’m so fucking sorry!” Sans apologized over and over again. The three of you held each other tight and didn’t let go.
XVI: The Tower (cont.)

"...The Tower card is not merely a portent of destruction. As with all the cards, there is a lesson. Change happens in all of our lives; in fact, life IS change. 
...The real work begins after the crash. Look at what was destroyed and let it go. More importantly, look at what remains. It has survived a trial by fire; make sure you recognize its value. Pick it up and plan on fitting it into your new structure. This is the universe's idea of repurposing."

(Picture credit goes to Lastoneout on tumblr for their amazing art! IT’S SO GOOD!)
After the hug ended for the three of you and the tears had slowed to a stop, you all separated and you were left to eat some more of your food in an effort to heal up. It sort of worked. The food mostly would heal your soul but it wasn’t your soul that was injured. The monster food would do almost nothing to heal your physical wounds. However the food did help to heal Papyrus’s wounds leaving him completely unharmed. You could see that both brothers were completely exhausted so you were all left to sit in the rubble of the basement. It was completely trashed but with the help of the large bones Papyrus had placed around the room the structure held. You already knew from that morning that the house would be fine. The basement was fairly deep underground.

Sans refused to touch you and you had mixed feelings about it. He had already apologized to both of you countless times and in truth you and Papyrus had already forgiven him. Neither of you had it in yourselves to hold his freak out against him. However your body seemed to have other ideas. You couldn’t help the minor flinching at every shift he made. Seeing him so angry had been triggering for you. You were certain that if you didn’t remember facing Omega Flowey and Asriel so many times then you would’ve had a panic attack. You worked better under pressure but now you were completely useless. And Sans picked up on this and made sure not to move too much or try to get closer to you at all.

You felt terrible.

Papyrus made a valiant effort to move things along. “SO. WHEN, UH, CAN WE LEAVE?” He asked eyeing the trashed room.

Sans had the deepest stress lines under his sockets that you had seen in a while. He wiped his hand across his face (you flinched) and sighed, “it’s still daylight out. we have all night.”

“GREAT. YEAH.” Papyrus pushed some of the rubble and dirt out of the way. “FRISK!” He called you and you looked at him. He removed his sweater and bundled it up before placing it on the floor along with some remnants of the couch. “YOU SHOULD GET SOME REST! YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED.”

“…yeah. get some sleep, kid.” Sans said. He removed his jacket in measured movements and slid it over to you. You jumped and then scolded yourself mentally for jumping. You hated this. Still your body had minute trembles running through it as you grabbed the jacket and added it to you “bed”.
“…I can’t.” You said quietly.

“Yes. It doesn’t look very comfortable…” Papyrus muttered eyeing the makeshift bed.

You shook your head. That wasn’t the reason. Under other circumstances you would be mortified to say this but you were so emotionally drained that you couldn’t muster up the embarrassment. “I peed my pants.”

Both brother stared at you with wide eyes before almost in sync they glanced down at your pants and then away. Your cheeks flushed unwillingly and you shifted to better hide yourself. You were thirteen and it was the first time you had wet yourself in a long time. If anything Sans looked even more guilty which just made you feel all the worse.

“Well, we’ll…uh…get a change of clothes for you right away!” Papyrus suggested and stood up.

“wait, bro, i’ll go-” Sans started giving you a concerned look but Papyrus held a hand up and cut him off.

“No no. You rest. I will just grab something from the house!” He paused. “I was in the city around this time…I think. Much safer for me to go.” He nodded to himself and approached the stairs. With his long legs he could hop up the shattered ones and soon you both heard the door open and close. You were left alone with Sans.

Sans didn’t look at you. You shifted uncomfortably. A long tense silence stretched between the both of you. It had been a long time since you had felt this way around him. Sans sighed and you startled slightly at the sound. “the…uh…sink.” He cleared his throat and nodded to the ruins of the counter. You were almost afraid to approach the debris all over the floor. “…looks like it still works. you can wear my lab coat to, uh, cover up.”

You shakily climbed to your feet—wow you were a lot more fatigued than you had previously thought— and made your way over to what was left of the sink and counter. The counter was completely destroyed leaving only the sink precariously still standing by sheer determination. You stared at the debris around your feet and noticed familiar trash from the cabinets. There were tools and blueprints you recognized from the storage but you also noticed a photo album on the ground. There were pieces torn out of it and a few pages were barely hanging in there. In the pictures where you could actually see anything, you spotted Sans. He was standing with monsters you didn’t know…but a few that you recognized. With a slight chill up you realized that some of these people were the grey monsters. The ones that had been erased with Gaster. These people had been Sans’s friends.

You couldn’t look away from the pictures. You had never seen Sans look so happy. His smile was bright and his eye sockets were crinkling. He looked young and carefree compared to the Sans of today. Everything he had gone through…he didn’t deserve that. None of those monsters had deserved that. You wished that your powers could allow you to go further back in time but you weren’t even sure how long ago this all had occurred. How old would you have been? Would you even remember to try to help them?

Maybe you should’ve taken Gaster up on his plan. Then at least Sans would have everyone back-“stop.” You jolted out of your thoughts and looked at Sans. He was watching you with understanding eyes. “…don’t think about me, frisk. didn’t we agree to stop fussing over the past?”

The room was quiet enough that he didn’t have to talk loud for you to hear him. “…frankly…..and
i’m being completely honest here….i wouldn’t change a single thing in this timeline.” He closed his
eyes. “…i hate what gaster had made me into. i hate that i wasted so much time trying to save that
guy. i hate that he’s made me lose you and that i have to tell my brother everything now. he left me
with so little choice in my life….like he was controlling me when i thought, stupidly, that i was the
one in control.” He gave a pitiful scoff.

You kneeled down and closed the photo album before straightening up and looking at Sans. You
didn’t like him like this at all. “You didn’t lose me.” You said. He looked at you and you hated how
he tried to hide how hopeful he was. You walked over to him rebelling against the instinct telling
you to get away and kneeled in front of him. He watched you warily. “…If I went away for a year,
would you notice and remember me?” You asked him.

“yeah…? of course.” He seemed baffled.

“Remember me in a month?”

“yeah. kid, what-?”

“Remember me in a week?”

“i’d notice you gone right away.” Sans said. Unwillingly your heart fluttered a little at that. It was
nice to be reassured.

Your hand found a scrap piece of wood and you tapped on it with your knuckles. “Knock knock.”

Now he was completely confused. “who’s there?”

You clicked your tongue playfully. “You forgot me already.”

He gaped at you for a moment before he snorted and grinned unable to help chuckling at such a
terrible joke. “that isn’t funny, buddy.”

“You laughed.”

“…okay it’s funny. but also not cool.”

“Knock knock.” You said again.

“getting a lot of visitors today.” He responded. You pouted a little and knocked again. “who’s
there?”

“Olive.”

“olive who?”

“Olive you.” You said sincerely and reached out to touch his cheekbone. You left him speechless
again and then to your utter surprise his cheekbones began to glow blue. You gaped at the sight. Was
he…blushing? Papyrus blushed a redder color but Sans-

Sans ducked his head away. “h-heh heh. good one kid. hey, uh, why don’t you wash up? before pap
gets back. heh.” Your jaw was still hanging open but he was clearly embarrassed so you got up and
hurried back over to the sink feeling your own cheeks warm. You hadn’t known that Sans could
blush. You had never thought you would use the words “Sans” and “cute” together but now you
couldn’t help it. Papyrus and Sans were definitely related to each other.

You grabbed Sans’s lab coat –thankfully just dirty but still intact- and you slipped it on. It was long
enough on you that nobody would be able to be flashed from behind. You just had to make sure your front was covered. You stripped of your pants and underwear and turned on the sink. The water pressure was lower than it usually was but it was enough for you to scrub the piss out of your clothing and off of your body.

You were just finishing up and were hanging the clothing over the edge of the sink when someone knocked at the door upstairs. Oh right, the door automatically locked behind anyone who entered or left. Sans tried to get to his feet but you could see it was a struggle. You pulled the ends of the lab coat around your lower body until you were significantly covered and then hurried up the steps the best you could. You had to hop and few times and you were fairly sure you had managed to flash Sans (who could see up the stairs from his position) you bum at least once by accident but you got to the door and opened it.

Papyrus quickly got inside and shut the door. “I GOT SOME CLOTHES FOR YOU WITHOUT BEING SEEN! MY SNEAKING SKILLS ARE UNRIVALED!” He boasted and then looked at you. “FRISK! YOU’RE…YOU’RE….WELL HERE!” He handed you the clothing quickly. It was a set of pajamas that looked like they belonged to Sans. But you had never actually seen Sans wear proper pajamas. They were covered in skulls and crossbones. Papyrus gave you a pat on the head and walked past you so you could slip the pants on. It felt good to be in clean clothing and the elastic waistband kept the large bottoms to your hips. You followed after Papyrus.

“I ALSO BROUGHT PILLOWS AND BLANKETS FROM MY ROOM.” He announced as he threw them on the ground.

“uh, pap, you gotta be careful. we can’t mess with time too much.” Sans warned.

“NO WORRIES! THESE WERE GONE WHEN I GOT HOME YESTERDAY! I JUST ASSUMED YOU STOLE THEM FOR YOUR PRANKS, REMEMBER?” Papyrus grinned.

“oh. right. s’fine then.”

You rejoined them on the bottom floor and avoided the gaping holes in the ground. Papyrus plopped down at the front of your sleeping pile and patted it. “COME, HUMAN! YOU NEED SOME SLEEP!”

You obeyed and laid down on the mildly-comfortable sleep pile. Papyrus’s hand found your hair and began to stroke it and you shot a look at Sans. He had exposed one of your secrets. Sans seemingly didn’t see your look. The brothers started up casual conversation as to where both of them had gone on their little adventures in the past. You knew that they were waiting for you to fall asleep. Even though you already knew all of the secrets, apparently they both had silently agreed this was something the brothers wanted to discuss alone. Or at least as alone as a two-person conversation with three people trapped in a room could be. You didn’t fault them and you wished that you could give them proper space but there was no choice in the matter.

You weren’t sure what all Sans would tell Papyrus. You didn’t doubt he would tell him the truth about Gaster and probably he would tell him about the experiments they did. Papyrus, being older than you, would probably understand a lot better. At least Papyrus would be able to shoulder the burden of that knowledge for the three of you until you were old enough to understand better. However you worried about if Sans would tell Papyrus any of your secrets. And if he did, which ones? You would match Sans and tell Papyrus the truth about your powers. It was only fair especially seeing how he had protected you despite possibly getting killed himself.

You scooted further into his touch reveling in the comfort he gave you.

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You woke up naturally and blinked a couple of times. Your arm stung and your back was stiff from laying on the ground. Frankly your whole body felt like you’d been hit by a truck and you still felt exhausted emotionally. But you were fully rested. You didn’t recall falling asleep or what you dreamt of. Even though you weren’t wearing Sans’s jacket exhaustion must have been too powerful for you to dream of a past timeline. Or maybe travelling through time had messed with your mind. You felt a little scrambled mentally.

You pushed yourself to a sitting position to find Sans fast asleep on the floor using one of the pillows Papyrus had brought down. Papyrus hadn’t moved from his position next to you and you looked to see him still awake but zoned out. He seemed more than a little lost. You gently touched his arm and he looked at you. You tilted your head in question and he gave you a tired smile.

“GOOD…MORNING I THINK.” He said. You and Sans were both used to his snoring so his loud voice wouldn’t disturb either of you unless he actually tried to wake you both. He seemed hesitant to talk. You sat and watched him with your heart pounding thickly in your chest. “…SANS TOLD ME EVERYTHING.” He admitted. You held your breath. “…TIME SHENANIGANS WAS A GOOD DESCRIPTION. EARLIER, I MEAN.”

Papyrus smiled at you. You clenched your hands in your lap. “APPARENTLY IT WAS ACTUALLY SANS THAT I LEARNED A LOT OF MY ATTACKS FROM. I HAD THOUGHT HE HAD COPIED MY ATTACKS.” He looked at his brother sleeping. “AND HE TOLD ME ABOUT DR. GASTER…THE MONSTER I DON’T REMEMBER. AND…FRISK, HE TOLD ME SOME THINGS ABOUT YOU. AND YOUR TIME POWERS. DETERMINATION AND WHAT IT IS.” He looked at his lap. “I ALWAYS KNEW ABOUT DETERMINATION…BUT NOT IN THE WAY SANS DESCRIBED IT. WHEN ALPHYS TOLD EVERYONE ABOUT HER EXPERIMENTS I DIDN’T THINK THAT SAME DETERMINATION COULD ALTER TIME ITSELF. IT’S REALLY AMAZING! AND TERRIFYING.”

You watched his hand clench once and then release to look at you again. There was a pain in his eyes. “FRISK…I’VE HAD DREAMS BEFORE ABOUT YOU. AND FEELINGS LIKE I KNEW YOU. AND CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU AND UNDYNE. I JUST IGNORED THEM. ESPECIALLY…ESPECIALLY SOME OF THOSE DREAMS. DREAMS WHERE YOU…” You felt your shoulders hunching slowly, preparing for the blow of his words. But he never actually said it. “….HE SHOWED ME…MY SCARF. FROM A DIFFERENT PAPYRUS WITH MY…HIS….DUST…” He stopped himself. Your throat was tight. “……..I’M GLAD THAT IT WASN’T ACTUALLY YOU. YOU’RE MY FRIEND. AND EVERYONE’S FRIEND. THE BEST FRIEND TO MONSTER KIND! AND…” He beamed at you. You stared at him honestly floored by how proud he looked. “I ALWAYS KNEW YOU COULD BE GOOD!”

Your eyes stung and you couldn’t stop yourself from wrapping your arms around him. You cried softly into his shirt and apologized. He held you close to him.

“I NEVER DOUBTED YOU FOR A MOMENT!! WELL. ACTUALLY I DID. BUT YOU WERE REALLY SCARY AT THAT TIME! OR, WELL, THIS CHARA HUMAN WAS. IT’S VERY CONFUSING!” Papyrus said. He lifted your face and wiped at your eyes with the hem of his shirt. “FRISK, I KNOW SANS DIDN’T TELL ME EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. OR AT LEAST EVERYTHING HE KNOWS ABOUT YOU. AND YOU DON’T NEED TO TELL ME. I DON’T CARE WHAT YOU DID IN OTHER TIMELINES! YOU’RE YOU FROM NOW AND THAT’S THE FRISK I CARE ABOUT!! THE ONE WHO’S MY TRUSTED FRIEND!” He pressed his teeth to your hair in an approximation of a kiss.
“Thank you.” You whimpered out.

Papyrus just continued to smile even if the pain in his eyes were still there. You didn’t imagine that it would fully leave any time soon. Papyrus had his whole world shifted today. “YOU’RE LIKE A SUPERHERO WITH YOUR POWERS! YOU CAN MAKE A SAVE WHENEVER AND JUMP BACK TO IT! THAT’S SUPER NEATO.” You shook your head. That wasn’t quite how it worked. You corrected him and then told him about your promise to Sans. “OH.” He sounded a little disappointed. “I GUESS THAT’S FOR THE BEST. SANS IS THE ONE WHO KNOWS ALL THIS TIME CRUD.” You giggled a little finding it hilarious how fed up Papyrus was with the time shenanigans just like you and Sans were.


You opened your mouth and then closed it. Hesitantly you signed to him unable to actually voice it: “Scared.”

“What? There’s no reason to!!” Papyrus protested. “Nobody will be mad!”

You gripped his pants leg. “…How much…did Sans tell you about….what Chara did?”

Papyrus looked uncomfortable. You supposed that discussing a person’s very-real death with them would leave them feeling discomfort. You and Sans were too used to the knowledge to even be bothered by it. “Just what happened to me. Oh! And…your judgements.” You looked at him in shock. Sans had told Papyrus about the Judgements? “You don’t remember? We…time traveled? Space traveled?? Traveled. To one of the judgements…sans was super mean to you.”

“I deserved it.” You said numbly still shocked.

“It was still mean!”

“I killed everyone.” You said and Papyrus stared at you now. “Everyone. Every monster…that Chara and I came across. Toriel…you….Undyne…Alphys…Mettaton……even Sans himself. I…they…we….killed them. I-I’m….I’m a dirty brother killer.” You whimpered and hunched over pressing your forehead to his leg as you fought back old trauma.

“N-no. Well, that’s actually really terrible. But it wasn’t you! It was Chara!” Papyrus rubbed your back as you grinded your teeth together to bite back sobs. “Chara is the one Sans…killed….Repeatedly.” He took a breath after his words even saying them hurt him.

“How can anybody…forgive me? I…I can’t even forgive myself.” You whispered.

“Not with that attitude!” Papyrus huffed and pulled you up so he could look you in the face. “Frisk, I won’t be the one to tell you that you have to tell everyone the truth. That’s your choice. And frankly I’m proud that I’m trusted enough with this knowledge. But you should trust the others too! They love you almost as much as I do!” He pushed your hair out of your face. “And yeah, they will probably be mad. Or scared. Or something! But I’m scared too. And if I, the great Papyrus, am scared then there’s a good reason to be! This is….this is really heavy stuff. But. They’ll forgive you because they love you.”
“I don’t want to lose anyone.” You confessed.

“AND YOU WON’T. NOT IF ME OR SANS HAS ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT!” Papyrus boasted. He “kissed” you all over your face and you giggled a little at the strange kisses. “WE’LL ALWAYS BE BY YOUR SIDE. YOU CAN’T GET RID OF US! GOT IT?” You nodded and once again you two hugged before Papyrus flopped backwards on the sleeping pile. You barely managed not to yelp in surprise. “NOW WE JUST NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO UNTIL OUR PAST SELVES LEAVE!” He sighed loudly clearly burdened by boredom. You would suggest sleeping –especially because of all the magic he’d used earlier- but you doubted he would take your advice.

You had plenty that you could talk about with him but a majority of it was too sad. You were tired of talking about depressing things and you didn’t want to add any more water to the wet blanket that you and Sans had been all day. So instead you decided to tell Papyrus about sillier things that happened in past timelines as well as the origin of the secret codewords.

Things weren’t perfect. You didn’t doubt that you would be scared of Sans for a while yet. It would be painful dealing with not only what it means that Gaster was apparently after you but that Sans had lost quite a lot of ground in his recovery. Both of your support systems had taken heavy blows from today…but you could already feel some relief with Papyrus knowing so much more now. He was a great asset in making sure that neither you nor Sans would fall back into the depression that hung over both of you. His optimism and all-around cheerfulness was a much-needed boost. His support would be necessary in the coming days. You told him as much.

“ALRIGHT I’VE DECIDED. TOMORROW –OUR TOMORROW, NOT THIS TIME’S TOMORROW…UNLESS IT IS ALREADY THE SAME THING…UGH!- YOU, ME, SANS, AND ALPHYS ARE ALL GOING ON A MORALE-BOOSTING TRAINING RUN! NO EXCUSES!”

That sounded just fantastic.

Chapter End Notes

Well now we can start going back into the fluff and silliness category. It will be bittersweet for a little while in terms of Sans and Frisk’s relationship but hopefully things will sweeten up again.

(For the record, the prompt was: Sans blushing)
Chapter Summary

Papyrus has a plan to help repair Frisk and Sans's relationship. Luckily both are willing to try.

Chapter Notes

Prompt: -Valentine's Day

Note: 78% of Toriel's wrath is taken out on Undyne. It's a good thing Toriel loves Frisk's friends.

It had started out innocently enough. You were in class with your classmates and it was Study Hall time. You were gathered with your friends focusing on your science homework –you needed to focus more on science if your life was going to make the decision to be sci-fi- when across from you Tamara sighed a bit. You looked to her in confusion but she ignored you and called out instead to your teacher.

“Mrs. Toriel?” Toriel looked up from her own grading and focused in on Tamara.

“Yes?” Toriel asked. She was wearing her reading glasses today after a long night. You liked it when your mom used her glasses. It made her look cuter even if she looked a bit more her age (which was…old. As far as you knew. She called herself an old lady anyway though you thought she was pretty spritely).

“Oh,” Toriel soothed and turned back to Tamara before it could get too rowdy. “Are we going to do anything for Valentine’s Day?” Tamara leaned onto her desk clearly unwilling to do any actual studying. She had a magazine opened on her textbook. Taking a peek at it you noticed tutorials on how to make a pretty Valentine’s Day gift. Well now you knew where the idea came from.

Toriel opened her mouth but she was cut off by Papyrus (who was volunteering his help today) asking, “WHAT IS THIS VALENTINE’S DAY?”

“Seriously?” Tyler –a human- asked from where he was trying and failing to hide the fact he was playing Legend of Zelda (You weren’t sure which one) on his game system.

“Hey! We don’t make fun of you for not knowing monster holidays!” Eddie protested.

“Calm down, children.” Toriel soothed and turned back to Tamara before it could get too rowdy. “Will you please explain what this ‘Valentine’s Day’ is?”

“It’s a romantic holiday.” Tamara explained with a grin. She loved being the center of attention and seemed proud that she was the one telling all these monsters about human customs. Well at least it saved you from explaining. “Where couples give each other gifts like flowers and chocolate.”
“And a lot of stuff in the shape of hearts.” Another human added.

“But it can also be a day where you just show your loved ones how much you love them!” Tamara finished with a bit of a huff. “But it’s mostly for couples.”

“I see!” Toriel tapped her finger to her chin. “When is Valentine’s Day?”

“Tomorrow!” A couple of the children called out.

The monsters groaned. “How are we supposed to get stuff done the day before?!” Lansot cried in despair.

“Arts and crafts.” You suggested.

“THAT SOUNDS GREAT!” Papyrus shouted jumping up. “I CAN GO GET PLENTY OF GLITTER AND OTHER STUFF USED FOR CRAFTING ARTS!”

“We need red and pink paper!” Tamara called and Papyrus ran out before anyone could stop him.

The classroom was in a tizzy. Everyone was talking about Valentine’s Day now. Some people were annoyed with the thought of it because it was a couples’ holiday and they weren’t dating anyone. Others though were excited to spend time with their boyfriends and/or girlfriends.

You didn’t have feelings towards the holiday one way or the other. It was alright, you supposed, because your mother would give you the leftover pieces of chocolate from her gifts that she didn’t particularly care for and you did like chocolate. But other than that it was just another day to you. Admittedly seeing all of the hearts at stores and such tended to get obnoxious to look at, though.

Lansot nudged you with their head. “Yo Frisk! Should we exchange gifts?”

“Why?” Chass teased. “Because you two went on one little kid date?”

“It wasn’t a kid date!” Lansot argued. “It was a real date!”

“Did you kiss?” Tamara asked eagerly.

“Uh…no…” Lansot said.

“Then it was a kid date!” Chass declared. Lansot looked to you for help seeming disappointed and a little bitter. You felt the need to defend them and their feelings. You certainly believed it was a real date without a kiss! You didn’t need to kiss people for it to be a real date! You told everyone as such. Lansot perked up at your defense of them.

“Hey yeah! And Frisk would know! They went on a date with Papyrus and Undyne!”

“No way!” Eddie said. “You dated Undyne?? Before she was with Dr. Alphys?” You hid your face in your hands unable to believe how much your flirting had come back to haunt you.

“And they’re dating Sans!” Lansot continued. You shoved them slightly in an effort to shut them up. Realizing they were embarrassing you they gave you an apologetic grin.

“So Frisk already has a boyfriend!”

“Dude, Temmie already told everyone that.” Andrea—who was eavesdropping- said. You turned to her and she pointed at the wall where one of the Temmies was still stuck from a tragic Temmie accident. The Temmie was still waiting for someone to release it. Toriel had already tried to tell the Temmie that it could leave literally at any time because the hole in the wall was big enough for them
to walk out of (plus Temmie seemed to defy all known laws of everything so Temmie could probably just phase through the wall or something) but Temmie still was stuck. Temmie became the class pet and was given Tem Flakes every day. No humans were allowed near Temmie.

Tamara huffed. “How were we supposed to know? We can’t talk to Temmie!”

“Does this mean you’re going on a date with Sans tomorrow?”

You heard a loud gasp behind all of you and the sound of paper flying everywhere as it hit the ground and you saw the recently-returned Papyrus gaping at you in excitement. His eyes were sparkling and you could tell he was no doubt planning something. Oh no. Did Sans never actually tell Papyrus that you two weren’t really dating? It wasn’t that big of a deal if people did think you were dating but you had never considered holidays like Valentine’s Day. And brothers that shipped you with Sans. And friends that also shipped you with Sans. And friends that wrote fanfiction (that you were too embarrassed to read) about you and Sans.

And that’s how it all really started. Tamara’s question caused the next two days to spiral out of control for you. But first you had something to deal with before Valentine’s Day and that was a very-panicked Bestie.

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“No, my child. Here, look.” Toriel pointed at your textbook to the sentence you needed to read. “You are thinking of electromagnetic force. What you-” But whatever she had been about to say (that you no doubt needed to hear) had been cut off by the very house shaking. Baffled both of you looked at each other to jump as a fist banged loudly on the door. Toriel hesitantly got up and had only managed one step to the door when the wood splintered and broke and a very manic Undyne charged in.

“Undyne!” Toriel cried, horrified.

“NO TIME! I’M TAKING YOUR KID!!” Undyne shouted and ran over to yank you out of your seat. She threw you over her shoulder. You couldn’t even muster up the surprise. You managed to wave at Toriel before Undyne ran back out of the house and jumped into Papyrus’s car, throwing you in the backseat. “BUCKLE UP!” She screamed at you and you hurried to comply.

“HI FRISK!” Papyrus greeted ecstatically and once the three of you were buckled he pulled away from the curb. Toriel was not going to be happy. “UNDYNE, I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU JUST BROKE INTO HER MAJESTY’S HOUSE!”

“There are more important things to worry about than a door that won’t open!” Undyne growled. The door had only been locked. Now you would need a new door. “LIKE THE FACT THAT I HAVE NOTHING FOR VALENTINE’S DAY FOR ALPHYS!!!!” She literally screamed into the open air clearly frustrated.

“GOT IT ALL OUT?” Papyrus asked.

“Yeah. Bit better.”

“GOOD! HUMAN! WE ARE GOING VALENTINE’S DAY SHOPPING IN THE NEXT TOWN OVER!! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, DATING EXTRODINARE, SHALL FIND THE BEST KIND OF PRESENTS FOR YOUR DATES!”

“But-” You tried to say. You weren’t going on a date with Sans tomorrow though.
Undyne spoke over you. “I can’t believe you never told us about this holiday, punk! Were you expecting us to just KNOW? Did you wanna hog all the dating action for yourself? Huh???”

“No.” You said.

“Oh.” She hackles relaxed and she slumped back in her seat while crossing her arms. “…Alphys has been kind of distracted lately.” She explained. “Mettaton said he’s gonna visit soon. Him and his cousin. Which is fine but that guy….is pretty weird. And I don’t really like him that much.”

“WHAT? BUT METTATON IS GREAT!”

“Just because YOU find him sexy, Papyrus…!” Undyne teased.

“I CAN ADMIRE GOOD-LOOKING ROBOTS!” Papyrus said completely unashamed.

“If that’s the kind of guy you wanna admire. I’m not interested”

“THAT’S BECAUSE ALPHYS FILLS YOUR HEART.”

Undyne flushed and looked out the window. She didn’t deny Papyrus’s observation. You smiled. “ANYWAY!” She recovered from her lapse of toughness. “Alphys is all hung up on his visit. So I’m, uh. Well, you know. Gonna do what people do on dates.”

“PRESS THE ‘C’ BUTTON!” Papyrus helpfully supplied. “AND WEAR CLOTHES.”

Undyne looked like she was gonna say something different and then decided against it. “Yeah, Papyrus. Exactly that!”

You really didn’t want to consider what she had been about to say. Gross.

Anyway.

“SO WE’RE GONNA GET PRESENTS!” Papyrus finished and soon enough the car pulled up to a super store. The three of you entered and Papyrus cheerfully greeted the cashiers. They looked honestly happy to see Papyrus and waved back. You were glad he was making so many friends. Undyne manhandled you two over to the section of the store clearly devoted towards Valentine’s Day stuff. “WOW! THERE REALLY ARE A LOT OF RED THINGS HERE! AND HEARTS!”

He said as he admired the teddy bear holding a giant stuffed heart.

“Holy crap this is all really cute!” Undyne gaped at a particularly fluffy bunny but when she caught you looking she changed her tone, “I mean…I’m tough! And this is all cheesy crap!”

“CHEESE WOULD GO WELL WITH WINE ACTUALLY!” Papyrus said. “I SAW IT ON THE COOKING CHANNEL!”

“Hey yeah! Wine sounds good! And Alphys liked it when we went drinking! Stay here!” Undyne ran off. You picked up the abused rabbit and brushed it off before placing it back on the shelf with its siblings. It seemed happier now.

“FRISK.” Papyrus called you. His voice was lowered some. You tilted your head at him and he seemed vaguely nervous. “ABOUT YOUR DATE WITH SANS….I HOPE THAT YOU DON’T MIND?” You blinked at him. “SANS HAS…NOT BEEN HAPPY. BUT HE’S HAPPY WHEN HE’S WITH YOU! SO, UH, GO OUT WITH HIM. AND SHOW HIM A GOOD TIME???”

You looked down and away. It wasn’t your fault that you weren’t up to date on Sans’s emotional
state. He had been avoiding you this past week ever since the incident in his lab and Gaster. You had originally just thought that he was just trying to repair the worst of the damage but maybe he really wasn’t. The last you had seen of him he had dropped off his jacket at Toriel’s house and disappeared. You had honestly been terribly worried about him. You had voiced your worries to Papyrus in the past but he had assured you that Sans was still coming home and resting. They ever talked occasionally about nightmares the two of them would have now that Papyrus actually knew that some of his dreams were real.

It left you feeling lonely.

Papyrus noticed your change in mood. “IF YOU DON’T WANT TO YOU DON’T HAVE TO!” He said, sweating some. You could tell he really did want you to take his brother out. You didn’t mind going out anywhere with Sans (even if now it was under very clear romantic connotation) but you weren’t so sure Sans wanted to go. You didn’t think you would flinch around him anymore.

“Nowhere to go.” You explained.

“DON’T WORRY ABOUT THAT! I GOT YOU RESERVATIONS!” Papyrus immediately jumped back onto the date idea now that you had agreed. You frowned. Where in town would you need reservations? Mettaton’s fancy hotel hadn’t been rebuilt on the surface. It was instead preparing for humans to use it eventually when the New Home was opened up to tourists. Technically you two could go to eat in the restaurant there but it was expensive and neither Papyrus nor Sans had adequate jobs to pay for that ridiculously-overpriced place.

However when you questioned him he refused to tell you where you were apparently going to have a date at. Reluctantly you gave up and Undyne rejoined you two. You had to inform them of the best kinds of Valentine’s Day gifts even though you honestly didn’t know. You tried to tell them both that you just were supposed to buy something that they know their lover would like but that just caused Undyne to flip out more at all of the possibilities. Personally you didn’t think Alphys would care about all of these stuffed animals. Wouldn’t it just be better to get a holiday-themed Hatsune Miku figure?

“I don’t have time to buy that! Valentine’s Day is TOMORROW, you punk!” Undyne scolded you. Oh right. So you stood on the shopping cart and let Undyne push you around as you pointed out necessities. Like candles for romantic atmosphere. And an apron that looked sexy. Maybe an outfit (but that just caused Undyne to blush. It had been worth it). You would’ve suggested cooking but perhaps it would just be better if she took Alphys out to eat.

“Argh! Why is this crap so difficult?!” Undyne complained as she looked back and forth between two similar-looking boxes of chocolate. She had spent the last five minutes on it. Papyrus had abandoned you two for mysterious reasons you didn’t doubt were related to Sans. “Frisk, how the hell do you even narrow this down??”

You looked in the basket at the single cream pie slowly defrosting in it. You were going to give it to Sans for pranking purposes. Hopefully it would cheer him up and it wouldn’t be used against you.

You laid your head on the cart and stared at her. “Alphys will like anything you give her.” You told her.

Undyne sighed and lowered the chocolate. “…It’s our first Valentine’s Day. I wanted it to be special.”

You thought for a moment. “Maybe…don’t have it on Valentine’s?”
She looked at you and frowned. “What do you mean?”

You shrugged. “Valentine’s Day is a…big dating night. Lots of crowds. Alphys doesn’t like crowds.”

Undyne’s eyes widened. “Hey YEAH! You’ve got a good point! I could take her out on a different night! Give me plenty of time to get all the good stuff!”

“Before Mettaton.” You added nodding.

Undyne grabbed you and noogied you. You cringed at the feeling of her knuckles grinding into your head. “Jeez, you’re so smart Frisk! No doubt because of your mom….oh. Oh crap.” She released you and you rubbed your stinging head. “Toriel’s gonna kill me.”

“ Probably.” You agreed.

“…” Undyne was sweating nervously. “Hey! Let’s go get you a cute outfit for your date!” She suggested, deftly dodging the thought of Toriel’s rage. She knew it firsthand from the sledding incident (that you were finally ungrounded from).

“Dress?” You asked a little excited at the prospect.

“Yeah! Something that’ll make that guy shut up the moment he sees you! You’ll see!” Undyne suddenly started pushing the cart running down the aisle. You held on for dear life.

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You could barely believe this was happening. It was Valentine’s Day and after school and Papyrus’s plan was being put into action. You call it a “plan” because you know for a fact that just setting you up with Sans wasn’t his only mission for the evening. Besides the dinner you were certain he was going to do something else. But that wasn’t what you were worrying about at the moment.

“It’s not too….much?” You asked your parents as you finally exposed to them your evening wear. It was a light pink dress with a tight bodice with tiny beads adding a pattern to it and a loose skirt that flowed like water down to your knees. You admitted you had found it adorable in the store but now you were wondering if it was too much for just a fake date. You wore a pair of tall boots to help block out some of the cold but you still had to wear a trench coat over your clothing. Your hair had a bow pinned into it. You were vaguely reminded of the tutu you had found and worn in the Underground (that you still kept under your bed).

Toriel was covering her mouth with her hands but Asgore was beaming. “You look beautiful!” He exclaimed. You flushed with pleasure.

“My child, you are stunning as always.” Toriel pulled you to her and flattened your hair. “But it is rather cold. Do you want to wear this?”

“Present.” You said, shifting shyly.

Asgore took a picture of you with your camera. You gaped at him and he chuckled. “For the scrapbook.” He said as he placed the camera aside. “Still, I am not sure about this Valentine’s Day for you, young one.” You found his mixed feelings about you dating Sans to be rather silly. Honestly if they both just understood that you two weren’t really dating there wouldn’t be so much stress. But you and Sans were so close that others couldn’t really consider not interpreting it in a romantic way. It was hard to put a label on yours and Sans’s relationship so you decided to let them do whatever.

“If it was not Sans, I would be a lot worse.” Toriel agreed but she still looked grumpy. It was
probably because of the door still. “I am surprised you did not want to go with Lansot.”

You and Lansot, during class today, had exchanged gifts. They had looked a little shy while doing so and you were once again left to wonder if perhaps their feelings for you were real. However it was more like Lansot to actually just blurt out whatever they were feeling so you would cross that bridge when and if you came to it. You two had shared the chocolate at lunch and had gotten stomachaches but it had been fun.

“knock knock.” You three turned to the bedroom door. It was closed. Toriel looked gleeful as she hopped up and grabbed the handle but waited.

“Who is there?” She asked.

“arthur.” You really shouldn’t be surprised that Sans would arrive with a knock knock joke.

“Arthur who?”

“arthur any chocolates for me?” You and Toriel both giggled as she opened up the door and you closed your trench coat to prepare for the cold outside. To your utter surprise Sans was actually dressed up in a suit complete with a (loose) tie and everything. But over his tuxedo he was wearing that acid green jacket he wore whenever he didn’t have his usual jacket which clashed terribly. He seemed at ease and after he greeted both Toriel and Asgore his eyes landed on you. You could see the wariness in his eyes and felt a small part of your happiness drop out. You would need to show him that you were fine.

“Sans.” Asgore said, standing up to his full height to tower over Sans. “You are aware Frisk will need to be brought back here tonight?” He asked it lightly but there was a slightly menacing undertone.

Sans seemed completely unaffected. “that’s cool.”

Asgore immediately dropped the Bad Dad act and he smiled. “Good!” He turned to you. “Have fun today, Frisk!”

“Be careful in the snow, my child. Do not get too cold.” Toriel said giving you a kiss on your forehead. You nodded to both of them and turned to Sans where he was waiting for you. You grabbed the plastic bad with Sans’s present in it and then the four of you walked to the door together. You shuddered in the cold. You wished that you had Sans’s jacket but it didn’t match your outfit at all. You tucked your free hand into your pocket and hunched down after waving goodbye to your parents and joining Sans on your walk to…wherever you were going.

“…don’t worry, kid.” He told you after a few moments of snow-crunching silence. “it isn’t that far of a walk.”

“Where?” You asked.

“papyrus has something planned, apparently. got us a, uh, ‘limo’ and everything.” You frowned at him wondering what he meant by that.

You stared longingly at the thick jacket he was wearing and he caught your eye. You looked away. The walk really wasn’t too long, you were sure. You could deal with the cold a little longer even if you wished that you had worn gloves. A hand suddenly appeared in your vision and you looked up to see Sans holding his hand of to you. You looked at him in surprise.

“you looked like you needed a hand.” He said. You didn’t know what holding his hand would do
but you grabbed it. Abruptly the hand came completely off. You gawked at the hand and looked back and forth between it and Sans. He looked amused and the hand in yours wiggled its fingers. That was crazy. You thrust the hand back at him.

“Mean.” You said.

“What? you’re not gonna give me a ‘hand’ for that quality prank?” He grinned. You shook your hand demanding he take his own hand back.

“No.” You told him glaring but the glare was ruined because as the shock wore off you were actually rather amused. You knew that the brothers could dislocate their bones but you had never seen it in action. It would be more disturbing if he wasn’t making puns. You were relieved that he was even joking with you.

“It has a nice ring to it, though.” You had thought at first that he was making another joke (and complimenting himself at the same time) but then you realized that you were holding something other than his hand. You placed his hand in your other one and then stared at the tiny ring in your hand. It had a thin silver band on it that clearly wasn’t going to fit any finger other than your pinkie. At the top of it was a little ruby in the shape of a heart. It was….really pretty.

You looked at him. Where had he gotten the money for this? He seemed uncomfortable and a bit bashful. “….it’s thanks.” He said vaguely. “for a lot.”

You stared at the ring again and silently handed back his hand. He took it and reattached it to his wrist while watching you. You just couldn’t believe that he had given you anything like this. He was admittedly being a little awkward tonight and you could still feel the tension between the two but he was making an effort. And you would as well. You hoped that by the end of tonight things would at least be better for you two. You wanted to support him again.

You slipped the ring onto your right pinky finger. It fit perfectly. You didn’t even want to ask how he knew your ring size. In response you handed him the plastic bag you were carrying. He looked inside and gave a bit of a chuckle. “a pie?”

“Pranks.” You stated.

“Sounds like a great present.” He told you truthfully before motioning with his skull. “let’s keep moving or pap’ll flip. you must be cold in that thin thing.” You nodded and grabbed his hand again before shoving both of your hands into his pocket. He didn’t have any body heat but already your chilled hands was warming as it also warmed the lining of the pocket. Sans gave you a side-eyed look but didn’t say anything as you two continued walking to your next destination.
Chapter Notes

This chapter is so shippy. I swear this is still only queerplatonic. *sweats nervously* I-I did warn that it may get shipper.

As it turned out, your “limo” that Papyrus had hired for you was actually a limo. A real one. You had stared at it while Sans seemingly brushed it off and climbed right in through the door a human was holding open for him. Where had Papyrus even gotten the money to hire a limo? And for that matter why? Where were the two of you going? You were starting to feel apprehensive about this date. If it was anyone but Papyrus you would think that something illegal was involved. As it was, perhaps this human was just one of Papyrus’s many friends?

Just remember that this night out is more for Sans than it is for you.

You climbed into the back of the limo with Sans and gazed around you at the open seating. The seats extended the length of the car and was clearly meant for multiple people. You felt like you were going to prom or something. Sans had found the mini fridge and was peering inside of it curiously. The car started moving and you considered just staying in your seat –like a good child- but you probably weren’t gonna be in a limo again soon so you joined him.

“a lot of alcohol.” Sans pointed out to you pulling out a bottle of wine before he held it out to you. “want some?” You stared at the bottle completely disinterested. “yeah looks pretty gross.” He agreed and put it back before shutting the door to the fridge and just sitting on the floor. You had never really sat on the floor of a moving car before so you joined him. “did my brother get you too?” You gave him a questioning look. He gestured to his outfit.

“Undyne.” You corrected.

“she in on it?” You shrugged. He stared at your bare knees. “isn’t it cold for a human?”

“Yes.” You responded. You two lapsed into an awkward silence with him gazing unfocused at your knees and you staring at the opposite end of the limo. The two of you had never tried to force conversation before. You never saw the need to and eventually as Sans relaxed more around you he had stopped trying as well. Had Gaster really ruined your relationship so much? You weren’t even angry or scared of Sans anymore. You had even grabbed his hand (twice) to show him this. So why were things still so strange?

The limo slowed a stop and was left idling. You stood up and approached the windows. That had been a really short drive. You couldn’t see out of the tinted windows well but you didn’t have to as the door was opened and held for you both. Sans climbed out first and you followed after him just to stare at your destination.

It was New Grillby’s.

You and Sans shared confused looks before he led the way –like he had done many times before- into the bar. You were expecting the familiar scent of monster alcohol and grease but you could
barely smell the grease. The interior of the bar was completely different. There was a single table in the middle of the room with a white tablecloth, flower, and candle on it. There had been a rug placed under the table. Where the booths were was instead a large plywood cutout of a cupid that was... actually kind of creepy. It had a picture of Papyrus’s face on it and had a speared meatball on the end of the notched arrow. The lights were turned down low and the candles placed sporadically around the room were some of the few light sources.

There was a single podium behind which you discovered Papyrus himself. He was dressed up like one of those fancy French waiters and had what appeared to be a paper mustache taped just above his teeth. He grinned at the sight of you two. “BONSOIR!!” He shouted in quite possibly the worst French accent you had ever heard. The only reason why you knew it was supposed to be a French accent was because of the greeting. “WELCOME TO THE GREAT PAPYRUS’S FRENCH RESTAURANT. I WILL BE YOUR WAITER. YOUR TABLE IS READY!” He ushered the two of you over to the table and took both of your coats (chucking Sans’s a little violently across the room. Looks like Sans had broken Papyrus’s dress code). Sans watched the whole thing looking terribly amused before turning to you to share in his grin. You resisted the urge to giggle at the ridiculousness.

You both took your seats. Sans leaned on his elbow and grinned at his brother tilting his face into his hand a little. “s’great papyrus.” He said.


“yeah he is.” Obviously-Not-Papyrus beamed. His mustache shifted some. You eyed it. Would it fall off? “so then. what’s our waiter’s name?”

“MOI AM PEPERUS, THE GREATEST WAITER IN THE WORLD!”

“nice to meet you.”

“SAME. NOW, MAY I HAVE YOUR DRINK ORDERS?” Peperus put down a pair of menus. You told him your drink order and Sans asked for ketchup. “RIGHT AWAY, VALUED CONSUMERS. NYEH HEH HEH- I MEAN NYON HON HON……HON?????????” He flew backwards into the kitchen.

Sans snorted and you buried your face into your hands unable to resist the laughter but trying to keep it down for the sake of Peperus not hearing you. “my brother is so cool.” Sans said and you nodded in agreement. From the kitchen you heard a lot of rustling before Peperus returned with both of your drinks. When he placed it down you noticed that Sans’s bottle of ketchup said “Fancy Ketchup” on it.

“HERE ARE YOUR MENUS.” He placed the menus down in front of you two. “MOI WILL BE BACK WITH BREADSTICKS! COMPLEMENTARY! MADE BY WORLD FAMOUS CHEFS!” He hurried back into the kitchen. Was he trying to give you both alone time? You picked up your menu and looked through it. Everything on there was spaghetti…but cooked in different ways. Even the dessert was spaghetti.

“….Grillby.” You muttered suddenly worried.

“hm?”

“Peperus cooking.”
“oh.” Sans understood then and shrugged. “he’s a fire monster. probably used to it.”

“There’s a lot of alcohol.” You pointed out.

Sans didn’t respond. You tried to think of something to say to fill the silence. You looked helplessly at the jukebox and wondered if it still worked. The one in the old Grillby’s was broken but maybe this one wasn’t? You climbed to your feet and walked over to the machine. You flipped through the songs and realized that you didn’t recognize the names of any of them. You decided to just pick a random song but when you felt for your pockets you realized that you didn’t have any. You hadn’t brought any money with you. You went back to your seat reluctantly accepting that other than Peperus’s antics, this would be an awkward date.

Cupid Papyrus smiled encouragingly at you. The meatball dripped like it was bleeding. You looked away from it to find Sans staring at you. You signed him asking why he was staring.

“you’re really gussied up.” He said. “you really wanted this to be a date, huh?”

“I wanted to see you.” You corrected.

He guzzled down some of the fancy ketchup. “you knew where to find me.”

“You knew where to find me.” You shot back.

He eyed you. “angry?”

“No.” And you weren’t. You could understand if Sans would rather rely on his brother more than you. You were used to being unnecessary. You would just rather be told first if you were going to be replaced.

“…i can’t read your mind, kid.”

You didn’t say anything but you could feel your eyes growing hot. You refused to let tears form. It was embarrassing enough that you were getting emotional about this. It wasn’t like you were losing Sans’s friendship. You two would still be friends even if he didn’t talk to you about these things anymore. It was only natural that brothers would prefer to talk to each other instead of some human kid. You would be fine on your own. You always were. As long as Sans kept giving you his jacket you would survive.

Sans was starting to get a little upset. It didn’t show visibly on his face but you could sense the change in his demeanor. His eye sockets looked deeper than ever as the lights of his eyes shrank minutely. “stop that.” He commanded. You blinked at him. “i know you. you’re not thinkin’ anything good. stop.”

You looked away. Then you heard voices from the kitchen. “Shit, Papyrus! Things are going sour! Get back out there!” Even when Undyne was hissing she sounded a little too loud in the silence.

“I-I think they can hear us!” That was Alphys. Undyne must have taken your advice and decided to take her out another night. Why were they wasting their Valentine’s Day here then?

“PLAN B!” Undyne shoved Peperus out of the kitchen doorway carrying a basket of breadsticks. He was sweating and his mustache was crooked as he hurried over and placed the basket on the table.

“AH, HERE ARE YOUR BREADSTICKS! UH, ARE YOU READY TO ORDER? MEANWHILE! I WILL SET THE MOOD!” He looked at his hand. “L’AMORE?” He read. You were fairly sure that was Italian. On cue, music began to play from what sounded like a computer. It
was all in Japanese. You were pretty sure this was the opening to *Kimi ni Todoke*, if you were remembering your anime correctly. Alphys particularly liked that one.

Sans immediately managed to hide his mood and was back to grinning at Peperus. “quick question. actually not a question.” He waited just a moment (enough to aggravate his impatient waiter) and then continued, “spaghetti is italian, not french.”


“yeah we’ll have the spaghetti.” He winked. “just one plate’ll be fine.” At least this meant you could cut the amount of bad cooking you were about to have in half.

Peperus looked relieved and grinned. “COMING RIGHT UP! IF YOU NEED ME, JUST CALL!!” He skipped –literally skipped- back to the kitchen. At least Peperus was happy. Out of the corner of your eye you could spy him, Alphys, and Undyne all watching you two. Sans pulled out his phone and dialed something before holding the phone to his ear. A few moments later you heard Papyrus’s ringtone went off and Peperus fumbled his phone before falling on top of Undyne and Alphys. You could hear the ensuing scramble to shut it off. When the music stopped, Sans put his phone away.

A few moments of hushed talking from the kitchen, though, and then Sans’s phone was ringing. He picked it up nonchalantly. “hey bro.”

“HELLO SANS!! I’M SORRY I MISSED YOUR CALL! I WAS…IN THE BATHROOM!!” You could hear Papyrus both over the phone and in the kitchen.

“we can hear you from the kitchen.”

There was a pause and then Undyne and Papyrus were stage-shouting at each other. You heard the clatter of pans hitting the ground and the back door slam open. Alphys turned up the anime music even louder to drown out the sound of Undyne cursing.

“AH! Y-YOU MUST HAVE HEARD ME IN OUR KITCHEN!! I AM WORKING HARD TO TREAT MY GREATEST LOVE TO A SPECTACULAR DINNER!!” Papyrus shouted over the phone. You took a sip of your drink.

“who’s that?”

“ME!”

“Alright bro. treat yourself right.” Sans said and then clicked off. Another romance anime opening came on.

You were determined to get back on track. “Gaster.”

“no.” Sans immediately responded.

You were determined. “Sans.”

“stop.”

“Sans.”
“kid, I said-”

“Sans.”

“I don’t want to talk about it.” He glared at you. You could see the edging of blue around the one light in his eye. You clenched your fists against your nervous reaction. He instantly deflated after you failed to hide your reaction. He seemed to shrink in on himself some.

“I forgave you.” You said softly so nobody but Sans could hear you over the music. Sans didn’t respond and drank more of his ketchup. You pushed your drink over to him knowing that he wouldn’t want just fancy ketchup all night. He accepted it without response. You tried again, “S’real lonely.”

His eyes shot to you at that. Oh, so he did remember that voicemail. You weren’t sure if he did. Now you felt a little guilty about bringing it up. The lines under his sockets deepened. “…kid what do you want from me?” You grabbed a breadstick and took a bite, chewing in silence. Sans continued, “i messed up just like i always do. what more do you want from me?”

“You.” You stated simply.

“you being close to me only made you an easier target for gaster.” He said bitterly. Finally you were starting to understand his resentment. You scooted your chair closer to the table. It was still like pulling teeth but you had missed actually talking with Sans.

“Gaster would’ve…found me no matter what.” You said. “He……exists all over time. And space. This isn’t your fault.”

“I know that.” He said and looked at you again. “but how the hell am i supposed to forgive myself for this?” He demanded. “i almost killed you and papyrus. if he wasn’t so good at what he does, you both would’ve been dust. you would’ve either RESET or reloaded a SAVE again and where would we be? weeks back? would it be your birthday again, frisk?”

You shrugged.

His eye sockets were dark. “….i can’t lose control like that.” He finally whispered. You took another bite of your breadstick and considered his words. You didn’t personally think it was a big deal. Yes he had almost killed you and Papyrus and almost destroyed the house in his rage but people lost control sometimes. Monsters just had it worse because of how destructive they could be when they were honestly upset.

“I’m not scared of you.” You told him. His sockets were still black. “…You scared me.” You tried something different. “I was…..really scared….but…not of you killing me….but I was scared of losing you.” Now the lights did come back and he gazed at you in confusion. “I didn’t want to lose…any of this. This future….this is the future I want.” You swallowed. “It won’t always be good. But…that’s life. Friends get past the bad times together. Just like in the Underground….My family isn’t whole without you, Sans.”

There was pain that filled his face before he hid his face behind his hand. You didn’t say anything and just waited. It was no longer a matter of yours or Papyrus’s forgiveness but rather if Sans could forgive himself. You knew for a fact it would be difficult. Forgiving yourself was much harder than getting others to forgive you. You doubted that he would decide now…but at least you got your say. You would hope that he would continue to be your friend no matter what.

Sans lowered his hand finally and stared at the table unseeingly. Finally he looked at you with
serious eyes. “that won’t be the last you see of gaster. especially if what you said he wanted you for is true. i….” He hesitated before continuing, “i’ll try to fix up the lab. maybe see if i can find a way to track him. or do something to help you.” You nodded. “….this isn’t flowey, kid. you’ve got help on your side. and this isn’t just your battle so….rely on me, alright?”

You reached across the table and gripped his hand. The band of your ring scraped against his bone. You nodded again to him determinedly. In the past you two had been enemies and then Sans had been a neutral party. Hopefully this time, with his help, perhaps you won’t have to bear the burden of protecting your soul alone. He squeezed your hand back and then released it as Peperus returned. His eyes were shining as he placed the plate of spaghetti down on the table.

“IT LOOKS LIKE EVERYTHING IS GOING WELL HERE!” He announced, pleased. In all honesty you had forgotten the setting you were in because you had been so focused on Sans. “BONE APPETITE.”

Close enough.

Peperus departed again no doubt to spy. You took up the fork bravely and began to spin the pasta on its points. Sans scooped up a bit and popped it into his mouth. You didn’t understand how he didn’t at least make a face when he ate. It must be years of practice. You admired him for that. A song came on that sounded rather similar to that song from a kid’s movie you once watched with dogs eating spaghetti. It was fitting. You stared at Sans and the image of you two reenacting the famous ‘spaghetti kiss’ scene popped into your head. But Sans didn’t have lips so you abandoned the thought.

As it turned out, the spaghetti wasn’t completely terrible. Papyrus was admittedly getting better with his cooking but it was still pretty nasty. At least now it was edible. One day Toriel would be able to teach him how to properly season and cook but today was not that day. For the most part you and Sans were left alone and despite the atmosphere you were relaxed. Things weren’t perfect but you could tell that your friend was more open to you again. You two managed to chat about simple things like school and work and both had hypotheses about how Papyrus had rented out New Grillby’s on a famous date night. All in all you had a fairly good evening.

“check please.” Sans said as Peperus stood over you two for hopefully the last time. His mustache was barely hanging in there now.

“NO WORRIES, VALUED GUESTS!! DINNER IS FREE ON VALENTINE’S DAY.”

“that’s great. what about dessert?” Sans a little too casually.

Peperus –being the unsuspecting not-Papyrus he is- didn’t suspect a thing. “JUST ONE MOMENT!” He promised and made to move back to the kitchen when he cried out in anger. You turned and saw a white dog munching on the meatball that cupid Papyrus had speared. Cupid Papyrus had a grin of outrage on its face. “HEY!! GET OUT OF HERE, DOG!!” Peperus shouted and he ran to grab the dog. The dog startled and dashed to the side causing the cupid Papyrus to wobble and topple. Peperus, too close to it, cried out in alarm and managed to dodge but got a faceful of conveniently-misplaced cream pie that had been set on top of the cutout.

The French-Italian waiter ripped the pie off of his face in disgust and faced towards you two. His mustache had lost its battle to a creamy death and was gone forever. Sans was grinning like it was the best present he had received a while. “oh.” He said casually. “there you are pa-pie-rus.”

“SANS!!!!!!”

==
You two were kicked out of the restaurant.

Just as he had told Asgore, Sans brought you back to Toriel’s that night. It wasn’t particularly late but it was a good time for you to take a warm bath and get some of Toriel’s cooking into you before bed. You and Sans stood outside the backdoor (because the front of the house was still being repaired) and watched your breath fog in the cold air. Your face was still warm from New Grillby’s and you two had gotten back to your house even faster by taking shortcuts than by limo.

“normally dates would kiss each other at the end.” Sans told you casually.

“Kid date…” You muttered to yourself remembering yesterday. Sans waited for you the explain but you didn’t.

“hey. tomorrow after school…wanna help me clean up the lab?” He said instead.

“…I need help with science homework.” You bargained. You really were stuck on your stupid homework.

His grin broadened in response. “sure.”

“Okay.” You agreed and grabbed his arm to turn him towards you. You aimed for a grateful kiss on the cheek but he turned his head at the last moment and you got his teeth. Both of you hopped back a little in surprise and gaped a little.

“h-heh heh. that was awkward. i was kidding about the kiss.” He tried valiantly to recover for you both.

You nodded and signed him a quick good night before going in through the back door. You felt your cheeks burning but you glanced once over your shoulder to see his own cheeks blue and felt much better about your embarrassment.

(And a little proud. You had made him blush again.)

You quickly ignored what just occurred and hurried through the house in search for your mom to let her know you were home safe. Along the way you spotted a bouquet of flowers in a vase on the table. It gave you pause. All of the flowers in there were flowers that your mom liked. You only knew one other person other than you who was aware of this information. You grinned. The flowers weren’t even a little burnt.

Officially in a great mood you moved into the living room to find your mom reading in front of the fire. She looked up at your smile and reciprocated it. “Welcome back, my child! How was your date?”

“I had my first kiss.”

“What!?”

Chapter End Notes

How many prompts did I cover in here?
-Date
- More blushing Sans
- Peperus
- Kiss
- Science homework(??) (I'll bring it up again later)

I think one more but whatever. I hope whichever prompters are happy with this!

EDIT: I forgot to add! Okay so I'm taking a short break from this particular story to start doing some Sans POV Side-Stories. Keep a look out for that! I'm gonna take a day or two off first though. Although, knowing me, I may actually post sooner. But I'm gonna at least take tomorrow off.
Fusion

Chapter Summary

Papyrus wants to try to use his blasters but needs a little help from Sans. You learn something new every day with these monsters.

Chapter Notes

So I tried something a little different here. It's more out there than the rest of the series but I honestly really love the idea of it. Hopefully it goes well for you guys! It's kind of a filler chapter anyway.

You were walking home from school when you spotted Papyrus and Undyne walking off together further into the woods. It was a particularly warm winter’s day and although the sun was starting to set you found you didn’t quite want to go home yet. What were Papyrus and Undyne up to? Papyrus was wearing his battle body which meant they may be going to train. Curious, you followed after them. The two of them were much taller than you though and had longer strides so you jogged to catch up and tugged on the hem of Undyne’s skirt to get her attention.

“Heya punk!” Undyne grinned widely at you and ruffled your hair some. You shook your head and smoothed your hair down. “You coming with us?”

You signed to them: “Where?”

“I AM GOING TO SHOW UNDYNE THE BLASTERS! YOU KNOW…” He trailed off meaningfully. “THE BLASTERS!” Undyne shot him a suspicious look but you nodded. You were rather surprised that Papyrus hadn’t brought up the blasters sooner. It had taken all three of you by surprise that he could use an attack you thought only Sans could use.

“I still think you’re full of it, Papyrus!” Undyne said and the three of you started walking again. Looks like they were trying to find a good clearing. Couldn’t hurt any innocent bystanders. “Did you just make up the technique or…?”

“NO. IT'S SANS'S ATTACK, I THINK.” Papyrus said.

“Sans? Your brother doesn’t even train though. I didn’t know he knew any kind of attack magic.”

Papyrus looked a little offended on Sans’s account. “MY BROTHER IS DEFINITELY SUPER LAZY! BUT HE KNOWS ALL THE SAME ATTACKS I DO! WE LEARNED TOGETHER!”

Undyne’s eyebrows went up, impressed. “Really?? Then why the hell doesn’t he use it?? He doesn’t seem very strong!”

“ACTUALLY SANS HAS A LOT MORE GOING ON WITH HIM THEN ANYONE WOULD KNOW! I, MYSELF, HAVE ONLY RECENTLY REALIZED HOW MUCH!” You looked at
Papyrus in shock. Was he about to just give away secrets like that? Papyrus wasn’t known for being subtle but…

“Really? Like what?” Undyne asked curiously.

Papyrus winced ever so slightly. “SORRY, UNDYNE. IT’S….PERSONAL.”

Undyne was taken aback. “Oh….No, that’s cool. I get it. Your brother just has always been a real mystery to, hell, everyone.”

“THAT’S BECAUSE HE DOESN’T LIKE TALKING ABOUT ANYTHING TO ANYONE!”
He grinned at you. “EXCEPT FRISK!”

Undyne chortled. “THAT’S BECAUSE FRISK IS DATING HIM!” She turned to you. “Hey Frisk, how’d the date go anyway? When I was with Asgore not long after the poor guy looked like he was about to have a heart attack at whatever Toriel told him!”

You kept your face straight. You and Sans hadn’t actually talked about the accidental kiss. You had been feeling a little devious when you had told your mom that you and Sans had shared a kiss but you weren’t sure you wanted it to become a big deal. After all, Sans was still an adult and you were a kid. While the dating thing seemed to be fine with monsters, other humans would no doubt take it badly. And if Papyrus knew that you had kissed Sans, he would probably post it. You didn’t want your poor old father dying from shock. Best not to stir up more trouble.

You shrugged neurally.

“Ugh, LAAAAAAAME!! When the hell is Sans gonna step up to the plate?? How long have you two been dating?”

“HERE’S A GOOD SPOT! NICE AND OPEN AND NOT FULL OF DATING TALK!!”

Papyrus called cheerfully and motioned to the large open area. You couldn’t even hear the sounds of the city from here. You were all out a decent distance. You took a moment to shoot off a text to Asgore about how you were out with friends at the moment. You paused before also sending one to Sans about Papyrus.

Undyne just chuckled. “What’s up with that? I thought you shipped these two?” She pointed at you with her thumb.

“DOESN’T MEAN THE THOUGHT OF SANS DOING ANYTHING WITH FRISK ISN’T SUPER WEIRD!” He sweat a little bit. “IT DOESN’T HELP THAT I READ ALPHYS’S FANFICTION!”

Undyne cackled. “OH MAN the look on your face then!!” She slapped her knee and wiped a tear from her eye. You couldn’t believe that there was actually fanfiction of you with Sans. Didn’t Alphys say that real life was better than fanfiction? Maybe she had only meant in terms of your parents. Although you had to admit that your life was probably interesting enough to warrant a fanfiction or even a video game, you weren’t so sure that a shipping fanfiction would be so interesting. You were tempted to look it up just to see any responses, though. You definitely were not going to read it.

“Anyway, let’s see those blasters!” She called and took a position like she was going to fight back. Papyrus shook his head.

“I’M NOT HITTING YOU WITH THEM!”
“Oh come on! They sound awesome!”

He shook his head again. “UNDYNE, THEY’RE REALLY DANGEROUS! I DON’T WANT TO USE THEM ON A FRIEND!” You nodded in agreement. They definitely did not feel good to take a hit from.

“NGAAAHHHH! FINE.” She sulked as she stepped aside. “Show us what you can do!”

Your phone beeped in your pocket and you looked at it. Sans was asking you where you guys were. Did you worry him? Maybe he really should be here for this. You gave the best description you could of where you were.

“HERE I GO!!” Papyrus widened his stance and stretched his hands out. You could see the sweat forming on his brow as he focused. You squinted in the bright sun trying to see if his eye was glowing again. You tried to look at his left eye before you remembered that it was his right one that had glowed at that time. Right now, though, it wasn’t glowing. The three of you were silent and you could sense the change in the atmosphere as Papyrus summoned up his magic…but nothing else appeared with it.

He lowered his arm, baffled. “IT DIDN’T WORK!”

Undyne looked to be in her serious teacher mode. “Are you focusing well?”

“OF COURSE! I AM GREAT WITH MAGIC!”

“But this isn’t something you’ve used often?”

“I’VE ONLY USED IT ONCE!”

“hey bro.” Sans was right next to you. Undyne and Papyrus turned to see him and Papyrus grinned.

“SANS! YOU’RE JUST IN TIME FOR ME TO SHOW OFF MY AWESOME USE OF THE BLASTERS!”

“oh yeah. saw that. you didn’t quite manage it though.” Sans was smiling next to you but you could see the stiffness in him. Was he alright?

“YES….SANS WHAT DO I NEED TO DO AGAIN? LAST TIME WAS AN ACCIDENT, AFTER ALL.”

“An ACCIDENT? Man, it was totally a fluke then!” Undyne said. “Yo Sans! Show us how it’s done! Maybe a demonstration will help!”

“UNDYNE’S RIGHT!” Papyrus agreed but then he seemed to hesitate a bit. You could see that he was remembering the exact scenario that the last time the blasters had been used occurred. He studied his brother a moment before continuing. “YOU’LL SHOW US, RIGHT? SO THAT I MAY PERFECT IT!”

“s’not that big of a deal.” Sans tried to blow it off. There was some sweat on the back of his skull. “you’re great enough without them, papyrus.”

“OF COURSE! BUT WITH THE BLASTERS I WILL BE UNDEFEATED! IMAGINE IF ANYONE TRIED TO HURT FRISK! LIKE SAY, A PERSON THAT CAN’T TAKE PHYSICAL ATTACKS WHICH FRISK OF COURSE CAN ONLY USE!”
Your eyes widened some. That’s what this was about? Papyrus was trying to help protect you from Gaster? But there was no guarantee that even magic would hurt him. And the blasters seemed a bit extreme. Perhaps the machine couldn’t save him but maybe there was another way to bring him and the monsters back?

Sans side-eyed you and you tiled your head slightly. Sans sighed and then signed to you: “Scare you?”

“HEY! No sign language that I haven’t learned yet!” Undyne called scowling and crossing her arms. She was the farthest behind in learning sign language mostly because of how busy she was. She didn’t get the chance to study with you often.

But Papyrus did understand and he was looking to you for your reaction too. He seemed surprised but then again he probably didn’t know just how badly Sans scared you. You didn’t doubt that Papyrus was aware that Sans had killed you a number of times over but maybe he didn’t quite understand how badly that had affected you. Well. You wouldn’t be the one to tell him.

Would you be alright with seeing the blasters? You had only ever saw them in bad situations. The very thought of them made your blood run cold but…you were strong. They weren’t going to hurt you. Even as you nodded to Sans and Papyrus you hurried over to join Undyne. If anything you knew she could protect you if anything went wrong.

“……alright then.” Sans walked over to join his brother with his hands casually in his pockets. “……they aren’t your normal thing, pap,” He said, “so don’t expect them to come easy. you always had trouble with it.”

“Psst, hey kid.” Undyne said, crouching down to be on your level. You looked at her and tilted your head in question. “Can Sans really summon up these awesome blasters??? Isn’t he, like, super weak? Health-wise, I mean.”

“Sans is lazy.” You said and pointed at him. As you two watched a blaster formed from nothing to spin around Sans. His eye was glowing and your hands were beginning to shake. Undyne gaped at the sight of the monstrous thing. You quickly put your hands in your pockets. “…But he’s strong.”

“Holy hell!” Undyne jumped to her feet. Sans was telling Papyrus how to work the magic but so far he hadn’t even shot the laser. You could see his blue eye occasionally drifting to you and you had to steel yourself against the sight so as to not cringe away. Your heart was pounding in fear in your chest as visions and instances of the times you had seen that blue fire burned in your mind. You clenched your eyes and shook your head.

Papyrus made a frustrated noise. “I DON’T UNDERSTAND WHY IT’S NOT WORKING!!”

“maybe your LOVE isn’t strong enough…” Sans muttered to himself.

“THAT’S NOT FUNNY.” Papyrus shot back.

“I feel like I’ve missed something.” Undyne told you.

“Personal?” You suggested.

“…Probably.” She agreed reluctantly. Papyrus and Undyne, you knew, were close to each other. It wasn’t like Papyrus to keep secrets from anyone. It looked like your secrets probably wouldn’t be hidden for long. …This wasn’t helping your current state of mind.

Papyrus still hasn’t managed to summon up the blasters. Sans vanished his own. “maybe it really was
a fluke.” He suggested.

“BUT YOU’VE TAUGHT ME BEFORE!”

“we were both pretty young then. our magic was different. no proper training.”

“I DON’T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT FEELS LIKE.” Papyrus crossed his arms, unsatisfied. “I WASN’T FOCUSING ON THAT WHEN I SUMMONED THE BLASTERS LAST TIME!!!” He turned to his brother. “SANS, YOU SHOULD SHOW ME HOW IT FEELS!”

Sans raised an eyebrow bone. “you talkin’ about fusion?”

Your eyes widened. “Fusion?” You asked, looking between all three of them.

“You two can fuse??” Undyne cried and then she paused. “Actually that makes total sense!”

“WE’VE BEEN ABLE TO DO IT FOR YEARS! WE JUST NEVER DO!” Papyrus said. “because it takes up a lot of magic.” Sans explained for your benefit. You were still goggling at them though. What did this mean they could fuse? Like…Amalgamates? Or like something else? Maybe like that tv show with the gem aliens? “we’re mostly made of magic so we can, uh, blend together to form a new body. the souls stay separate though.”

“…I wanna see.” You breathed.

“Yeah, same here!” Undyne was grinning looking pumped up. “I’ve never actually seen a fusion!” For your sake she added, “Monsters need to have similar magic to each other. So usually it’s siblings and family members that can fuse. But,” she scratched the back of her head, “I don’t have family left so I never got to actually try it.”

Did that mean Asgore and Toriel could fuse if they wanted to? You tried to imagine in but then realized that Toriel probably wouldn’t even let Asgore come close to it. She was barely in the stages of forgiving him and becoming friends with him let alone willing to merge into one body.

But Sans and Papyrus? That sounded awesome! You nodded in encouragement and Papyrus gave an excited and hopeful smile to Sans. Sans caved under the force of his friends’ excitement. “alright.” He winked. “s’been a while. sorry if i’m rusty.”

“DON’T WORRY! YOU’VE GOT ME FOR SUPPORT!”

“that’s perfect, bro.” And then the both of them fell silent as their eyes fell close. You and Undyne watched as their bodies began to glow with their magic. The magical aura became so thick that you thought that you had just lost sight of their bodies before you realized that the magic was their bodies now. They had completely melted down their forms. Together the magic reached for each other and began to blend and overlap. It was astounding to watch like the blending of two different liquids if the liquids had glitter in them. The magic looked the same as the flames that would burn in the two brothers’ eye sockets.

Within a series of long moments there were no longer two entities. The magic swirled together in a whirlpool of colors before a shape began to emerge. It was as tall as Papyrus but it was definitely a bit stockier like Sans. You could see the outline of armor that Papyrus had been wearing but even as you watched you could see Sans’s coat forming. Then the body really began to form and you squinted against the blurriness before the form settled.

Standing before you was a whole new person and you couldn’t help your amazed stare. Even the
clothing had fused! But this skeleton before you certainly wasn’t Sans or Papyrus. The facial bones were softer like Sans’s but the face was longer like Papyrus’s. There was unadulterated joy in the eye sockets as this skeleton examined itself.

“Awesome!” He cried and spun around. “My cape is still here!” His voice was deep and strange. You had expected to hear Papyrus but the voices sounded almost like the two were overlapping. But overlapping in a way that they sounded almost as one. You still couldn’t believe your eyes. “But…of course the cape is still here.” He seemed to tell himself. “It’s just a fusion. Where would the particles for the cape go? The matter needs to go somewhere because the clothes aren’t made of magic unlike my body so-”

“SANS I WOULD APPRECIATE THE TONING DOWN OF YOUR SCIENCE INFORMATION. THOSE THOUGHTS GIVE ME A HEADACHE!” The skeleton suddenly cut himself off and you instantly recognized Papyrus’s inflection and way of speaking.

“Whoa-ho-ho!! LOOK are you two!!” Undyne cried and ran over to inspect the new skeleton. “I can’t believe how badass this is!”

“It’s quite awesome! But then, of course, Papyrus is part of me so of course I’m awesome!” The skeleton bragged. He shoved his hands into his coat pockets—although the coat now looked more like a long sleeved shirt more than anything—and he grinned at you. “What d’ya think, Frisk?”

You approached hesitantly but not without any small amount of curiosity. You squinted at him and then reached out to touch his gloved hand. He grinned and took your hand before sweeping you up into his arms and to your utter amazement he even smelled the same as them. Like bones. You wrapped your arms around his neck and hugged him back.

“Awesome!” You said.

“What do you even call yourself?? Papans? Sansyus??” Undyne questioned. “What do fusions even call themselves??”

“Comic Papyrus, actually.” Comic Papyrus said as he maneuvered you to sit on his shoulder. Actually now that you were up here he was actually taller than Papyrus. He was at least Undyne’s height and Undyne was already taller than Papyrus. His shoulders were wider too but the armor helped with that. You could sit somewhat comfortably there but you also felt the familiar sensation of blue magic making you lighter.

“That’s a mouthful.” Undyne said. You were more wondering where he got the name from.

“Hmm…you’re right.” Comic Papyrus thought for a few moments.

“Syrus.” You suggested.

“Heh heh, that’s a great idea!” Comic Papyrus agreed enthusiastically. He swung you down from his shoulders and deposited you on the ground and released his magic from upon you. “Syrus! Short and sweet! And less of a mouthful! Now I don’t have to keep calling myself that name!” Syrus stopped. “But Comic Papyrus is a great name.” His tone of voice changed to a drawl you recognized anywhere, “it’s because we’re funny as hell, right?” Syrus’s face scrunched. “IS THAT A JOKE?”

“Stop arguing with yourself!!” Undyne said and Syrus jumped before turning back to her. “Fusion is exhausting, isn’t it? Let’s see there blasters at work, baby!!”

“She’s right.” Syrus said and turned a bit more serious. “I already am feeling tired…Alright! Let’s do this! Nyeh heh heh heh!!” He motioned for both of you to step away and you backed up a fair
distance with Undyne. When he saw you were both safely back he found a tree and focused before summoning up two blasters. Both of his eyes burned with the two colored flames of the brothers’ magic. It was both intimidating and exciting to see.

“OH! NOW I GET IT.” Syrus said. “…I DON’T KNOW IF I LIKE IT.”

“it’s not for fun.” Syrus also said. “now pay attention.” Syrus stretched out his hand and the lasers charged quickly in the mouths of the skull-shaped weapons. You cowered slightly out of preservation instinct. Undyne pulled you close to her protectively and shot you a quick smile before she focused her attention back on the action. “There!” Syrus commanded and twin blasts erupted and shattered straight through the trees. They took out everything in their paths for a good fifteen feet from Syrus. You felt the ghost of the memory of them burning your skin.

“HOLY SHIT THAT WAS AMAZING!!” Undyne shouted forgetting her language temporarily. “Hot damn, no wonder you didn’t want to hit me with that! I would’ve been dust in moments!”

“Exactly!” Syrus said even as he beamed with reluctant pride. His eyes kept jumping to you so you tried to assure him with your body language that you were fine. You were shaking, but fine.

“You got it down, then?” She asked.

“Yes! Uh, but I’m not sure about using it any time soon. Especially not for training.”

“I will! …Maybe.”

You tugged on the hem of his shorts to get his attention. “What’s it like?” You asked. “…Being a fusion.”

Syrus seemed to consider it. “Same as if you were in your own body….but with someone else there.” Suddenly Syrus winced. “…that, uh, wasn’t a good description.” You didn’t like it at all either. “sorry kid. It’s hard to explain any other way.”

“Is it worth it, though? Are you more powerful combined?” Undyne asked.

“Definitely!” Syrus perked back up from his slip-up. “I bet I could take you!”

“OH I am SO up for that challenge!” She summoned her spears.

“Uh…” Syrus sweated. “Actually…let’s not.” He held his head and swayed slightly. “…SANS, YOU HAVEN’T BEEN RESTING ENOUGH.” He muttered to himself. That, you knew, was partially your fault. You had woken Sans up last night with another nightmare. You two had spent the night curled up under a blanket on the couch and watching reruns of children’s shows you hadn’t seen in years. Neither of you managed any more sleep that night.

Undyne vanished her spears and frowned worriedly. “Maybe you two should separate, then. We can fight next time! And there WILL be a fight next time!”

“YES MOM.” Syrus said before adding under his breath, “bro that was really weird to say.” The next moment his body began to glow and you saw Syrus fade back into the two separate brothers. It was almost like watching the fusion in reverse. When the two bodies had reformed, both were collapsed on their knees and covered in sweat. Sans slumped to the ground.

“I FORGOT HOW EXHAUSTING THAT IS!!” Papyrus complained as he struggled to his feet.
Undyne helped him up. You went to Sans side. He hadn’t moved so far.

“Sans?” You asked.

“erg…don’t worry about me, kid.” He gave you a tremulous smile. His bones seemed more bleached than usual. “i’ll be fine. just gotta get myself grounded enough to stand.” You gave a small smile at his weak joke. He seemed to appreciate it.

“CAN YOU STAND?” Your other friends joined you. “DO YOU NEED HELP?”

“i’m literally gonna pass out if i stand up, bro. help. someone call life alert.”

“Oh crap, he’s sick!” Undyne said and both of them lifted Sans up onto Papyrus’s back. As soon as he was secured Sans really did pass out. It was alarming to see him suddenly slump and his sockets go dark like a puppet with its strings cut.

“LOOKS LIKE WE OVERDID IT.” Papyrus fretted. “I’M GONNA GET HIM HOME! HE’LL NEED SOUP AND A BLANKET! FRISK, I’M SORRY BUT NO SLEEPOVER TONIGHT! CAN’T LET YOU CATCH IT.”

“Sick?” You asked. You were unsure you could even catch monster sickness. Where had it even come from? There were no signs before!

Papyrus ran off with his brother so Undyne had to answer you. She was eyeing the destroyed trees. Hopefully nobody would be bothered by the destruction. “Magic sickness. It happens when we’re almost fully drained on our magic. Weakens us enough that it’s a lot like when humans get sick cuz we’re made of magic, y’know?” Undyne ruffled your hair at your worried look. “Don’t freak out, punk! He’ll be just fine. He’s got his brother to dote on him! Er….” She hesitated looking a little more doubtful. “Actually….Papyrus’s cooking may not be so great for a sick monster…..” You were both silent for a beat before Undyne’s grin was back. “Well! Looks like you’re staying with me tonight since your scheduled sleepover is cancelled! BE PREPARED FOR ALL KINDS OF GIRLY CRAP BECAUSE WE ARE GONNA HAVE THE BEST SLUMBER PARTY TWO BESTIES COULD HAVE!!” She roared. And then she paused and gave a sheepish chuckle. “And Alphys, of course.”
You've been (forced) to have a sleepover with Alphys and Undyne! Somehow, though, certain secrets keep getting brought up. Perhaps when one domino falls, the others will start falling too.

You stood inside of Undyne and Alphys’s house carrying your bag of sleepover supplies. Such supplies included your bathroom necessities, some clothing, your phone charger, a portable fire extinguisher (that your mom insisted you take to anybody’s house during a sleepover, not just Undyne’s), your laptop, and your cosplay. So far Undyne had abandoned you to go get changed while you were left with Alphys. The woman smiled at you and you smiled back. It had been a while since you had spent time with Alphys.

“Would you like to, um, put your stuff in your room?” Alphys asked and motioned to the spare room upstairs. You nodded, but first put the fire extinguisher next to the couch. It needed to be in a place you could get to it quickly. Alphys didn’t protest the fire extinguisher even though she had one already in the kitchen. It was a robot charged with putting out fires. It was a little faulty.

Both of you walked up stairs and you heard the shower running as Undyne bathed. “I-I wasn’t really expecting company.” Alphys explained as she glanced around the somewhat-messy house. There were bits and pieces of technology and anime everywhere. Undyne had left some of her weights out and her spears leaning against the wall. “Undyne didn’t tell me you were staying over.”

“Surprise.” You said with a shrug.

“S-Surprise??”

“To both of us.” You nodded. Alphys’s lips twitched in amusement. You both entered the spare bedroom and you put your stuff onto the floor. You took the time to explain how this situation had come about and Alphys appeared surprised.

“Sans and Papyrus FUSED??” She tapped her bitten nails against her mouth. “I thought Sans stopped that after Ga—” She suddenly cut herself off, wide-eyed. “I-I MEAN.....! WOW. SANS AND PAPRYUS CAN FUSE!! HAHAHA I HAD NO IDEA!!” She fell silent realizing just how horrible her lie really was and she sweated nervously.

You wondered not for the first time if you should tell her about Gaster. Alphys was the only other person who knew about the scientist, and Papyrus had a point in saying that she could help. Or at least deserved to know. But if you did tell her, would she ask for an explanation as to why he wanted
you? Did she know anything about your powers? Sans had told you that, no, she did not. But it was more because she wasn’t interested in the time stream rather than because she couldn’t understand. If Alphys had taken the time to read the reports Sans had looked at down in the True Lab to track anomalies, she would’ve been able to put the pieces together.

You didn’t want to get into that conversation now. It was hard enough with Papyrus knowing. Alphys......had come to hate you in a lot of timelines. And you had inadvertently caused her death in many more of those. She may not have fallen at your hands, but you had killed her nonetheless with your actions. The thought still chilled you. Did she dream about it? Papyrus confirmed that he dreamt of past timelines but...

The awkward silence was getting louder. You decided to try a middle ground. A way to set the path for yourself without actually traveling down it yet. “I...know about Gaster.”

Alphys gaped and then her mouth snapped closed. Her demeanor, like last time you had talked to her about Gaster, had changed. She seemed sadder and much more serious. You understood that reaction now. “S-Sans...told you?” You nodded. She turned to the side and twiddled with her fingers nervously. “I...I didn’t expect him to....of all people.....I thought I would cave first.” She turned back to you. “Wh-what...What do you....think?”

You considered her words. What did you think about Gaster? Or, what did you think about the things they did? Or, what did you think about Alphys now? You didn’t know what she was asking. “...I don’t like Gaster...” You confessed softly. “Or...I don’t like what I’ve heard about him...” You didn’t hate Gaster. You pitied him. A part of you still wonders what would have happened if you had allowed Gaster to take your soul. “But...I’m not judging you...or Sans.”

She watched you impassively and seriously. You couldn’t recall a time Alphys looked so serious. She seemed to be waiting for you to say more, but you didn’t know what to say. So you just stared back at her. Finally she broke and her face crumbled because she turned away. She took off her glasses and covered her eyes as her body trembled. You were alarmed. You hadn’t wanted to start off your sleepover like this! It was supposed to be a fun night! Why did you even bring this up?

Alphys sniffled and gave a watery laugh. “Y-you...you don’t really know...how much that means to me, Frisk.” She peeked at you from around her palm. “But at the same time...it doesn’t change much anything. I’ve still...I still helped do terrible things to humans...And monsters...But.” She dropped her hands and fully turned towards you. Her eyes were reddened but she was no longer crying. There appeared to be a type of weight that had lifted off her shoulders. At least a little bit. She smiled weakly. “But...it helps. Th-Thank you, Frisk.”

The shower turned off. It wouldn’t be long now until Undyne joined you two. She just needed to get dressed first. “We all have done terrible things.” You told Alphys. The scientist stared at you with wide eyes, but you wouldn’t elaborate on this part. She was still silent as you smiled at her, and then turned away to unpack a few of your things. From what Undyne had told you on the way over, you all were going out to eat. So you wanted to wear something a little bit nicer than your dirty jeans and tee shirt. Maybe you could wear some slacks and a ribbon in your hair. Of matching colors. Would that be too dressy?

“Uh...” Alphys said to get your attention back. “We’re...um...getting sushi. Did Undyne tell you?” You blinked in surprise and shook your head. Would it be weird for Undyne to eat sushi? “Undyne doesn’t really know what it is.” Alphys informed you with a small sadistic smile before it relaxed into something a little more sincere. “But, uh, she’s eaten fish before. And fish eat fish...right? It should be fine.”

You shrugged and nodded. Your stomach growled. Frankly just getting some food sounded nice.
You had never tried sushi before, but you had seen your human parents eat it before. You weren’t totally sure you would like it, but you wouldn’t be against trying it. You picked up the clothing you were going to wear and held them up to show Alphys. She understood and left the room so you could change.

When you were done, Alphys and Undyne were out in the living room. Undyne was putting her shoes on. She was a bit better dressed than expected, and she looked nice in her sweater dress and leggings. Undyne, despite being very much a tomboy, really knew how to dress. She looked extremely pretty. Her hair was left loose and it covered her eye. She wasn’t wearing her eyepatch. You hurried to join them.

“You all ready then, squirt?” Undyne asked. You nodded and sat down to yank on your boots --you didn’t have anything nicer-- before you followed the two of them out. Undyne actually had a car of her own now. It was rather necessary especially if she was currently living in Ebott. Nobody wanted to rely on Papyrus as their only friend with transportation (because Sans didn’t count). Alphys was currently waiting for her small car because she wanted to use her own money to buy it. The three of you climbed into Undyne’s truck and buckled up before heading out.

“Alphys, you won’t BELIEVE what the heck happened today! Papyrus freaking fused!” Undyne said.

“Ah, uh, Frisk was telling me about it. It’s pretty astounding!”

“Yeah, no kidding!! That skeleton...sometimes I really don’t get what’s going through that adorable skull of his!” Undyne paused and her voice lowered to a more serious tone. “...You know how Pap isn’t good at keeping secrets?”

“Um...yes?” Alphys agreed hesitantly seeing her girlfriend’s change. Alphys shot a look to you but you kept your face impassive.

“He seems to have gained a lot. And suddenly he’s tight-lipped! NnnngAAAHHH!! THAT’S SO FRUSTRATING!!” She raged and hit her steering wheel. “It has GOT to be a great secret if Papyrus won’t even slip a little bit!!”

“W-Well, I mean...everybody has secrets.” Alphys said.

“Yeah, but still...I wanna know!”

“Sushi?” You asked in an effort to change the topic.

“If it’s in the next town over!” Alphys said. “I-I thought it would be fun! Undyne didn’t believe me when I said that humans really do eat sushi and it wasn’t just on anime and Undyne was super psyched to try it and I couldn’t resist either because I haven’t tried sushi made by actual Japanese people and--” Alphys rambled on until Undyne cut her off,

“So we’re gonna go try it! Hey, you ever have it before, Frisk?” You shook your head. “Heck yeah! Let’s try it together then!!”

“I-I’ve made it for myself before.” Alphys continued. “But...they always fell apart. I don’t think I made the rice sticky enough.”

“If it’s as good as you say it is, then we’d better learn how to make it right! I’ll even teach Papyrus how to cook it!”

“No cooking involved.” You said. Well, except maybe the rice. You weren’t too certain about that.
“Great! No chance at fire!”

As it turned out, the sushi place had been a great idea. It was a fairly small place without a lot of customers, but the servers were kind and polite. They only seemed fascinated to see Undyne and Alphys rather than scared. It was a relief. All three of you had a basic grasp over the Japanese words written, and you found it good practice to read the English translations next to the Japanese words. You had been tempted to get a bento, but you had come here for sushi so that was what you would get.

It had been nice chatting with the girls, but the talk with Alphys earlier and what Undyne had mentioned in the truck reminded you of Sans. Was he alright? You still had questions about monster sickness, but the way Undyne made it sound, it was just a temporary thing. Like when you became too fatigued and collapsed and took a while to recover. You had sent a text to Sans earlier to check on him, but he hadn’t responded. Contacting Papyrus had just resulted in a quick assurance that he would handle everything.

You continued to worry, but you were distracted by your friends. They suggested taking pictures instead, so you pulled out your Snapchat app. It was fun taking the pictures. You could grow to like using cameras, which was good because you still had a whole scrapbook to fill.

Sushi was okay, you thought. You weren’t sure how you felt about the raw fish, but you liked the texture of it all. You especially (though it was kind of rude to do in public) liked to take the rolls apart, eat the fish, then scrape the rice off of the seaweed to eat, and then eat the seaweed last. It gave you a feeling of unexplainable satisfaction. Undyne and Alphys had tried as well, but their pointed teeth made it a bit more difficult with the thin seaweed.

The highlight of the night, however, was when Undyne tried the little green ball of wasabi. You and Alphys already knew about the dangers of wasabi from anime and the manga you read. You had sniffed it and tried a tiny bit, but the stinging of your tongue had been unpleasant so you didn’t try it again. You also had mixed feelings about the ginger. You both had tried to warn Undyne about the wasabi, but Undyne, being Undyne, took it as a challenge and ate the whole thing.

Through your laughter and her screaming you had managed another snapchat picture to send to all of your friends. Its caption read: Undyne ate wasabi. It spiced her life up too much. The blur of Undyne rushing by the camera behind your selfie with Alphys only made the whole thing all the more hilarious.

You all hadn’t been allowed to stay in the restaurant much longer than that, but you were politely asked to leave. It seemed most of the servers had been more amused by Undyne’s reaction than anything.

When you all made it back to their house, you were sent upstairs to bathe. Despite the house being rather large, there was only one bathroom with a bath in it, and that was the one in Undyne and Alphys’s (now shared) room. It used to contain a toilet as well, but Undyne broke that. Alphys had tried to fix it, but it ended up becoming a talking toilet and you just weren’t comfortable with the amount of sentience your porcelain throne would have. So you used the tiny bathroom added to the guest room whenever you needed to relieve yourself.

After you were squeaky clean, you went downstairs to discover a strange set-up. The smaller version of the cube bed was laid out in the living room with Undyne and Alphys on top of it. They were surrounded by little bottles of nail polish. There was also a dangerous-looking metal file that looked like it would be more useful in a prison break than in a manicure. Because it was so toasty in the
house (considering Alphys was used to the heat and Undyne hated the cold) both women were dressed in summer pajamas. Alphys had on a nightgown and Undyne was wearing her shorts and a tank top. She was grinning broadly.

You felt a little threatened.

“It’s time for some SLEEPOVER STUFF!!!!” Undyne declared as you crawled onto the bed. “GET OVER HERE AND LET ME DO YOUR HAIR, PUNK!!!!” You hurried to her and turned around to let her grab your hair. You closed your eyes momentarily and prayed to whoever that you would still have hair after this.

“Sensitive.” You warned her.

“I know how hair works!” Undyne shot back as she started to dry your hair with a nearby blow dryer. On the closest table was also a straightener.

“Um...can I see your hands?” Alphys asked. You held out one of your hands to her. Your nails were clean, but they were uneven because they kept breaking. You only gave them the minimum amount of care. Alphys picked up the nail filer and narrowed her eyes at it, displeased.

“You've got knots. Do you even USE conditioner?!”

“...No...” You admitted. It felt like an unnecessary step to you. You were used to two-in-one shampoos, but your parents no longer got you that.

Undyne gave a cry of disgust. She yanked your hair again by accident. “Start using conditioner!! We all know you have some kind of weird hair-petting fetish, so make sure your hair doesn’t have knots in it! Conditioner will make that thing SMOOTH AS ONE OF MUFFET’S SPIDER WEBS!!!”

You had to admit, Muffet’s spider webs really were smooth. Even when you were getting stuck in them.

Wait, how the heck did even Undyne know that you liked to get your hair played with? You narrowed your eyes at Alphys, and she gave you a nervous smile as she carefully tried to file your nails. “Papyrus.” She explained, and it all made sense. All of the town probably knew, then.

“You don’t like it?” You asked Undyne. “Having your hair played with.”

Undyne didn’t respond but her hands stilled temporarily. The pause was telling, but then she shouted, “Of course I don’t!! I don’t have a stupid weakness like that! That’s a human thing!!” Alphys looked over the rims of her glasses at you and winked. You grinned. It was nice building a repertoire of blackmail against your friends. Not that you would ever use it maliciously, but it would even the playing field a bit.

Undyne switched to drying your hair and you all fell silent over the noise of it. You pulled your phone out of your pocket with your free hand and began to scroll through your messages. Sans hadn’t responded at all, but Papyrus had snapchatted you back. It was a picture of him with Sans. Sans looked bleached and had dark lines under his sockets, but he was giving a weary smile. He had a bowl of soup in his lap that, according to Papyrus’s words on the photo, wasn’t made by Papyrus himself. Was it canned soup? It looked rather delicious.
In response you motioned for the other two to gather in close and you all took a shot together. That was a good one. You wondered if you could save it to your phone.

Undyne finished drying your hair and Alphys had gone to looking at the nail polish colors.
“Anime?” You asked her.

“Actually!” Alphys perked up at the thought. “I found a good one! Madoka Magica! I’ve heard that it’s sad but it’s a good story to watch! I was thinking we can all watch it together!” She hesitated. “Even...Sans.”

“What the heck is your problem with him anyway?” Undyne asked as she straightened your hair. She was actually pretty gentle with your hair after she toned down the pulling.

“I d-don’t have a problem with him!” Alphys sighed. This didn’t sound like it was the first time they had talked about this. “Sans and I just have a...complicated relationship. It’s mutual.”

“You say that, but how complicated can it be?” Undyne muttered. You and Alphys shared a look and then turned away at the same time. You wondered how little Undyne actually knew about Alphys’s past. Everyone was aware of the determination experiments on monsters...but how many of them knew about the determination experiments with the humans? You weren’t even sure how much your dad knew about the experiments. You were too afraid to ask.

Alphys finally decided on a light pink for your nails and started painting them. Her hands were shaking a little and caused some of the pain to go onto your cuticles. “It’s...um...” She started softly. You hadn’t expected her to continue, “very complicated.” She looked to you again. You didn’t say anything and watched her curiously. You wouldn’t allow your reactions to influence her. “...Sans and I...have a history together...” Undyne suddenly stiffened behind you and you thought you smelled your hair burning. “N-N-NOT LIKE THAT!!” Alphys cried, and you jerked away so your hair wouldn’t burn. Undyne cursed.

“Sorry! Sorry!!” She ran a hand over your hair. Luckily it was just damp enough that the strands didn’t burn. She put the straightener aside and shifted over so she was sitting next to you instead. “How DO you mean, then?” She demanded.

Alphys nervously closed up the nail polish. You silently blew on the nails she had already painted. “Um...Sans and I....used to, um, work together...” She rubbed at her scales. “On the...determination...experiments...and other things...”

“Whoa whoa, wait. Sans was a SCIENTIST?? IS A SCIENTIST????”

“Yes.”

Undyne looked absolutely floored. She stared at the bed for a few long moments before looking at you. “Did you know this too?”

“Yes.” You nodded.

“Why didn’t Papyrus tell me?!” She demanded, suddenly upset.

“He didn’t know.” You quickly defended him, and now even Alphys was shocked. Then her face cleared in realization before she looked sad. “But now he does.”

Undyne watched you for a few long seconds before it clicked. “Oh. So earlier today...” You nodded. “But...What the heck?? Why was he being so personal about it?!”
“There’s more to the story,” You said, “that wasn’t his place to tell.” You looked at Alphys and then back at Undyne. The fish woman stared at Alphys now and you could practically see the pieces falling into place in her head. You didn’t want to talk about this anymore. Undyne and Alphys should probably have this talk in private rather than with you. So you put your hand on Alphys’s knee to draw her attention. You gave her a reassuring smile before glancing pointedly down at your nails. She took the hint.

“U-Um...so...Madoka Magica.”
Chapter Summary

Things just go from bad to worse.

Chapter Notes

So wow. This sleepover was supposed to be fun. Apparently my muse decided against that.
Also, I really shouldn't have made them watch Madoka. But, too late to back out now.

Undyne was suspicious of Alphys. Not that you blamed her because suddenly everyone around Undyne was hiding secrets. Everyone she trusted. Only your dad was different, but you didn’t pay a whole lot of attention to your dad’s relationships. So even though Undyne was brushing things off to continue with the sleepover, you could see that she was mulling things over. And Alphys was sweating about it. It was becoming awkward enough that you kind of wanted to go home just so the two of them could talk things out.

But you stuck around, and Undyne straightened your hair. You didn’t use conditioner, but you marveled at how soft your hair was now that it was straightened. It was warm and smooth and it pleased you. Undyne was grinning broadly from her handiwork too. Alphys’s work on your nails didn’t quite go as well, but that was to be expected. She did well considering how small your nails were compared to both of the women’s claws.

While your nails dried, you watched Undyne do Alphys’s nails. The three of you talked about school and work. Alphys had moved on from her study of the stars to instead pursue interests in engineering. The stars, she said, made her kind of sad.

“Why’s that?” Undyne asked as she poked her tongue out to help her concentrate on what she was doing.

Alphys rolled the words on her tongue before replying, “Because of Sans. He, um, loves the stars.”

“What, and that makes you sad? Screw him, man!” Undyne muttered, getting a little close to the end of her rope about Sans and Alphys. You shifted uncomfortably.

“Undyne, it’s not that simple. It’s-It’s not…” She didn’t know how to explain it.

“It’s not WHAT.” Undyne finally asked, fed up. She screwed back on the lid to the nail polish. Alphys was sweating. “Look, I get it. You and Sans did really messed up things with the Determination experiments. But why is that still bothering you??? You and Sans are friends, right? Just freaking talk to him!!”

“Sans and I aren’t friends!” Alphys denied somewhat bitterly. You blinked in surprise, taken aback.
Alphys lowered her voice, looking saddened. “W-we stopped being friends a, um, while ago. Because sometimes things…can’t be repaired. Not after…”

“After?” Undyne prompted gently.

Alphys shook her head and wiped at her eyes with the heel of her hand. “G-Gaster.”

“Who’s Gaster?” Undyne asked. That only made Alphys look stricken. She flinched at the question and retreated visually inwards.

“N…nobody.” She whispered and scrambled off of the bed. “O-Oh look! I need a shower too!”

“WAIT!!” Undyne cried and stood up. “Your nails! Alphys!!” But Alphys had already made the dash upstairs to the bedroom. The click of the lock was audible. Undyne cursed and threw herself back down onto the bed. Then she noticed you, like she had forgotten you were there. “What the heck was that all about??”

You weren’t sure if you were supposed to respond. This was a personal thing between Alphys and Undyne, but you felt a bit required to defend Sans. You already knew that Sans and Undyne had an interestingly dynamic relationship. They mostly interacted through Papyrus. He was their shared friend. Sans liked Undyne just fine, but he liked everyone just fine. And Undyne was about as exasperated with Sans and every person was. But she liked him too. Especially because they had an unspoken agreement to watch over Papyrus together because they both loved the skeleton.

But just because Undyne loved Papyrus, doesn’t mean she couldn’t easily come to dislike Sans. Especially if he causes grief for Alphys. So you felt the need to defend him a bit because you knew nobody else really would.

“Gaster,” You said softly, “was the head scientist before Alphys.” You looked at Undyne to find her watching you. “He built the Core.” You tilted your head a little to the side. “Don’t you wonder… why you don’t know his name?”

Undyne openly gaped at you before her head twisted to watch the door that Alphys had gone through. You didn’t know what conclusions she had formed from your confession, but hopefully it would be enough. Undyne’s fists were clenched, so you reached over to touch it. She didn’t look at you. “If you…want to go talk to her…I’ll wait here. I don’t mind.”

Undyne opened gaped at you before her head twisted to watch the door that Alphys had gone through. You didn’t know what conclusions she had formed from your confession, but hopefully it would be enough. Undyne’s fists were clenched, so you reached over to touch it. She didn’t look at you. “If you…want to go talk to her…I’ll wait here. I don’t mind.”

Undyne shook her head. “Pushing her will just make her more upset.” Undyne gave you a twisted smile that wasn’t the least happy. It seemed more self-depreciating. “I’ll give her time to cool down. Maybe talk to her tonight.” She took your hand and tugged you into her lap to noogie your head. You winced under the assault. “But you know!” She held you in her arms. Her taller form was enough to keep you contained. “So out with it!! What’s up with Sans and Alphys? Who WAS Gaster? Was he a murderer? A crazy guy?? Did he come up with all those insane puzzles around Hotland??”

You didn’t know the answer to any of those questions. Maybe he had been all three. “I don’t know.” You said. “But…Sans liked him. And…I guess Alphys did too.”

“But who WAS he?? What did he even do that’s freaking ripping Alphys up about this???” Her voice became a little more solemn. “This is like those Amalgamates all over again…”

You shook your head. It wasn’t your place to tell. Undyne kept pushing and you kept refusing to answer. She seemed like she was going to use physical force to make you talk, becoming frustrated with your stubbornness, when the doorbell buzzed. You startled realizing it sounded an awful lot like
Mettaton’s robotic voice. That was new.

Undyne released you to jump off of the bed and answer the door. Careful of your tenuously dry nails, you leaned over on the bed to see the skeleton you two were just talking about standing there with his brother. Papyrus greeted Undyne loudly while Sans just gave a lazy wave. He had that look about him like he had just woken up from a nap. He looked significantly better.

“WE’RE HERE TO TAKE BACK OUR HUMAN AND OUR SLEEPOVER.” Papyrus announced.

“Whoa-ho-ho! That’s real cocky of you! Where do you sick bones get off trying to hijack OUR sleepover?” Undyne asked, crossing her arms and blocking the doorway with her body.

“NONE OF OUR BONES ARE SICK ANYMORE! THE QUEEN COOKED US SOME SOUP AND NOW WE’RE ALL HEALED UP!” You were pleased to hear this. You weren’t sure if your mom would actually cook for them.

“Mr. Harrington?” You called.

“right here, kiddo.” Sans said, holding up Mr. Harrington. Neither skeleton looked super pleased with each other. That was a shame. You wondered what they did to annoy each other. Perhaps Mr. Harrington’s dancing skills were too showy for Sans’s lazy bones.

“What the HELL is that?” Undyne asked, snatching Mr. Harrington away from Sans’s lax grip. Mr. Harrington boogied nervously. Undyne laughed. “This a cousin of yours?”

“THAT’S MR. HARRINGTON. HE’S NICE. AND A FRIEND OF FRISK’S!” Papyrus corrected. Sans slipped around Undyne to stroll into the room and sit down on the bed. Undyne made a face at him and then allowed Papyrus in before she shut the door against the cold. Papyrus took Mr. Harrington back before they all went over to the bed.

You gazed at Sans with some worry, but he honestly looked much better. Monster food was amazing at healing magical problems, apparently. Sans winked at you reassuringly. “There’s no way in hell you’re taking the human!” Undyne said and grabbed you. You were being held hostage. “Frisk has a LOT of explaining to do!” Uh oh. “ACTUALLY.” Undyne’s eyes narrowed in on Sans. “You’re JUST the guy I wanted to talk to. Hey, what the hell is up between you and Alphys??”

Sans shrugged. “dunno what you mean.”

“Your relation with her. DUH!”

“we’re friends...probably.”

Undyne tightened her hold on you. “Not according to her.” Sans was watching Undyne carefully. He glanced to you for some help, but you couldn’t give it to him if you tried. You were afraid to say anything.

Papyrus looked around at the group. “WOW. THIS IS SUPER TENSE. UM. I’LL JUST...GET SOME POPCORN!” He literally threw himself into the kitchen where he banged around noisily. You wished that you could join him.

Sans still had a lazy grin on his face. “that sounds like friendly fire. i’m hurt.” You smiled a bit, but Undyne scowled.

“This isn’t the time for your terrible jokes!”
“there’s always time for terrible jokes.”

Mr. Harrington, who was laying on the bed, danced a bit harder. You weren’t sure if that was agreement, protest, or if he was trying to convince Sans to stop. Despite the tension, you were still amused by his antics.

Undyne literally threw you aside and grabbed the front of San’s jacket, yanking him to her face. You sat up in alarm as she growled at him, standing up so that he hung from her grip, “I’m really tired of all you thinking I’m some kind of idiot. Alphys is up there in tears over you and some guy named Gaster or whatever!! So why don’t you fucking start explaining?”

Sans’s smile dropped. Papyrus reentered the living room nervously. “U-UNDYNE. YOU SHOULDN’T! IT’S...IT’S NOT FUN! JUST...”

“that information,” Sans said slowly, his eye sockets dark, “is pretty heavy for a sleepover. heh heh, wouldn’t you prefer to hear it from alphys instead of this bonehead?” The lights came back on and he winked. “let’s just enjoy the sleepover.”

Undyne glared him down, but Sans wasn’t budging. You admired his ability to stand up to a furious Undyne. Admittedly you had done it before too, but that just meant you knew what it was like. You had almost forgotten what it was like to see her legitimately angry.

“I-I’ve got the anime!!” Everyone looked up as Alphys called down. She gaped wide-eyed at the situation and shrunk back a little. “O...oh...” She whimpered. “H-h-hello.”

Sans gave a wave, still being clutched at by an angry Undyne. “hey.”

“HI ALPHYS!” Papyrus jumped on the opportunity to break up the situation. “I’VE MADE POPCORN.” You could hear the sound of popcorn cooking in the microwave. “AM MAKING POPCORN.” He corrected. “WOW, WHAT ANIME ARE WE WATCHING TODAY? SOMETHING NOT STRESSFUL? BECAUSE I COULD TOTALLY GO FOR THAT.”

Alphys’s eyes darted back and forth between Undyne and Papyrus. You watched as Undyne tightened her grip on Sans’s collar, came to a decision, and dropped him onto the bed. Sans laid there like it was his choice to be there. Undyne gave a relatively enthusiastic grin at Alphys, “Yeah, Pap’s right! Why don’t we get started on the show?” The microwave beeped from the kitchen. Papyrus hurried to go get the popcorn.

Alphys nodded slowly before she descended the steps. Her eyes kept ticking back to Sans, who, from the looks of it, had seemingly fallen back asleep. Alphys put the DVD into the DVD player before crawling up onto the bed. Papyrus ran out from the kitchen with his bowl of popcorn, using his long legs, jumped straight onto the bed right next to you and Sans. The two of you bounced upon impact, waking Sans up.

“POPCORN!!” Papyrus cried.

“that certainly happened.” Sans said.

“I’m surprised you didn’t...” You started, finding yourself unable to resist the urge, “pop a corny joke.”

Sans beamed at you and everyone else groaned. “NOOO!!” Papyrus lamented. “THEY’RE GETTING WORSE!!”

“heh heh heh heh heh. that was great, kid. ten outta ten.”
“More like ZERO out of ten!” Undyne complained.

“The show is starting!” Alphys called and the lot of you quieted down. The sleepover had expanded to include Sans and Papyrus now as if it was completely natural. You found yourself enjoying the anime. It was cute and you liked the music. You never really understood why anime girls cried so much, but you were never one to cry too much. Alphys, like you, highly enjoyed how cute the designs were. Undyne and Papyrus both enjoyed the fighting aspect. Sans seemed indifferent, but he hadn’t quite fallen asleep yet.

Then things suddenly took a turn in episode three when one of the characters were killed off. You were mildly shocked. Alphys gasped. “Oh-ho-ho hell yes! This just got a whole lot more interesting!!” Undyne cheered, grinning. Your jaw clenched instinctively as your eyes darted to Papyrus. He was almost subconsciously rubbing his neck. Your stomach dropped.

The anime just got worse from there. It was still enjoyable, but the theme kept becoming darker. You found yourself putting yourself in the places of the characters. You could see yourself as Madoka, and then you saw yourself more as Sayaka. And Sayaka, you saw, wasn’t able to handle herself. You were becoming chilled, but you couldn’t tear your eyes away.

When Homura’s story was exposed, you excused yourself to go to the bathroom. Inside of the bathroom you sat on the floor and hid your face in your knees. Your heart was pounding rapidly, and images from your dreams swam around in your head. Your body was shaking. The anime had hit far too close to home for you. Kyubey reminded you too much of a calmer Flowey, and Madoka felt like Asriel to you.

Your lungs weren’t getting enough air. Just like Homura, nothing you did seemed to save Asriel. He was always “killed”. And you weren’t sure you wanted to see anymore. If you didn’t have Sans by your side, how many times would you RESET? How many times would you try to save Asriel? How was Homura doing it? Would she give up?

A knock made you start violently and caused a tiny noise to escape you. The door opened to admit Sans. He shut it quietly behind him, studied you for a moment, before joining you on the floor. Your vision was blurring. You couldn’t uncurl from your position if you wanted to.

“...welp. that wasn’t what i was expecting.” He started. You couldn’t respond. He continued in your stead. “who knew such a cutey thing would turn so dark? it was kind of interesting before...but now...” Your teeth were grinding together. There was pain in your legs from where your nails were digging hard enough into them. Sans watched you and you didn’t doubt he could see how incapacitated you were.

“knock knock.” He said.

You managed to whimper out, “w-w-who’s there?” Your voice sounded fragile even to your ears.

“ivor.”

“i...ivor w-who?”

“ivor you open the door...or i’ll climb through the window.”

You laughed, but it was slightly hysterical. You felt your body loosen somewhat. “Y-You wouldn’t d-do that. Lazy...bones!”

“yeah, probably not.” Sans admitted. You continued to giggle into your legs.
“knock knock.”

“who...’s there?” You responded.

“scold.”

“scold who?”

“scold enough to go ice skating.” You laughed again, and again when he told another joke. He kept them coming until your tears had dried and you were able to relax against him. You didn’t even have time to think about why you were in the bathroom with all the jokes he made.

The two of you were in there long enough that someone else knocked on the door. “Who’s there?” You and Sans both called, chuckling to yourselves expectantly.

“IT’S PAPYRUS!!”

“Papyrus who?” Both of you called back.

“THE GREAT PAPYRUS!”

“that’s not a joke.” Sans said. “my bro’s too cool to be a joke.”

“ARE YOU TWO ALRIGHT??” Papyrus asked, popping his head in. He had a worried look on his face. You suddenly remembered why you were in here.

“we moved the sleepover into here.” Sans said.

“WHAT?? BATHROOM SLEEPOVER? I WANT TO JOIN!” He said, and joined you two on the floor. “WHAT DO WE DO IN BATHROOM SLEEPOVERS?”

“we tell knock knock jokes.” Sans grinned.

“I CHANGED MY MIND. I DON’T WANNA BE PART OF THIS!!” Papyrus cried and got up to go to the door when another knock sounded.

“WHO’S THERE?” You, Papyrus, and Sans all called. You found yourself smiling to see Papyrus instinctively joining in.

“I-it’s us!” You heard Alphys say.

“IT’S US WHO?”

“It’s a zoo??” Undyne asked.

“With all of these monsters...yes!” You decided. Papyrus and Sans both laughed.

The door opened to reveal Undyne and Alphys. “What the heck is taking you all so long? There’s only, like, two episodes left!!”

“S-Something about a bathroom sleepover?” Alphys added, peeking around her.

“yeah. feel free to join.”

“DON’T DO IT! IT’S ALL JUST TERRIBLE KNOCK KNOCK JOKES!!” Papyrus warned.

“A-are you okay, Frisk?” Alphys asked.
“the...sushi made me a little queasy.” You lied quickly. You both wanted and didn’t want to finish the anime. Maybe at a later date when you weren’t too fragile. You wondered how Homura handled her time situation. Did the anime have a happy ending? You didn’t know. You were scared about if it didn’t.

“Oh crap, really?? Maybe we should’ve ate in.” Undyne suggested. Alphys was watching you curiously. You wondered if she knew you were lying. You guys had eaten quite a while ago, after all.

“maybe you should sue-shi them.” Sans suggested.

Papyrus groaned and you muffled your laughs. “LET’S NOT.” He said. “WE SHOULD HANG OUT IN HERE, THOUGH. IT’S NICE. WE CAN BRING MR. HARRINGTON IN AND HAVE A DANCE COMPETITION!”

“In the BATHROOM??” Undyne asked incredulously.

“THE BEST DANCERS CAN DANCE ANYWHERE!!” Papyrus said.

“Oh, you are SO on, skeleton! I’ll get the toy!!” Undyne dashed out of the bathroom.

“I-if you need to vomit, Frisk,” Alphys suggested quietly, “then, um, don’t be afraid to use the toilet!”

“I agree.” The toilet said.

Chapter End Notes

Remember how I said the toilet was a talking toilet because of Alphys?

That feeling when you had things planned for this chapter, and then your muse takes it in a different direction. This was honestly going to get so angsty. And I could feel it coming on. And then my muse was like "no, that's not the Undertale way" and totally changed the plan. I hope this ending works for everyone!

*dropkicks computer out of the window*
Sans Gets Arrested...Again

Chapter Summary

It's a wonder Sans doesn't get arrested more.

Chapter Notes

I realized I confused a number of people by posting the Hollow Eyes chapter first. Sorry about that!

Here, again, is another chapter of me trying to write something good and not managing to reach my own standards

(Important Note: For the best effect, listen to the karaoke [no lead vocals] version of Bad to the Bone throughout the first part of the chapter. Here's a link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJcu1jWEhTc )

Sans had a track record for trouble. Everyone was aware of this, but not many people seemed to realize how deep this went. The police from various cities nearby Ebott all seemed to know Sans almost personally. He liked to cause problems. Never anything actually dangerous, but enough to cause trouble for various people. Such things on his arrest record included: driving in inappropriate areas (grass, roofs, fountains, monkey bars), blowing airhorns at anyone who would match his driving speed, speeding, running an illegal hot dog stand, running an illegal ice cream stand, and blasting “Bad Boys” while passing anybody pulled over by the cops. These were only some of the reasons.

Every time he was arrested, he would use his one phone call to call Papyrus. And Papyrus would, in turn, call you. Because he usually didn’t have the money to bail out Sans’s increasing bail fee. So you, your parents, and Papyrus would go down to the police station usually to only find it in a state of furious panic. Because jail could not hold Sans thanks to his shortcuts. And he always found a shortcut, so he would escape before anyone could bail him out. Which only made the police angrier and more frustrated. Especially whenever they managed to pull him over for speeding. Which happened a lot.

Today you were in the middle of lunch when your phone began ringing. You paused in taking a bite of your jello before you pulled the phone from your pocket. You clicked on it to see it was Papyrus. Papyrus never called you during school because he encouraged your education. You wondered what he could possibly want. You answered the phone.

“FRISK.” Papyrus sounded fed up. You recognized that tone in his voice immediately. “ARE YOU ABLE TO COME WITH ME? SANS HAS GOTTEN HIMSELF ARRESTED AGAIN.”

You wondered what he was arrested for this time. No matter how much it seemed to annoy the adults, you actually found it all very silly. After all, what other people could claim they were arrested
for changing the clothing on mannequins? Though, admittedly, he had dressed them in very silly clothing. Also, plastic breasts are apparently scandalous to tiny children’s parents. You actually had a quiet bet with your friends on things that Sans would get arrested for before summer vacation. A lot of the kids claimed a certain number of speeding charges, but you knew that Sans wasn’t gonna allow himself to be pulled over that much.

So you called your parents and the three of you went to join Papyrus. You sat in Asgore’s lap (somewhat illegally. You three had talked things out with the local police considering how many times you visited the station) while Toriel and Papyrus took the front seats in Papyrus’s car. You already knew that Asgore had a pocket of money and a plan to discuss how perhaps the human police should just let the monsters handle Sans...if they ever managed to get to that talking point.

Papyrus never actually told you all what Sans had done. You weren’t sure even Papyrus knew what Sans had done to wind up in jail this time. However, the process of going to get Sans was familiar to everyone involved. You were even greeted by name. You waved cheerfully to the police chief. She was a fairly stocky woman who looked like under normal circumstances, she would be a playful woman. However, she appeared fairly grumpy and exasperated. You wondered why.

“Hello.” She greeted the lot of you.

“Howdy, Chief Tannebaum!” Asgore shook her hand in his large paw. You admired her for not flinching away at the thought of his large hand. After all, most humans were intimidated by having their entire hand held in the hand of a monster. Chief Tannebaum never flinched.

“He’s this way.” She sighed. “If he’s even there.”

“HE’D BETTER BE!” Papyrus grumped. “I TOOK HIS MOPED!” You looked at Papyrus in confusion. When had he done that? The lot of you were led back through the holding cells to the very last one. You knew for a fact that Sans had been placed in each of these cells at one point or another. There wasn’t a shortcut in all of them, but he always managed to get to the ones with shortcuts. You suspected it was due to dislocating his arms. You wondered if the cameras ever caught that. For some reason, a song was playing quite loudly over the speakers of the building. You could see other criminals scowling and covering their ears. It took you a little bit to realize that the song was “Bad to the Bone”. You kept waiting for the actual lyrics, but they never started.

Sans actually was in his cell when you all arrived. “yo.” He greeted.

“SANS!! YOU ARE SO IN TROUBLE!! WHY DO YOU KEEP DOING THESE THINGS?” Papyrus demanded immediately, grabbing the bars. Sans shrugged.

“Mr. Skeleton,” the Chief crossed her arms, “care to explain to your family your reason for arrest this time?”

Sans grinned and winked. “people just can’t take a joke.”

“Oh dear, he pranked someone.” Toriel muttered under her breath.

“It is not a joke, Mr. Skeleton!” Chief Tannebaum scolded. She rubbed at her eyes.

“please. call me sans.” Sans said. “we’ve known each other long enough.”

“WHAT DID HE EVEN DO?” Papyrus asked.

“He impersonated a doctor!” The Chief said.
“actually,” Sans corrected, “i never said i was a doctor. i just said that, as a skeleton, i obviously know more about bones than an x-ray human doctor.” You personally thought he had a bit of a point.

“How is that even remotely funny?” Papyrus demanded.

“i told them they had ‘up dog’ in their bones. should’ve told them that they’re missing their funny bone, ‘cause they called the cops on me.”

“I can’t believe this!!!! Why would you even bother?” Papyrus raged.

“i was in the neighborhood.”

Papyrus dropped his face to his hands. Asgore sighed and turned to the Chief. “What will it take to get him out?” He asked politely.

“Frankly, Mr. Dreemurr, if you can just pay his bail you can take him. My cruisers are going mad over trying to catch him. He speeds every day in town. At this point we should just send him to the county jail...but I’m pretty sure he’d just get out of that.” She shot a glare to Sans. He was unaffected.

“Maybe we should just leave him.” Toriel suggested. “Overnight?”

“Ma’am.” The Chief said sternly, “I suspect you are just trying to get out of paying his charge. We all know he can somehow escape custody...so please just pay the fine and we can all go on our ways.” Toriel seemed a little offended by this.

“I was not implying—!” She began when Asgore placed a calming hand on her arm. She shot him a look, which he smiled nervously at before addressing the Chief.

“Shall we discuss this in private? I have a suggestion to hopefully make all of our lives easier.”

Chief Tannebaum eyed him suspiciously, but nodded and led your parents to the side. You leaned against the bars and smiled a little at Sans, unable to contain your amusement. He seemed just as amused.

“people just can’t get a joke.” He repeated.

“They just calcium.” You agreed, causing both of you to giggle.

“Oh my god?? Frisk, don’t encourage this!” Papyrus scolded. You bit your lip to stop laughing. Papyrus turned back to his brother. “I thought you were out with Dr. Alphys today looking for supplies for your lab?”

“i was.” Sans said, stretching and standing up. He pulled out a key from his pocket and tossed it to you. You unlocked the door to his cell. Sans slipped out and closed the door softly, taking the key back from you. “we stopped by the x-ray place to ask a couple of questions and...” He trailed off. “anyway, alphys went home after that. she was freaking out over my arrest.”

“impersonating a doctor is a new low!”

“maybe i just wanted to see some skeletons?” Sans joked. Papyrus gasped and covered your ears.

“not in front of the human!!!!” You didn’t hear what Sans responded, but you heard Papyrus cry out in outrage. His cheekbones were glowing a bit. When he finally released you, you
noticed that “Bad to the Bone” was coming to an end. After a few seconds of silence you could practically feel everyone in the room take an expectant breath. The opening notes played again. Someone screamed and cursed. There was a crash in the direction of the front desk down the hall.

“some weirdo put this song on repeat.” Sans explained. “but nobody can figure out how to turn it off.” He grinned. “it’s been playing for the past two hours. it’s not a fan favorite.”

Your parents came back then with the Chief, who looked exasperated at the sight of Sans out of his cell. She held her hand out to him, and he placed the keys into it. She firmly tucked the keys back into her pocket, glaring at him. “Frankly, monsters, if you can just get this damn song to stop playing, I’ll let him leave without a charge.” She rubbed her temples.

“deal.” Sans agreed. You all waited, but the music still didn’t stop. You looked at Sans. He shrugged and winked, “hey. gotta wait for the end of the song.”

“How are you even doing it?” Toriel asked.

“dunno. you ever notice how back in the underground, music just seemed to play everywhere?”

“Now that you mention it,” Asgore said, “yes!”

“yup.” Sans agreed.

“WOW. SO THIS SONG PLAYS IN JAIL!” Papyrus seemed amazed.

“It has never played in jail.” Chief Tannebaum denied.

“Yes...humans don’t seem to have music playing in strange places as much as us monsters do...” Papyrus noted.

The song began to fade out then. Everybody held their breath and after a few seconds...the song seemed to stay off. The people around you went insane. There were cheers coming from the cells. As you all walked to the front, the people in the reception area were in tears of joy. You thought it was a bit of an exaggeration...but thinking back to some of the music you had to listen to on repeat while in the Underground, you suppose you could understand. “Bad to the Bone” wasn’t nearly as good as monster music.

“Thank god.” The Chief breathed. “Please...just take him and go. I’ll...take care of the paper work.”

“Are you certain?” Toriel asked. “We can–”

“Please.” She begged. You decided it was best if you all left. As you exited the building, you heard the first strains of “Bad Boys” beginning to play. Someone screamed.

“so kid.” Sans asked as you all approached Papyrus’s car. “how’s it feel to date someone who’s bad to the bone?”

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Lately you had been zoning out a lot. It wasn’t extremely bad, but certainly a problem in class. You would stare off into the distance lost in thought. You mostly blamed the weather. Spring was on the wind as rain showers replaced snowstorms and the ground turned to slush. You had to start wearing rain boots more. Sans’s jacket was starting to become too warm to wear again. Allergies were also becoming a problem. As flowers began to bud and bloom, you began to sneeze a bit more. Not that you were actually allergic to anything, but it still made your head a bit fuzzy and your nose runny. Your parents worried that you were coming down with a cold, so Toriel decided to take you to see a
The doctor seemed to agree with you on the allergies. He recommended a good brand for you with the understanding that you would be doing quite a bit of gardening. So you and your mother went to the nearest supermarket in the nearby city.

“Frisk, perhaps you would like a new wardrobe?” Your mother suggested. She ran her fingers along the thinner material of a striped sweater. It had little bows on the sleeves that you thought were kind of cute. She glanced at you. “You are growing, my child.”

You looked down at your pants that were a little short on you. Toriel was right, of course. You were, in fact, growing. You were at that age now where you could feel puberty really starting to kick in. You had noticed more hair and smells from yourself. You weren’t getting much taller, but you were certainly developing in places that signified adulthood. It was actually kind of embarrassing, but that was mostly because some of your monster friends had begun to point it out in their human companions. You had a rather humiliating run-in with Lansot pointing out some new body odor you had developed because you were getting a little too lax in your bathing habits. You were cracking down on that more now. Toriel had bought you deodorant as well as anything else you both decided you would need.

“Soon you will be a very lovely adult!” Toriel praised even as she held your hand through the store. You didn’t mind holding her hand despite your age. Her eyes twinkled with mirth. “And perhaps...you will finally be taller than Sans!”

“That was low.” You joked. Toriel chortled.

“Oh my child, it was just a small tease!”

“Tiny bit offensive.”

“Please do not get short with me!” You both giggled and she ruffled your hair. One thing you had been worried about as you aged was how your friends and family would react to your changing body. Thanks to your human mother, you were unsure if you would have to start wearing gender-specific clothing and suddenly had to act a different way than you usually did. As the days passed, you could see your friends begin to act a bit more different than usual. Some of your friends had always acted a specific way, but now they were acting more like adults than children. Toys weren’t discussed so much as...other adult things. Things that your mother would certainly not want you talking about (although you did anyway).

But neither Toriel nor Asgore had pushed you into buying certain clothes. They still treated you the same (which, at times, could bother you. You weren’t a kid anymore...but at the same time you didn’t want to be treated completely like an adult either. It was a complicated feeling that differed from day to day for you) and that’s how you preferred it. A part of you continued to fear that this would change, but the logical part of you understood that your parents wouldn’t force you to do anything. So why were you still worried about it...?

“Frisk...” Toriel began and you looked at her questioningly. There was something hesitant and sad in her voice. “You are not embarrassed by this? Shopping with you?” She asked. You wondered where that had come from. “Would you prefer...Asgore? Or...”

“Mom?” You asked.

“I am sorry.” She sighed. Her hands were fidgeting with a package of underwear for you. “I have heard the other children complaining about their mothers...‘smothering’ them, and I was worried that...”
you felt the same.” You shook your head and squeezed her hand. She seemed relieved by your reassurance.

“I like...going out with you.”

Toriel smiled at you. “I am glad.” She leaned down to kiss your forehead. One thing was bothering you, though.

“Asgore?” You questioned.

Toriel seemed a bit embarrassed. “Well...I just thought that...if not your mother...then your father could take you instead. You are, after all, too young to travel to the city alone!” The silence was thick around both of you as these words sunk in. After all, you had traversed the Underground on your own. Toriel seemed to realize how silly her words sounded, but you pressed onwards.

“Both.” You decided, releasing her hand search through a rack of clothing. You preferred more comfortable clothing, so men’s clothes were the way to go, but women’s clothing could be very cute. But expensive. You frowned at the price tag wondering if it was worth the price. Would you wear it that often?

“That is good to know.” You glanced at Toriel. She was looking at pants for you now. You had noticed something in the more recent weeks. Something subtle between your parents that you didn’t dare bring up. Toriel and Asgore, it seemed, weren’t quite as...at odds anymore. There were still very much problems in their relationship, but something seemed to be recovering, if only reluctantly. Toriel didn’t seem to glare at Asgore as much anymore, but she still didn’t seem to care for his presence. It wasn’t friendship, certainly, but it was no longer hatred. You weren’t sure what to make of it, but you were glad that Asgore was having an easier time. You understood, thanks to Sans discussing with you the terrible choices Asgore had to make between being the kind monster he was, and the king his people needed him to be, that Asgore just wanted to recover some semblance of the happy life he used to have. Toriel’s hatred of him certainly didn’t help.

Well, no matter what your parents’ current relationship was, you weren’t going to say anything. You were just going to enjoy having a family.

You enjoyed your day out with your mother. Despite living with her, you actually didn’t spend a whole lot of time with her. Toriel was, in all respects, an older woman. She enjoyed softer activities with you, but you enjoyed running around a lot too. So you spent much of your time with your various friends. So sometimes it was nice to just get a day out with her. You couldn’t wait for it to be planting time so you could start your garden with her. And go bug-hunting with her in the summer again.

You two exited the store with your bags laughing about the show you were talking about, when you spotted a pair of Girl Scouts selling cookies. You smiled at them, but didn’t buy any because you preferred Toriel’s cooking. The parents of the girls seemed a bit frustrated for some reason, but you two continued on. You would need to take a bus back to Ebott, so you had to walk a couple blocks to get to the bus stop. However, just around the corner of the store you two came across Sans.

“Sans?” Toriel called in confusion.

“hey, buddy. wanna buy some cookies? only 2g.” Sans held out a box of your preferred Thin Mints.
“Hey!” A man at the front of the line said, “I thought you were selling them for three?”

“heard me wrong.” Sans said. “i wasn’t talkin’ about human money. five for you.”

“Oh, okay.” Money exchanged hands and the man went off happily.

“Why?” You asked.

Sans shrugged. “gotta make money, kid, and my hot dog and ice cream stands didn’t work out.”

“Girl Scout cookies, though?” Toriel asked.

“nope.” Sans pointed at the boxes where the word “Girl” was clearly scratched out for “Monster”.

“monster scouts. i was wonderin’ when you’d bring frisk around. they’re in monster scouts, so they’ll help.” You have never heard of Monster Scouts before, but you thought it sounded fun. Sans patted the seat next to him in offering when you heard the alert siren of a cop car. Sans muttered something in Wing Dings as a cop pulled over and climbed out of their car.

The cop took one look at the line and then Sans before he sighed loudly. “Oh god. Hello Sans.”

“sup.” Sans saluted the officer. His customers began to back away. “what can i do you for, pal?”

“We got a call about someone illegally selling Girl Scout cookies...right around the corner from a Girl Scout cookie stand.” The cop crossed his arms.

“i wonder who that is. because these are monster scout cookies.” Sans grinned.


Sans stood. “police be gentle with the cuffs.” You and Toriel laughed despite knowing you shouldn’t. Sans winked at you both. “go ahead and take the rest of the cookies. i bought ‘em legally.”

The officer cuffed Sans (tightening the cuffs as far as possible) before herding him to the cruiser. Toriel ran a hand over her face with a sigh. “I’ll call Papyrus and Asgore. It looks like we will have to talk to the chief of this police force too.” She said.

Chapter End Notes

Prompts addressed:
-Sans gets arrested
-Sans's "jobs"
-Puberty

(Side note, where the fuck is Mettaton)
Occasionally, everyone gathers out of their busy lives to have a game night at the skeleton household.

Just a quick chapter without much substance.

“The color is...green!” Toriel flipped the top card.
“This deck is shuffled TERRIBLY!!” Undyne complained.
“NOBODY TOLD ME HOW TO SHUFFLE!!” Papyrus said.
“undyne’s turning green over her cards.” Sans grinned.
“I’LL SHOW YOU GREEN!” Undyne slammed down a yellow six.
“Undyne...the card is a nine.” Asgore informed her.
“What? That’s totally a nine!”
You picked up the card and glanced at the one below it before shaking your head. Undyne groaned and took the card back.
“Now we know you have a yellow!” Alphys said. Undyne put down a blue nine instead.
“Yeah yeah. Laugh it up, nerd!”
You placed down a blue card. “It is fun to occasionally have a game night.” Asgore said cheerfully as he placed down a blue reversal card. You placed down another card.
“WAIT!! FRISK, IT WAS MY TURN!” Papyrus protested.
“reverse card, bro. it’s goin’ backwards.” Sans explained.
“THIS GAME IS COMPLICATED! WHEN IS IT MY TURN THEN??”
“When it gets to you!” Undyne said as she threw down her yellow six on top of your blue six.
“D-draw two, Sans.” Alphys said as she placed down her card.
“draw four, pap.” Sans chuckled as he laid another Draw Two down.
“ISN’T THAT CHEATING?” Papyrus asked.

“It is here in the rules!” Toriel said, glancing at the game manual.

“CAN I PUT DOWN ANOTHER ONE?” Papyrus asked.

“Yes.”

Papyrus threw down a coveted Draw Four. “DRAW EIGHT, YOUR MAJESTY!”

Undyne cackled. “Looks like you messed up!!”

“Wrong.” You called out, stopping Toriel from picking up the eight cards. You handed Papyrus back his card and pointed at the draw twos. “Can’t be...a Draw Four.”

Undyne laughed again as Papyrus made a disgruntled noise, picking up his four cards. “My turn, then?” Toriel asked. You nodded, and she placed down her next card.

“Perhaps next we try the Cards Against Humanity?” Asgore suggested.

“Nooo!! Asgore, jeez!” Undyne laughed, burying her face into her hands.

“T-Toriel would kill us!” Alphys agreed, smiling as well.

“let’s play.” Sans disagreed.

“What is this ‘Cards Against Humanity’?” Toriel asked.

“Fun.” You stated.

Everyone paused, and then Sans said, “wow, kid. where’d you even play that twisted game?”

“Is it twisted?” Toriel asked.

“screwy as anything.” Sans grinned.

Papyrus was shifting nervously. “STOP LOOKING AT ME. I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, WOULD NEVER HAPPEN TO WONDER WHAT SUCH A GAME IS ABOUT AND CONVINCE FRISK’S SCHOOL FRIENDS TO LET ME PLAY WITH THEM!!!” Nobody had been looking at Papyrus.

“Put down a card, Asgore!” Undyne hit the table with her hand to get the old king’s attention. The table groaned. Alphys sneezed.

“Uh oh.” She said, looking around nervously. “W-Where’s the cat?”

You placed down a color change card and shrugged. “Red.”

Undyne groaned and began to draw. “Yeah, where is that beast at?”

Sans shifted. “SHE’S AROUND. PROBABLY.” Papyrus narrowed his eyes at his cards. Sans was looking at his brother's hand. Papyrus wasn’t hiding his cards very well.

“Uno!” Alphys called out.

You thought you might have heard a low growl. You perked up. “Kitty?” You called.
“nope. just my stomach.” Sans said. You deflated some. Wait a second-

“SANS!! HOW THE HECK DO YOU KEEP GETTING DRAW TWOS?!!??” Papyrus cried out in outrage. He was developing quite a hand from constant drawing.

“what can i say?” Sans said, grinning and shrugging. “i’m two hot two handle.”

Everyone but you and Toriel groaned. “Just kill me and spare me the fate of hearing more puns!!” Undyne bemoaned.

“Sorry Undyne, we cannot spare and kill you!” Asgore joked. You thought that it was a little dark on his part. Sans grunted a little and rubbed at his chest. You sent him a curious look.

“maybe too hot.” Sans suggest, unzipping his jacket. “oh man, i may be cat-ching something.” Suddenly, Cat burst out from his clothing, yowling in anger. Her fur was puffed up as she landed on the table, scrambling the cards and making everyone scream. She hissed and leapt at Sans’s face, clawing her way onto his skull before jumping off and streaking up the stairs.

You threw your cards down in a huff. “Goddammit, Sans!” You cursed at being so startled. Your heart was going a mile a minute. Everyone froze in horror at your mouth. Alphys started sneezing out of pure shock, hitting the table with a fist in protest as she sneezed a third time.

“Frisk!!” Toriel and Asgore cried out.

Sans grinned. “love game night.” He said.

You were sent upstairs to Sans’s room as punishment.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter was so stupid. I just wanted them to play Uno. I'm sorry.
It had been a fight between Alphys and Mettaton about how the robot would be coming back to Ebott. Mettaton, being the diva he was, wanted to swoop in and get all the attention from the monsters as possible because he hadn’t been in a monster city in a long time. However, Alphys didn’t think they should cause a stir. Not that you all could avoid Mettaton causing a stir among his fans. The thing was, you all were going to the beach around the same time Mettaton was showing up. And nobody wanted tons of monsters to be following you to the beach.

“The beach!” Mettaton cried over the phone. “Sand and robots do not mix, Alphys-dear. You know this.”

“Then don’t come!” Alphys snapped, clearly getting annoyed with the fight. You were actually rather impressed. Alphys, in your opinion, had become so strong since leaving the underground. You didn’t know if it was because she lived with Undyne, or if it was because of Papyrus’s training. Either way, you were kind of scared of her right now. She was pacing the lab back and forth. Sans and Papyrus were both using their magic to move some pieces of reinforcement metal to the lab into place, so you were left sitting and watching the fight. Alphys’s phone was on speaker.

“But I want to spend time with the human as well!” He sounded like he was sulking a bit. “You all have been hogging Frisk.”

“It’s not hogging!” Alphys denied.

“What’s the matter, bro?” Sans asked and you turned your attention back to them. “That’s your idol on the phone.”

“I KNOW.” Papyrus said. He glanced nervously at Alphys. “BUT I WILL SEE HIM LATER. ALPHYS IS REALLY SCARY RIGHT NOW. I’D RATHER LIVE.”

“Don’t tell me Alphys scares you.” Sans teased.

“It’S NOT WORTH THE RISK!” Papyrus insisted. You agreed with Papyrus on that. You would all be meeting Mettaton again soon anyway. There was no point in getting worked up about him on the phone. Alphys finished her conversation with the robot and hung up in a huff before rejoining you all. She sat next to you. You glanced at her curiously.

“We’re going without him.” She decided.

“AW.” Papyrus sighed.

“We could just, dunno, not go to the beach.” Sans suggested. You eyed him. He had been strangely
reluctant to go to the beach for a while and you weren’t sure why. He wasn’t exposing anything when you questioned him on it.

“We’re going!” Alphys commanded. You and Papyrus both jumped a little. Alphys folded her arms across her chest and glared at the wall. “We’ve been long overdue for a beach scene!”

You made a small face, but you weren’t against going to the beach. During the summer all of you had been far too busy with settling back in the Overworld to go to the beach. And now that it was spring break, you all finally had a chance. Alphys and Undyne had taken off from work, school was out for break, and you still had no idea what jobs Sans had but you assumed he had taken off from it. You were sure his job was “professional troll”, but who knows?

You were actually rather excited to go to the beach, if you were honest. You had never been to the beach. You had seen it many times on television, but you had lived too far away from the closest beach to travel alone and your human parents had never taken you. You had seen pictures of your human mother on the beach quite often, but she didn’t seem to actually like going for pleasure. At least, not the beaches nearby. She had, in the past, talked about travelling to the south and their beaches.

No, wait...you had been to the beach. You frowned. You had gone to the beach not long after you had escaped from the underground. You had needed to get away from the reminder of your time there and all of the friends you had abandoned. You could remember the heat of the dying sun and the warmth of the sand. You remembered the tears that had run down your face and the trembling of your limbs. You had used the ocean to try to clean your hands of the dust, but it had just seemed to cling. It had seemed to stain your hands like the sins in your heart—

“Frisk?” A hand touched your arm and you blinked in shock. You started violently to see Papyrus move from the corner of your vision. Wait, Papyrus was alive? Sans was staring (grinning/judging/glaring) at you. You looked back at the owner of the hand touching your arm. Alphys was gazing at you over her glasses, her eyes worried. She opened her mouth to say something, hesitated, and instead said, “You...um, didn’t tell us your preference.”

You only goggled at her. What was she talking about?

“did you want to ride with pap or on the bus with the rest of us?” Sans reiterated. You swallowed and turned to him. His smiling face, you could tell, was a façade. When had you learned how to read him? Oh wait, you’ve known how to for a while now. Right. Papyrus was right there. Sans didn’t hate you. You had never been to the beach before.

You opened your mouth, but found it strangely dry. There was a cold sweat on your neck. You signed instead stating that you would take the bus. The car would be cramped with Papyrus and Asgore in it. Your friends shared looks with each other. Those looks were becoming familiar. Lately you had found yourself zoning out a lot more. The timelines in your head seemed more solid than usual. It wasn’t just in dreams that you were remembering them. They were making you confused during the day. You had yet to tell any of your friends about this, but you could tell they had noticed something was wrong. You had considered bringing it up with Sans, but you didn’t want to yet. It wasn’t worth being a bother over. You could figure it out for yourself.

“FRISK.” Papyrus called and motioned you over. You slid off of the (new) couch and forced the wrongness of seeing him alive and well away from your mind. You could still feel Sans and Alphys watching you.

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You all left for the beach before dawn. Asgore, because he was much too large to fit on a bus, rode
with Papyrus in his car. Toriel, who was also large, was short enough to ride the fairly-large buses along with everyone else. So early in the morning there weren’t too many passengers, so it worked out well. You all would need to switch buses once in a while, so Papyrus and Asgore would be reaching the beach before you.

You had a couple tag-alongs with your group today. Lesser Dog and his owner had decided to join you all. Greater Dog –sans his armor– had also come along. Their tails have yet to stop wagging. You wanted to pet both doggies very badly, but you had been forced to sit away from them so as to not cause trouble. Your eyes kept darting back to the dogs. Their soft fur teased you.

The beach, when you all had arrived, wasn’t super crowded yet. The water was probably going to be a bit chilly considering it was only March, but you had plans to go in anyway. It was easy to spot where Papyrus and Asgore had set up the items they’d had. The absurdly large umbrella stood out on the sand.

“LOOK AT THIS PLACE!” Papyrus cried, delighted. He was already in just his speedo, his Hawaiian shirt barely hanging on his bony shoulders. “THE SAND! THE SUN! THE SALT! MY BONES ARE BECOMING STIFF! I LOVE IT!!” You could practically see his eyes sparkling behind his glasses. You weren’t quite sure how the glasses were staying on his skull.

“Ugh, it’s really hot!” Undyne complained.

“You really fit in here.” Alphys commented, smiling. This whole place, to you, smelled like Undyne. You flipped out your towel onto the sand next to Toriel’s towel before kicking off your shoes. You frowned at the sand on your feet and dug your toes into the sand. You rubbed at your face. You didn’t have Sans’s jacket here at the beach, so the memories were coming to you again. Wait, did Sans’s jacket even have an effect during the day? You idly spun your ring around your finger.

“too loose?” Sans asked, catching your attention. Before you had realized it, everyone else had seemed to have moved onto other things. Alphys and Undyne were already undressed to their bathing suits and Undyne was encouraging Alphys to join her in the water. Papyrus was already running to go join them. Toriel had finished setting up everything under the umbrella and seemed to be getting ready to read some in the shade. Asgore had disappeared. You frowned and looked around before facing Sans again.

“...What?” You asked, forgetting his question.

“your ring.”

“Oh.” You glanced down at the ring and shook your head. You didn’t think it would be coming off on the beach. You hadn’t wanted to wear it here, but Alphys and Sans had insisted. It made you suspicious as to why. You shook your head in response to his question.

“hey, earth to human.” Sans said. He grinned at you. Something about his presence seemed off to you. Almost threatening. You shook it off. You weren’t sure why you were feeling that way when he didn’t look angry in the least. You tried to trust your eyes rather than your strange jumpiness. It must be the changing seasons. It was messing with your head.

You decided to change the subject. “Swimming?” You pointed to the ocean.

“Not until you put on sunscreen, Frisk.” Toriel interrupted. She motioned you over to her, holding up the sunscreen. “You do recall what happened last summer?” She smiled teasingly. You could still remember the particularly bad burn you had gotten on your shoulders and face when you had swam in the lake. You hurried out of the sun to join her on the towel. While you put on the sunscreen, your
mother tied up your hair. You didn’t have to worry about your shoulders this time because you were wearing a tee shirt into the water along with your swim trunks. You focused on your face.

“My child, how are you feeling?” Toriel asked you while you were rubbing in the lotion on your face.

“Fine?” You responded.

“You are not feeling unwell?” She studied you. You shook your head. She didn’t seem completely reassured. You weren’t sure what to tell her. You instead hurried with your lotion and then stood up. You signed to both of them if they were going to join you.

“In a bit.” Toriel said. “I have reached a very interesting part in this book!”

“not me. not much of a beach guy.” Sans yawned.

“But...you have never been to a beach.” Toriel said. Sans shrugged. You wondered if he had ever been to a beach. You decided against pushing anything and instead headed down across the warm sand towards your other friends. Undyne, for some reason, was running around carrying a rather panicked-looking Papyrus. As you watched, she chucked him into the ocean, landing on what appeared to be the beach ball you had brought with you. You smiled at the sight and glanced back at Toriel and Sans to see if they had seen. But they were leaning close together in their own world. Toriel looked serious and Sans was avoiding her gaze but nodding. Your smile fell some. What were they talking about?

You could ask Sans later. For now, you decided to go join in on the fun.

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The beach became fuller as the day went on, but it didn’t detract from your fun. The ocean’s chill was a lovely counter to the heat of the day, so even as you came out of the water shivering you were quickly warmed by the sun. It had been quite a long time since you had just spent the day with everyone in such a relaxed manner. You had decided not to let your memories get to you and to just enjoy the present for now.

Sans and Undyne had come up with a rather interesting game to play using you and Alphys as the “pucks”. Sans and Papyrus both used blue magic on you and Alphys. Then Undyne would spin you (much to Toriel and Alphys’s distress) before tossing you across the waves. After a first mishap of travelling dangerously far out, she tossed you lighter. You could barely contain your delight as you practically skated across the water and were launched into the air when you hit a wave. You gained quite a bit of air. Sans and Papyrus always made sure that you and Alphys made it back to shore easily.

Personally, though, you thought it was a lot more hilarious when your dad had been thrown out across the water. Especially because your mother was the one who threw him. You had laughed at Toriel’s satisfied grin. You laughed harder at Asgore’s exasperated and slightly-saddened smile.

You all received a surprise visit from Onionsan, who had returned to the ocean not long after the underground was opened up. You had wondered what had happened to them. The others had been confused and wary of this strange creature. You listened as they told you stories about what they had experienced in the ocean. You shared your tuna fish sandwich with them at lunch. It was later after lunch that Asgore revealed the toys he had bought at a local store. They were water guns.

“Oh-ho-ho!” Undyne grabbed her weapon of choice. “Are we gonna have a match!?”
"I HAVE NEVER USED A GUN BEFORE." Papyrus announced.

"You just pull the trigger!" Alphys explained. You grabbed two of the water guns. They were all already loaded and ready to go. While yours were pistols, Papyrus and Undyne had grabbed the longer spouted ones. They would have to reload a lot more than you. Toriel had joined them on their team while you, Alphys, and Sans were on another.

"Three hits and you are down!" Asgore called, standing to the side as a mediator. Undyne shot him in the chest, cackling, before she reloaded.

"friendly fire." Sans said, right before the game was called. You and Alphys jumped out of the way as Sans, the easy target, was attacked. You had fully expected Sans to take the attack head on, but he shocked everyone by dodging all of the attacks. The game paused, shocked. Sans grinned and shrugged. "what? you think i'm just gonna stand there and take it?"

His voice echoed in your head, making the blood drain from your face. The voice rebounded, echoing the many times you had heard him say it to you. The image of blood splashed across your mind. You cried out in surprise as you were shot in the face with water.

"I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, SCORE ANOTHER POINT!" Papyrus, the perpetrator of the attack, cried out. You didn't respond before he was shot in retaliation. Right, you were in the middle of a game. No time for zoning out. You dodged Undyne's attack and shot at Toriel. You didn't have very good aim. You didn't use a gun often, but you did manage to get some good hits in. Alphys, like you, wasn't particularly good. Sans was already out. Perhaps these teams were rather uneven, you decided, as you turned out to be the last person standing on your team. Between the three of you, Toriel had managed to get out. But you still had two rather tough opponents.

"You're down to your final point, punk!!" Undyne grinned, her form menacing. Her and Papyrus loaded up their guns. You didn't have many shots left, but you were determined. You had a plan.

"GIVE UP, FRISK, AND WE'LL SPARE YOU!" Papyrus offered. You shook your head, and smiled.

"No." You took off across the sand, dodging the water fired at you. Your friends cheered you on. It was amazing what training did for you. You had Asgore in your sights. He blinked in surprise to see you charging him. You twisted to hide behind him and called, "Tag in! Tag in!"

"HEY! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!" Undyne cried, outraged.

For a few quick heartbeats you were afraid that you really would have to face Undyne and Papyrus alone, but then Asgore stood up with you clinging to his back. You wrapped your arms around his neck to the best of your abilities and grinned deviously as he picked up a large water gun. "It appears there has been a change in rules." He pumped the gun and pointed it at Undyne. "Prepare yourselves!" You cheered as your dad, being your shield, attacked. You shot occasionally from his shoulder, but you hid behind Asgore’s bulk whenever you were shot at. Asgore, you found, was a great shield. He moved fairly fast considering his size, and you could tell he knew Undyne’s moves. However, that meant Undyne knew his moves as well.

It was too bad for them your dad was a badass. Because before they knew it, both Papyrus and Undyne were out. You cheered and hugged Asgore tightly. "That was great!" You said.

"That was CHEATING!" Undyne complained. You didn’t think it was cheating. You called for help, and help had come. You ignored her protests as Asgore pulled you over his shoulder to hug you to his chest. You two giggled together, but both abruptly stopped when you heard Undyne cry
out, “NGAAAAAAH!! SEND THEM INTO THE WATER, PAPYRUS!!” Together, you and Asgore were launched out into the water by blue magic. You were smiling as you resurfaced.

It was later in day when you approached Asgore again. You had been playing with the dogs, helping build sandcastles and little sand poffs for Greater Dog. The sun was beginning to set. Undyne and Alphys were taking some time to themselves. Toriel, Sans, and Papyrus had gone off together to look at the wave pools. You joined Asgore under the umbrella and stared out across the water. “Thank you.” You told him.

“What for, little one?” He asked. You were glad to see him so relaxed. You thought the sun was very good for him.

“For helping me...when I called.” You flipped your shirt a little bit, feeling the stiffness the salt had caused to the fabric. Help didn’t always come when you asked for it.

“Frisk,” Asgore placed a hand on your head. You looked at him a little shyly. He smiled softly, “we have told you already that we will be there if you call. Do not be afraid to ask for help, my child.” You hesitated a moment, and then nodded in understanding. Maybe one day, you mused, such words would will be the first in your mind when you truly needed help.

Chapter End Notes

I wonder what's up with Frisk.

Also! For those of you who don't follow my tumblr and haven't seen my updated notes on the series, here is my Tentative Updating Schedule

Due to having to go to work and school at the same time, my updating schedule has become more sporadic. With that in mind I will try to write and post on one or two of these following days:

- Friday evening
- Saturday (all day)
- Sunday (All day)
- Monday evening

So keep an eye out on those days specifically!
Mettaton

Chapter Summary

*Smells like Mettaton

Chapter Notes

When you get to the part where Mettaton sings, please listen to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBfE9UPTfg8

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You had been kidnapped. Somehow you figured that you should be more unnerved or at least annoyed by this. But you weren’t because you were very much used to your friends kidnapping you. Undyne had the biggest habit of doing it (luckily without breaking Toriel’s door down), but Papyrus wasn’t completely innocent in the kidnappings. So you were starting to become accustomed to randomly being scooped up and taken from wherever you were.

Mettaton was a first, though.

“There you are, darling!” Mettaton crowed like he wasn’t the one who forced you into his home. You looked around your new location still carrying the backpack containing Mr. Harrington and a couple other toys you were going to play with while at Papyrus’s house. You had both had plans to make a fake war together with what action figures and dolls you both owned. Well, it appeared that plan was a bit of a bust. “I’ve been here for forty-eight hours already and you haven’t visited me once!”

You were about to point out that his house had been surrounded by fans since he had first arrived, but Mettaton moved along with his speech.

“So I’m glad you’ve finally decided to allow me to grace you with my presence!” You wondered if Mettaton looked brighter than usual. Actually, looking at him, he appeared to have new parts. Alphys had said she had been working on upgrading his human appearance so the battery wouldn’t die as quickly. Right now he was in his “killer robot” form. It was hard to read his expressions because he was just a box with lights, but he was gesturing a lot so it helped.

Mettaton pointed at you, barely poking you accusingly in the chest. “You, my dear human, owe Blooky an apology! We’ve both been waiting for you to visit, after all! No phone calls or anything!” You didn’t have Mettaton or Napstablook’s numbers, and you hadn’t considered getting Mettaton’s from Alphys. You perked up at the sound of your ghost friend’s name. You looked around for Napstablook.

“Oh Blooky!” Mettaton sped off on his one wheel to find his cousin. You took the time to set down your fire extinguisher and backpack on the floor before joining them and looking around. You could tell that this house was more based off of Mettaton’s taste than Napstablook’s. Or, at least, this part of the house was. When you had been dragged inside, you had noticed that the exterior appeared to be
a mashed together version of Napstablook’s house and Mettaton’s old house. The interior was...extremely pink. And sparkly. There were many posters and pictures of Mettaton hanging up and NMTT was playing on the television. It was a news report on Mettaton being in Ebott. You wondered if there would be a lot of visitors to your small town soon.

Despite the fact that this house was clearly decorated by Mettaton’s taste, there wasn’t much in terms of furniture. You weren’t sure if that was because the robot didn’t need many material things, or if it was just because he hadn’t had time to decorate. You somehow doubted the latter considering he had a home improvement show. It all made you think of Sans’s phone call to you. He must be busy a lot taking care of Mettaton. You couldn’t imagine how the Underground looked anymore. It probably looked a lot like the fancy hotel that you’d had a date with Sans at.

No, wait, you didn’t date Sans.

Or...did you? Weren’t you dating Sans now? You glanced across yourself to see the smiling skeleton. The atmosphere of this place was far too romantic. A soft but somber music was playing. In this lighting, you weren’t sure if you found the smile on Sans’s face unpleasant or inviting. It wasn’t exactly friendly but rather it seemed like an attempt to be friendly. However, it had been a while since you’d had an actual meal to eat so you were enjoying yourself. Dating could be okay.

“oh.................” You turned your head to see your waiter Napstablook. You blinked and you recalled you were in Mettaton’s house. Oh shoot...you were zoning out again. Were you still in the Underground? No...No, you were in Ebott. Right. Mettaton was back.

You smiled at Napstablook and gave a small wave.

“i didn’t know we had company..............” Napstablook looked towards the kitchen and then back. “hi frisk.....wheres mettaton?” You pointed to where he had disappeared at. You both could hear him calling. You climbed to your feet. You both stood (or floated) around in silence waiting for the robot to find you both. When Mettaton finally returned, his screen lit up with an exclamation point.

“There you are, Blooky! Frisk is here!”

“yeah....” Napstablook agreed.

“So! Frisk, you must tell us what you’ve been up to here! I’m always looking for inspiration from other big celebrities!” You opened your mouth to tell him about your more recent meetings and what all you had accomplished when he cut you off again, “No no no no! Don’t tell me yet! First, let’s get started on your makeover!”

“Makeover?” You asked, startled.

Mettaton put his hands on the sides of his body. “Well, of course! We have to get you prepared for tonight’s party!” You frowned in confusion. What party? You weren’t aware of any such thing. Mettaton made a sound similar to a tongue clicking. It was very strange to hear in his robotic voice. “Well! Well well well welly well well! Alphys didn’t tell you.” He stated before sighing loudly. “That girl! Tonight I am putting on a show with Blooky and Shyren, of course! I, of course, am going to be singing with Shy as my backup! And you, lovely small human,” He tapped your nose with his thumb, “will dance with me on stage! It’ll be like the underground all over again. Oh, so many people wanted to see your moves! You were quite impressive keeping up with my amazing performance!”

You weren’t so sure that you wanted to. It’s not that you didn’t like dancing and such, but you weren’t feeling up for it. You mostly wanted to just go over to Sans’s house and maybe lay down for
a while. Maybe watch a movie. You didn’t feel like doing much today.

“Don’t make such a face!” Mettaton scolded. “Come now! I have a couple outfits planned for you to try on! And nothing like those silly outfits Alphys makes you wear. Don’t think I haven’t seen the pictures!”

It felt like hours later that you were finally released. Mettaton had long since transformed into his other form in an effort for more dexterity of his fingers. You’d had your hair done and changed multiple times. Your make up had been applied and reapplied. Finally you were left wearing quite a snazzy suit. Your shirt was, to match Mettaton’s coloring, a purple bedazzled shirt. It sparkled in any and all light. It was slightly unbuttoned at the top. You wore a solid black suit jacket with some of the softest material you’d felt on a jacket. You also had on some suspenders that attached to a skirt. When you spun in place, the skirt flowed like water. A hat to top off the outfit and some ankle boots with knee-high socks finished off the outfit.

You were...well, you thought you looked very nice! You found yourself smiling as you spun around. You glanced at the mirror to see Mettaton watching you with delight in his eyes. For a robot he was very expressive. Like he was alive. Almost like he was human rather than a machine. He made a little spinning movement with his finger and you twirled for him.

“Stunning! Marvelous! Frisk, you are ready to be on stage with me!” He took your hand and spun you again. He towered over you, but you were used to everyone being taller than you. “Blooky, what do you think?” Napstablook was on the computer not paying attention. Blooky actually hadn’t been paying attention for a while. You had forgotten the ghost was even there.

Napstablook noticed you two watching the ghost and turned to you. Mettaton motioned to you pointedly. “uh...yeah...you look nice.” The ghost looked like they would be fidgeting if they had fingers to fidget with. You appreciated the ghost’s compliment. You thought that Napstablook seemed a little more confident now that the cousins were in contact again. Although, it may be because they had to get more used to crowds. Popularity did that.

You glanced down at your skirt and waved your hips back and forth to watch it flow. Suddenly, an idea occurred to you. You hurried into the main room followed by Mettaton and Napstablook. You went for your bag and pulled out Mr. Harrington to show Mettaton. If you were going to get all gussied up for dancing, then of course Mr. Harrington needed to be ready to party as well!

“Ohhhh! Who’s this?” Mettaton took the skeleton toy from your hands and looked him over. “Mr. Harrington.” You held your hands up for Mettaton to return your friend. Mettaton did so, looking vaguely interested. You placed Mr. Harrington on the ground near the wall and turned him on. He started to dance. You and Mr. Harrington have been friends for a long time, so you knew his dance pattern quite well. You were in a good mood, so you started to copy his moves.

“Ohhhh! Ohhh yesss!!” Mettaton began to pose next to you, quickly establishing a rhythm that you and Mr. Harrington picked up on. Before you knew it, a beat began to play. You saw Napstablook playing something on the laptop they owned. Both the ghost and the computer were floating. You could tell that Napstablook was making the song, which just made you add more heart into your dancing. You grinned broadly as you, Mr. Harrington, and Mettaton matched steps with each other. Your dancing became interspersed with poses.
A knock sounded at the door. Mettaton made an annoyed noise. “That better not be any reporters! I’ve already told them that I would do interviews tomorrow!” He didn’t stop dancing with you. Instead, in a louder voice, he called, “Come innnn!”

The door opened some. Mettaton took your hand and lifted you. Your foot was about the size of his hand. You balanced on one foot on his hand. He easily supported your weight. You felt a thrill at being so tall. You spotted Papyrus and Sans in the doorway before Mettaton let you fall. He caught you and put you down. You both did one final pose as the music ended.

Papyrus clapped enthusiastically, eye sockets sparkling. “WOWIE!! THAT WAS AMAZING!!!”

“Thank you!” Mettaton stood up straight, fixing his metal hair. You turned Mr. Harrington off to save his battery. You were sweating some. Your makeup was possibly ruined and your hair would need to be fixed again. “It’s lovely to see you again, Papyrus.”

Papyrus flushed red. “IT’S GREAT TO SEE YOU TOO!!” You could see how pleased he was. You glanced at Sans, who met your gaze. You felt a little unnerved despite the fact he was smiling as usual. Maybe it was because he was smiling. Papyrus distracted you by saying, “FRISK WAS SUPPOSED TO COME AND VISIT US. BUT THEY NEVER SHOWED UP. WE GOT WORRIED!”

“guess they made a little stop, huh?” Sans asked, looking amused. “send us a text next time, buddy.”

“YEAH!! I WAS WORRIED FOR YOU. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WERE GOING TO VISIT METTATON SO I CAN COME TOO!” Papyrus agreed.

“Well you’re just in time, darling!” Mettaton said. “We were just practicing for the party tonight.”

“Oh yeah! I heard about that! I’m super excited! A real life concert! Is that what you’re wearing tonight, Frisk?”

You nodded. “I made it myself!” Mettaton bragged.
“IT’S A KILLER LOOK!!” Papyrus praised.

“It is.” You agreed, smiling widely. Sans was watching you.

“MAYBE YOU CAN DRESS ME TOO?”

“Of course! But not tonight. Much too busy.” Mettaton paused and then asked, “Want to dance with us?” He looking extremely pleased to have a genuine fan around. You recalled how Mettaton had reacted to meeting Papyrus for the first time. Papyrus’s ego seemed to match Mettaton’s, but he was so earnest about it that Mettaton seemed to look upon him more fondly than most of his fans. Surprisingly they got along quite well. Papyrus filled Mettaton’s compliment quota and responded enthusiastically to Mettaton’s attention.

“WOULD I?!” Papyrus cried, delighted, and hurried to join you both.

“Oh Bloopy!” Mettaton looked over to where he had last seen his cousin, but the ghost had disappeared. Mettaton sighed in slight disappointment.

Your stomach growled rather loudly then. You grabbed it in surprise. You hadn’t even realized how hungry you were. Now that you thought about it, it was actually rather late and you hadn’t eaten today. You hadn’t felt up for Toriel’s food.

“........would you like something to....eat?” Napstablook faded into sight next to you. You nodded.

“but....you cant eat ghost sandwiches........”

“don’t worry about it.” Sans said. “i got some munchies.” He reached into his pockets to pull out some popato chisps. He handed them to you. You took them gratefully, but still followed Napstablook into the kitchen. The others followed after you two as well. You munched on your food, but because it was monster food it only kind of quenched your hunger. Napstablook pulled out a ghost bagel and ate it. Sans sucked on some ketchup packets you were certain he had stolen from the local fast food place.

The ghost glanced around at the crowd in the kitchen before turning to you. “......do you want to.....lay on the ground and feel like trash with me.....? it went well last time....man it was great.” You nodded.

“FEEL LIKE TRASH? IMPOSSIBLE!” Papyrus said even as you and Napstablook laid down on the floor. Sans joined you. “SANS!! WHAT THE HECK??”

“i’m really down for this.” Sans joked. You giggled a little. Mettaton also joined you on the floor.

“NOT YOU TOO, METTATON!!” Papyrus lamented.

“What can I say?” Mettaton stared at the ceiling looking a little bored. “It’s tradition.” The four of you relaxed together. Papyrus sighed and joined you on the floor. You allowed the feeling of being trash wash over you. You felt like glamorous trash. Like a Glam Burger wrapper that was discarded. You could almost imagine you could see stars. It was peaceful.

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Your mother didn’t really want to go to the party. “I am much too old for such things.” Toriel protested. You shook your head and held her hand. You wanted her to come with you and have a good time. Everyone was apparently going to be at the party. Mettaton had only let you slip away long enough to grab Toriel.

“Frisk.” Toriel pulled you to a gentle stop and released your hand. She cupped your face and kissed
you encountered your forehead. “Do not worry about me, my child. Go have fun with your friends.” She smiled kindly as a devious light appeared in her eyes. “And in return, I shall have you for a whole day to myself! How does that sound?”

You liked the thought of spending a whole day with your mother. You still wanted her to come with you, though. But, you suppose she had a point. She wasn’t a young woman and Toriel didn’t seem the type to be at a dance party. You reluctantly gave in with a nod. She smiled at you again and said goodbye as you hurried to where the party was to happen.

Everyone in Ebott had been invited. Apparently it was supposed to be a private thing as a celebration to almost a year on the surface. The park was packed and magic was everywhere to light up the area. You marveled at all of the colorful magic. There was heat and snow and water everywhere. You could see Woshua making a fountain and splashing everyone. Flying monsters were darting and twirling around over the lake where it was less crowded. You could hear music playing and on the far stage you saw Napstablook playing some wonderful beats. It made you honestly want to dance.

You moved through the crowd of moving bodies and couples in search of some of your friends. It was night time, but only just, so there were still a number of kids here. You passed by refreshment tables only to stumble across some of your classmates.

“Frisk!!” Lansot called over the music. You dodged a couple passing you by before you joined your friends.

“We were hoping you were here!” Tamara said. She looked stunning in her ruffled top and short skirt. You rather liked her polka dot socks. Her thick hair was braided with jewels that glittered in the various lights. You noticed there were lasers and spotlights that were being added as the night wore on.

“You look great!” You said, but you don’t think that she heard your soft voice over the noise. You pointed at her outfit with a smile. Tamara nodded and spun to show you the angles.

“You look amazing, Frisk! Did you do your makeup?” She asked.

“Mettaton!” You pointed to the stage.

“Goooooossshhh, Frisk!” Lansot hopped next to you. Their tail had some kind of decorative band on it, almost like a fingerless glove. “You’re so popular!! Dude, introduce me!” You only laughed a bit. It was only through circumstance that you had connections.

The song changed then and you knew you would have to find your actual group that you had promised to meet with, but you stuck around for a while dancing with your schoolmates. The three of you felt a little silly, almost like little kids at a high school party, but you were in your own little world. It was better like this, after all. You were just pleased to have all of your friends alive and well with you.

After a couple songs, you bid farewell to them and moved closer to the stage. It was warm tonight and you were sweating, but Mettaton had put on some MTT makeup preserver or something. At least, nothing had wiped off onto your clothing yet. You stopped for a drink and finished it before throwing it into a trashcan.

The closer you got to the stage, the more the bass pounded through your body. It felt like your whole body was pulsing. The magic in the air made everything smell like an odd mixture of bodies and ozone. Your skin seemed to prickle with all of the life around you. You wondered if this is what it felt like to be a monster, surrounded and feeling magic all of the time.
You traveled through the CORE, the scent of ozone setting you a little on edge. You were worrying about any more monsters you would encounter. You were so weak and you needed to find some healing food. You would probably need to head back to the hotel, but you didn’t have the gold to buy anything more. You probably shouldn’t have spent it all on a hotel room, but you had wanted to see what it would be like to stay at such a ritzy place. And the bed had been so soft.

A grey monster passed you by, making your heart freeze with fear in your chest. Was that possibly one of the erased monsters? You didn’t know. It was hard to tell in this light. But you couldn’t be seen. Gaster may find you if it spots you, and so you hid quickly behind a wall. No, wait, this is a tree. What was a tree doing in the CORE? Oh well. There were stranger things here in the underground. You moved on in search of where Mettaton could be. He could appear at any moment and attack. You hoped that Alphys would call soon. You fingered the phone in your pocket and considered dialing Papyrus in hopes of some funny commentary from him and Undyne, but then remembered that your phone wouldn’t work in here. How did Alphys’s calls get through then?

“FRISK!! OVER HERE!!” You blinked and were back at the dance party. Confusion scrambled your brain and you looked around. Weren’t you just in the CORE? How did you get outside? What was such a park doing in the underground? But...the underground didn’t have stars. Not real ones. Was that the actual sky? You weren’t in Waterfall so–

“We almost didn’t recognize you in that awesome get-up!” Undyne said as your friends finally joined you. They were all rather dressed up with the exception of Sans. He was just wearing an unbuttoned blue shirt over a white tee and some jean shorts. He had flip-flops on tonight. Papyrus was dressed in the most recent fashion trend of Mettaton’s: brightly colored zigzags with bedazzled ducks on the sleeves. He was kind of hard on the eyes, but he somehow pulled it off. Well, you were wearing a sparkly purple shirt. Who were you to judge? Undyne had recently gotten a haircut that really worked with her outfit. A portion of her head was shaved and her hair covered her eyepatch. You rather liked her short jacket. Alphys seemed a bit uncomfortable here, but was having fun in her shorts and anime shirt.

You waved hello to all of them, smiling. You were still slightly shaken by the fact that you were outside. You felt like if you turned left, you would be back in the CORE. Were you taking shortcuts somehow? Was this how Sans felt?

“Papyrus was telling us how, uh, you were dancing with Mettaton.” Alphys said. She had a strange knowing look in her eye that you didn’t understand. “Show us?”

“yeah, kid. let’s see your moves.” Sans took your hand in his, tugging you to him. You stumbled in surprise but caught yourself.

“No–” You tried to say, not really wanting to be touched all of the sudden, but you weren’t heard. You felt blue magic wrap around your soul as you were grabbed by Papyrus. Before you knew it, you were being launched some into the air. You laughed, the annoyance slipping away, and did a pirouette before grabbing your skirt so you wouldn’t flash anyone. You were caught and spun
around by Papyrus before he threw you again. You landed lightly on his shoulders. Both of you struck a pose. Your friends cheered.

The music slowed down and you used your added height to see the stage. There you saw Mettaton appear along with Shyren. The monster girl had been singing some songs earlier, but they had all been solos. You guessed now it was time for Mettaton’s song. He seemed to have some extra musicians with him. You sat down on Papyrus’s shoulders, adjusting your skirt as Papyrus waved towards Mettaton. Mettaton winked at him making Papyrus squeal a little bit. Undyne rolled her eyes.

Then Mettaton began to sing. You had heard Mettaton sing once before, but it seemed that his voice had gotten an upgrade since then. It was smoother and blended well with Shyren’s backup vocals. You were put back onto the ground where you started dancing with everyone. Alphys, you saw, seemed a little bit shy. So you took her hands and moved back and forth. You made some ridiculous dance movements that made her giggle and soon she was putting her heart into it. Undyne cheered her on as they both enthusiastically danced together.

The magic in the air seemed thicker and the lights brighter. The music wasn’t too fast, but it was catchy. You found Sans and tugged his hands. He lazily moved with you to the beat, but you were determined to get him to dance. You were already getting the words down, so you found yourself mouthing them. He spun you before releasing your hands. You found yourself back in Papyrus’s arms. He was much more into the dance. Your hips moved with his for a while before he tossed you back to Sans. You laughed, realizing you were having a three way dance.

Sans pulled you into his arms and grabbed one of your hands. You wrapped a hand around his waist and moved the two of you a little roughly back and forth. Your motions were exaggerated and silly and you were having a wonderful time. Sans dipped you before your partners were lost and you were dancing with everyone around you. The music dipped and swelled. Shyren’s vocals rang out and Mettaton’s voice thrummed in you with Napstablook’s beats.

Later you would find yourself on stage dancing with Mettaton. You were certain that he would take up the rest of your night, and you were actually rather looking forward to it. The atmosphere was intoxicating and open. Mettaton’s confidence would resonate within you and give you the confidence to continue to dance and perform.

You were glad to have this moment. Recently you had found yourself troubled with memories invading your days. They concerned you some and made it a little difficult to tell this reality from another. You didn’t know what it meant for you. It seemed to be affecting your mood sometimes. You could feel it pop up at inconvenient times. But right in this moment, you were having fun right here with your friends. And you would take what you have and worry about tomorrow when it came.

Chapter End Notes

Tell me how you think I did with this chapter please. I'm once again wondering what everyone's thoughts are on Mettaton, Blooky, and Frisk.
Snail Hunting

Chapter Summary

Frisk and Toriel go snail-hunting together. Something is wrong.

(Maybe it's not just one thing.)

Chapter Notes

Hey! I'm posting on a Monday! Two in one "weekend"! Amazing! It's almost like back when I posted once a day, lol (I miss those days).

Note to my readers (because sometimes I can be too subtle, maybe, so I'm gonna leave a clue): if you note any changes in my writing style, it's usually for a reason.

You stared at the cat. Cat firmly ignored you. Her fluffy tail was flicking a little. The longer you stared, the more it seemed to twitch. Neither of you had moved for a good two minutes. Your finger was starting to hurt from holding down the button for so long. The red dot on the floor was shaking a little, but it wasn’t enough to draw Cat’s attention. She shot a scornful glare at you when you made a “psst psst” sound to get her attention.

You twitched the laser pointer and Cat’s eyes immediately darted to the dot, ears perking in attention. She stared at the dot and you wiggled it. Her tail flicked faster. It was a battle of patience. You could wait. You knew she wanted to go after it, but Cat seemed to hate letting people see her play. You had caught her at it once with Sans. He had used his powers to make a mouse (an actual one, the poor thing. Now that you thought about it, it was pretty funny hearing it squeak in terror. Papyrus hadn’t been happy) fly around the house. Cat had gone after it furiously.

You twitched the laser again. You brought the dot closer to Cat’s paws, teasing her. She half-heartedly went after it. You moved the dot away. She glared at the dot, getting annoyed. You turned away to look at your mom. She had been texting on her phone in between watching some drama on television. Earlier she’d had on the weather channel. She saw you looking at her and gave you a smile. You returned it with a soft smile when movement caught your attention and you snapped the laser off. Cat looked around her in confusion before furiously cleaning her leg pretending that she hadn’t just fallen for the trick. You turned the light on again. Cat firmly ignored it. Dammit, you had missed it. Now to start over.

Toriel turned off the television and stood up then. “Look, my child.” She called to catch your attention, “The rain has stopped. Would you like to get your boots and bucket and we shall go?” You nodded eagerly and stood up. Cat hissed at your sudden movement and darted away to the kitchen. Toriel had placed a baby gate to block off the kitchen, but Cat clawed her way right over it and skidded across the tiled floor to some mysterious corner. Toriel sighed. “We should really return that cat to Sans soon.” She said.

The two of you wandered over to the shoe rack and you grabbed your prepared rain boots. It was
going to be very muddy where you were going. Even Toriel had put on some specially-made extra-large boots. It was a good thing you had seen Cat run into the kitchen or she may have been hiding in your mom’s boots. It would’ve been funny to see her reaction to that. The two of you picked up some buckets and your backpack before heading outside. You held your mom’s hand as you walked.

*I haven’t had chocolate in a long time. Let’s have chocolate.* You thought and you tugged on your mom’s hand lightly. She hummed. “Chocolate?” You asked.

“How about on the way back as a treat?” She suggested. You would rather have the chocolate now, though. You must have made some type of face because Toriel clucked her tongue at you a bit. “You did just eat, my child.”

You didn’t respond, a little grumpy now. You guys never had chocolate, but you weren’t that huge of a fan of chocolate. Yes, you liked it, but not enough that you would want to keep a stash of it. Which is why it was such a problem when you actually did want some sweets. It was a bit annoying.

“Do you remember how to find the snails, Frisk?” Toriel asked as the two of you began to leave the town and enter the surrounding forest. Everything was all muddy and the air was thick and clean from the fallen rain. It was still overcast and it threatened to open up and pour again, but the mid-morning sun was encouraging activity. The forest was fairly bright but kind of creepy as they travelled through it. The scent of flora and fauna was everywhere, cheering you up. You nodded in agreement to your mother’s words even as she reminded you of everything you both needed to look out for.

Despite the bit of a rough start, you actually were in a wonderful mood as you spent the morning with your mother collecting snails and wild plants. It was nice being taught things in school, but you personally liked these more practical lessons. Toriel had decades of knowledge of the land from a very long time ago. You had never actually asked her what it was like living on the surface all those years ago, but you could tell that she remembered well enough. The names of the plants she taught you were things you had never heard of. They actually had different names in this day and age. It was fascinating that long ago monsters had eaten plants for medicine as well as the humans. Monster magic could only solve so much, it seemed.

You were actually rather surprised to learn how many snails were around here. A part of you was grossed out by the little things (knowing that they would be ending up inside of your stomach didn’t help much), but another part was fascinated by them. You liked to poke their eye stalks and watch them retract.

*If I put salt on them, would they bubble like slugs?* An excited voice whispered in you. You weren’t sure. You kind of wanted to try it.

“Come this way, my child! I think I see a good spot!” Toriel called and you dismissed the thought. You grabbed the snail and put it in your bucket before following after her.

Toriel was an old monster, but you could still see the young person in her. She told you stories of will-o’-the-wisps and monsters of old that you had never seen before. You told her about fairy tales you had grown up involving actual magical creatures and they always made Toriel laugh.

“Some of those stories, Frisk, are probably true!” She chuckled. “Not all, of course, but some! Oh, how time changes stories.” She shook her head. You asked her about the princesses and such. “I would not know about them.” She seemed reluctant to talk about such things. They made her uncomfortable, it seemed. “But I would not put it past humanity to change elements. Who knows what the true stories are? Perhaps they do come from reality?”
You scrambled up onto a log that had fallen over a small chasm at the bottom of which was a river. It looked pretty shallow and you knew that you could go around, but you wanted to walk across the log. It reminded you of adventure stories you had read, like those ones where children would run away from home to play in the woods or to live in the mountains. Those stories were always nice to read. It was better to live alone in the forests than to live with humans. They just discarded you whenever you were no longer useful to them. Or they just ignored you because you weren’t even wanted. At least the forest accepts everyone. That was why you had climbed Mt. Ebott after all.

Who needs humanity? You thought with a smile on your face. You spun around on the log to look for Toriel and found her missing. Your hands tightened in sudden fear realizing that you were alone. You dropped what was in your hand and looked up at the mountain towering above you. The path in front of you was pretty clear. You wondered how long there would still be a path as you walked forward. Your stick dragged along the ground beside you. It was getting late. You wondered if your parents would notice you gone any time soon. Would they send any kind of help? Would anybody in your village even notice?

No wait, you lived in a city. Not a village. A village with yellow flowers, much like the flowers you had fallen onto when you fell into the underground. You looked above you at where you had fallen down. You could see daylight streaming in. In this place, there was nowhere to go but forward. You followed it–

And cried out as you tumbled into a small gorge. Water soaked your body as you cried out, scrambling in confusion. Had you fallen into the icy waters of Snowdin? Were you in Waterfall? It was so bright. You couldn’t tell.

“Frisk!” You sat up with a gasp, covered in mud and water. Your body trembled and your head felt like it was throbbing. Your skin felt like it was splitting. Your arm was on fire. You shuddered and curled around your arm suddenly terrified that it was glitching out again. In your mind’s eye you could still see it and you could still feel it. You wanted to scream, but instead gritted your teeth.

I thurts does it not?

Yes, it hurt so much. Make it stop. Make it stop!

I twill end.

“Oh! You’ve fallen down, haven’t you...” Asriel’s soft voice called. Your head snapped up and the image of the goat child swam into your mind. “Are you okay?” Your mouth opened to call his name, your throat feeling clogged by something, when Asriel transformed into Toriel. You blinked in surprise at your mother as she held her hand out to you to help you up. You took it with a shaky hand and she helped you to your feet.

“Mom...!” You whimpered. You were so confused. Where were you right now? Why were you so wet? Were you outside? Toriel was here. It was alright because your mother was here. You hugged her and trembled, so very confused. You squeezed your eyes shut and tried to remember. Toriel fell to her knees, not caring that mud was ruining her pants, and held you close to her. You didn’t want to let go.

“What is it, my child?” She asked in a hurried whisper. “Are you injured? Frisk, my child, Frisk what is the matter?” She begged.

You couldn’t form the words. You didn’t understand what was happening to you. You felt like you were in a shifting world and she was the only thing keeping you where you were. You were so cold and wet despite the heat and humidity of the day. You clenched your hands in her shirt and spotted
red on your hand. Blood? But it was a spot. You tentatively removed your hand to see a little ring glittering on your finger.

Then you recalled Valentine’s Day and the deal with Sans. This ring was a symbol of your relationship and the trust you two bore. Because in this life, Sans knew everything. You had told him everything. You were in Ebott, and Toriel was your mother. And you had friends, and a family, and people who cared about you, and a monster after you. You were snail hunting with your mom.

You buried your face in Toriel’s shirt and inhaled her comforting scent. Knowing what timeline you were in reassured and calmed you immensely. The panic that had been setting in began to dissipate, and it gave way to a sinking realization that you weren’t doing okay. You weren’t okay at all. You had thought these were a passing thing, but you had just lost your grip on your timeline. It had felt like you were about to mentally leave the timeline. Right now you felt grounded, but earlier you couldn’t even tell that you were lost in your thoughts. These daydreams were getting out of hand.

“Frisk?” Toriel called again, her large paw stroking your hair. You looked up at her. You didn’t know how to explain anything. You couldn’t tell her what was happening to you without explaining everything. But you didn’t feel very much in control right now.

Words left your mouth unbidden, “I...thought I was...climbing the mountain again...” You swallowed against the words, but they continued to spill out without filter. You began to shiver, “I was going...to find the hole again...the one that the children fell down...and I...I was...I was gonna...”

“Oh, my child.” Toriel kissed your forehead, which stung as you realized that you were a bit injured from your fall. “Come, I believe it is time to return home.” She stood up and kept a reassuring hand wrapped around yours. You didn’t want to lose the connection yet.

“The snails...” You pointed to your discarded bucket. The snails that had escaped were leaving. Toriel shook her head and picked up your bucket as well. Her hand was able to hold both of your buckets.

“No worries. Let us get you home and washed up before you catch a summer cold!” You followed after her forlornly. You stared at your arm, half-expecting it to flare with pain again. But nothing happened. “When we return,” your mom continued and it caught your attention, “we shall call Sans.”

You looked at her in confusion. Why would she call Sans?

She caught your questioning gaze and smiled a bit sadly. “He is who you need to see, is it not?” Your jaw clenched some in surprise. Was there something your mom knew that you hadn’t told her? Had she guessed it? Had Sans told her anything? “Do not look so startled, my child.” She seemed amused, but in a wistful way. You had heard that tone of voice used far too much, but never in this kind of situation. “I am well aware that you have things you have not told me. And I trust you have good reason not to. So I am not the one you need to talk to, correct?” She looked at you again. Her eyes ran over your face, a hint of desperation hidden in those dark depths. “Sans can help you?”

Your eyes watered with guilt and shame as you nodded hopefully. Your mother wanted to help, you knew, but she was stepping aside for Sans. You hated that. You wanted her to be the one to hold you. You wanted to tell her everything. You wanted her to protect you from Gaster just as she had from all of those monsters and Flowey and Asgore. You wanted to curl up into her arms and let the world pass you by. You wished that you had never left the Ruins and had just stayed with her.

Mother always wanted to protect us.
But you couldn’t do any of that. You were no longer a child who begged for your mother (old or new). You had needed to leave the Ruins, and you could no longer be protected by Toriel alone. Your secret was still too much for her. You were terrified of hurting her as you had done so many times before.

_Do not be afraid to ask for help, my child._ Your father's voice rang in your head. You should tell your parents about Gaster, you knew, but you couldn’t. Gaster was after you, but they had no idea who Gaster was. Sans needed to be the one to tell them. It couldn’t wait anymore. You were scared you were running out of time.

You were no longer certain that Sans’s potion had stopped your erasure from this timeline.
Before You Hurt Anyone

Chapter Summary

Something was seriously wrong with you.

Chapter Notes

I hope you all suffer enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You didn’t release your mother’s hand as the two of you walked through the forest and exited. Your mind felt like it was still spinning and your head was throbbing. You glanced down at your arm and expected the pain to come back at any moment, but it didn’t. You weren’t even sure if you had physically felt the pain or if it had all been in your head. You looked up at Toriel and could see the stress in her eyes. She had tried earlier to speak with you calmingly, but both of you gave up the fronts of trying to comfort each other after a while. You were scared, but you were more stable. And her trying to comfort you only felt a little patronizing.

You tucked yourself close to Toriel as you two entered town. The sun was high in the sky and the temperature was warm with a cooling breeze blowing. You shivered and felt the aches of the scratches that were on your body from the fall. You worried some about infection. You were still quite covered in mud and dirt. Flower petals still stuck to your hair from the fall. Flowey’s attacks still hurt you, but Toriel’s healing had taken away most of the aches from the magical attack.

You gazed forlornly at the Ruins and the spikes as Toriel led you through the trap. You wondered if anybody had died from this particular puzzle. The spikes had enough gaps in between them that you could possibly get by without injuring yourself, but your clothing would catch. You imagined that you could see blood on the spikes and quickly turned your head away to find yourself back in Ebott.

Your heart leapt in terror. It had happened again. You had zoned out again and hadn’t even realized it. You swallowed thickly and glanced at your mom, but she hadn’t seemed to have noticed. How long had this been happening to you and you had just never noticed?

You had expected to go straight back to your mom’s house, but instead Toriel surprised you by leading you to Asgore’s house. The door, as usual, was unlocked and the sign in place inviting anybody in. Toriel knocked and smiled down at you reassuringly. You smiled tentatively back. Inside you could hear many voices laughing. The thought of being around so many people made you nervous. Your nerves already felt rather frayed and if you weren’t mistaken you could hear some rather important people talking with your father.

“Come in!” You heard Asgore call and Toriel opened the door. Inside you indeed saw some of your father’s more internationally important friends. You had heard that some of them were in the nearby vicinity, but you hadn’t even considered that they may visit. You were pleased to note that they appeared happy. Asgore was smiling and was clearly delighted to see both you and Toriel, but his smile fell some at the sight of you.
“Oh dear. What has happened to you, young one?” He asked. He stood from his large armchair to approach you.

*Don’t let him close. He’ll kill you!* You stared in horror at the king’s downtrodden expression. His armor glowed in the strange light of the barrier. The triton in his hands was menacing. You had died so many times by his hands already. Were you really going to have to take the old king’s life in order to survive? You gripped the knife in your hand tightly. The knife squeezed back.

**FIGHT.** You had to fight. But you didn’t want to fight. There must be another way.

“I don’t want to fight.” You told him. Asgore froze with wide eyes.

“What—?” He started.

“Asgore,” Toriel interrupted before he could finish. You looked at your mom, startled by her presence. You realized that you were still holding Toriel’s hand, but it was still difficult to maintain your grasp on now. You were scared. You wanted to see Sans. He should know what’s wrong with you, right?

Toriel didn’t have to say any more. You could tell that some kind of understanding –an unspoken language between two people who have known each other for a long time– passed between them and Asgore turned to his company. “I am sorry, but we will have to cut this short. I have cakes you all may take with you!”

Toriel pulled you gently aside away from prying eyes and kneeled down to be more level with you. You felt so small again. “Why not go wash up, Frisk? Asgore will watch over you.”

Your grip immediately tightened around hers in terror. What would happen to you if you were alone? Would you leave this timeline completely? Was Toriel going to die? Were you going to die? Asgore might try to kill you again. You didn’t have a weapon to defend yourself.

**The kitchen. It will probably have knives.** Right, the kitchen. You knew that Asgore and Toriel both kept actual knives. Maybe this time you may actually be able to find them. If not, there were always the gardening tools. But you preferred the knives.

You wanted to tell Toriel not to leave you. You didn’t want to be left alone. But you were used to being alone. It was just your mother leaving you once again. She would be back eventually. You could take care of yourself. Maybe you should bring Mr. Harrington into the bathroom with you again. You would have to make sure to make dinner. Your mother would probably have dinner with one of her boyfriends.

You nodded in understanding and were surprised when you received a kiss on your forehead. You blinked and between one moment and the next your mother turned into Toriel. Your eyes stung with the urge to cry. She stood up. “I will be back soon, my child. Worry not.” You nodded again and watched as she left. You turned away and went to the bathroom to enter it.

You looked down at your hands and could see them trembling. This was worse than your nightmares, you realized. At least with the nightmares you could avoid them by being awake. Now they were plaguing your waking hours too. You gripped your arms and shivered more. You wanted Sans’s jacket. Maybe that could help you. Maybe the scent would help? Your hands clenched around drying mud as it chipped off in your hands. You needed a shower.

You stripped and stepped into the shower. You were too nervous to take a bath right now. You needed flowing water on you. You turned the water up until it was too hot. You felt more awake
with the heat on your skin. You felt more alive and aware. The hot water grounded you. The underground, as far as you had experienced, didn’t have hot water. You closed your eyes and focused on the water running across your skin. You moved mechanically to wash yourself. Your skin stung where the water hit your open wounds.

**What will you do now Chara?**

**Now that you are back?**

You spun around and looked for the source of that voice. Every hair on your body stood on end. Had you...imagined that? It had sounded like...

You hesitated to peek around the shower curtain. But you needed to know. You were compelled to know. You opened the curtain a little bit and peeked out. The bathroom was empty. There were no signs that anybody had even entered. You pressed the side of your head against the cool tile. Your imagination was going crazy. You just...you just needed to calm down. Ignore everything.

*When the world hates you, then try to ignore it. Smile. Everything will work out for us in the end.*

You felt a small smile pull at your lips, comforted by the words. You wondered where you had heard them before. Maybe it was something that Sans had told you on one of the nights you had spent with him. It sounded like something he would say.

You returned to your bathing. You felt distinctly more stable and better as you got clean. You ran your hands over your body and really took your time to look at it. It was becoming so much different in recent months, but you were still you. You were still Frisk and you would never stop being Frisk.

So why did it feel like you were many different people at once now? The feeling was familiar to the one you had back in the underground. Back when your actions hadn’t felt completely yours. Was it possible that because the timelines seemed to be crossing the boundaries of memories into visions in your mind that Chara could return? Chara was never you, but Chara had controlled you in too many timelines. It was possible that...

No. No, Chara can’t take you over again. You...you weren’t afraid of the monsters. You wouldn’t ever attack them or anybody. No, Chara can’t take you over.

You stepped out of the shower and grabbed your towel to dry off. Your dad kept large fluffy towels in the bathroom that you could wear like a blanket if you wanted to. They were fairly heavy, but they were almost always warm and it felt good to dry with them. You wrapped yourself up in your towel and grabbed your soiled clothes to head for the door.

Voices outside made you pause. You were a little hesitant to leave the bathroom rather naked with company still out there. Had Asgore not gotten rid of the visitors yet? It wouldn’t be very professional if your sort-of co-workers saw you so undressed. It had been hard enough to get them to take you seriously when you were still a child.

But you recognized Papyrus’s loud voice and Alphys’s softer voice. They had to have been not far from the bathroom. Maybe waiting for you?

“NO, I KNOW.” Papyrus was saying. He was talking in his soft-yelling voice. “THEY HAVE BEEN...OFF.”

“A-and now Toriel has called Sans here? Maybe we should...maybe we shouldn’t be here.” Alphys asked nervously.
“I WANT TO HELP FRISK TOO!” Papyrus denied. “IF ANYBODY CAN COMFORT FRISK, IT IS I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS! NOBODY’S COMFORTING SKILLS SURPASS MY OWN!”

“I hope Undyne gets here soon...” Alphys muttered. You decided eavesdropping wasn’t a good thing and opened the door. Your friends immediately dropped their conversation at the sight of you. Alphys looked tired and stressed out. You wondered why and hoped she was getting enough sleep. Papyrus appeared delighted to see you.

“THERE YOU ARE! ARE YOU ALRIGHT? HER MAJESTY TOLD US YOU WERE...UNWELL?” The way he said “unwell” sounded like a very unsubtle attempt to tell you it was related to your secret. You weren’t sure if he was referring to Gaster or your past, though.

You looked away and gripped your clothes tighter.

“A-ah, um, why don’t you...get dressed? We’ll...we’ll wait here!” Alphys suggested.

A drop of cool water dripped down your neck to your back. You made the hand motion for ‘mom’ with a questioning tilt of your head.

“She’s with His Majesty and my brother in the living room.” Papyrus informed you. You nodded in understanding and then moved down the hallway to get dressed. You gazed around the room and wondered why there was only one bed before you remembered that you didn’t have a sibling. Your chest hurt at the thought of Asriel and you shook your head. No, now wasn’t the time to think about such things. The image of him earlier still haunted you.

You went to your wardrobe and pulled out some clothes. Despite starting to feel cold, you pulled on a striped tank top and some shorts. You tossed your dirty clothes onto the floor to be washed as soon as possible. You then grabbed your towel to go hang up.

Once you had exited the bathroom, you found only Papyrus waiting for you. He smiled brightly at the sight of you, but he seemed kind of worried. “HUMAN!” He called cheerfully, his fake armor shining despite the lack of sun. The light reflecting off of the snow seemed almost blinding, but the mist of the waterfall helped to dull it. You felt like you were in a cloud.

Sans had warned you that you would probably have to face his brother. Papyrus was so eager to fight, but you were worried about hurting him. You liked Papyrus and found him funny. And you could tell that he enjoyed playing with you. You didn’t think he had a lot of friends despite being so friendly. But you still had to fight him.

Maybe you could...avoid killing him like you did Toriel? She had looked proud that you were strong enough to protect yourself, but your heart was still heavy from killing her. You had thought that you could just knock her out...but now she was gone. A few of the monsters on the way to this point had spared you and you had managed to escape, but you were sure now that you would have to actually fight Papyrus.

You tightened your fist inside of your glove as Papyrus approached you. You had already tried to spare him. Now he was coming to attack you. You were scared, but you got ready to dodge. You would just need to get in one, maybe two attacks and he would be dead. You could regret it later when you had left this place and were away from the strange creatures that wanted you dead. Papyrus’s hands reached for you—

And felt your mind snap back to the present. You gasped slightly as Papyrus’s hands landed on your shoulders. You instinctively jerked away before realizing that he wasn’t attacking you. His eye
sockets were wide with worry.

“YOU ZONED OUT, FRISK!” Papyrus told you. “I UNDERSTAND THAT MY FACE CAN BE QUITE DAZZLING, BUT I HAVEN’T SEEN YOU STARE LIKE THAT BEFORE! IT WAS RATHER...SCARY. AND FAMILIAR...?” He seemed wary of his last statement. You wondered how much he remembered.

You were a bit shaken by that. You didn’t want to hurt Papyrus. Papyrus had never killed you. You didn’t need to defend yourself. You were okay. Your empty hands clenched around nothingness. You gave a shaky smile of reassurance and signed an apology.

“DO NOT WORRY! I WILL FORGIVE YOU!” Papyrus turned around. “EVERYONE IS WAITING IN THE LIVING ROOM. EVEN UNDYNE IS HERE!” You had seen Alphys’s excited message on her blog this morning about Undyne coming back to town for a couple of days, but you hadn’t known that it was today. You were unsure how you felt about seeing her.

The living room, like Papyrus said, was full of your friends. At first sight all of them looked rather serious as they talked in lower voices. When they spotted you, the conversation stopped. Toriel immediately stood up and approached you, cupping your cheek as she kneeled in front of you. You noticed that your father was on the far side of the room. His eyes looked worried and pained.

“How are you feeling, Frisk?” Your mom asked. Your eyes drifted back to her face from your dad’s and you granted her a tired smile. You opened your mouth to respond to her, but you weren’t sure what to say. You closed your mouth. In response she pulled you into a hug.

“Aw, don’t worry!” Undyne grinned at you as your mother released you from her hold. “I’m certain the little punk’ll be just fine! Hey kid, you been training too much without me?!?” She joked.

The wind was howling around the two of you. You could hear the metal clanking, following you as you ran for your life. The scent of water and lakes filled your lungs with every desperate breath. You had been warned about Undyne, and now she was furious. You remembered her at one time being your friend, but now she was nowhere near that. She had known you had killed Papyrus right away. Sans was nowhere to be seen. He hadn’t been at his post. You supposed that you’d deserved that.

You ran as fast as your legs could carry you. You could hear and see the glowing magical spears thrusting up from the ground behind you. It was all you could do to avoid them. Spears flew through the air barely missing you. You panted and tried not to let your fear brew tears in your eyes. You needed to see if you were fleeing.

You needed help. You wished that Toriel was here. You wanted somebody –anybody!– to help you. You felt a sharp pain in your back that split through to your chest and you only had a moment to register the blood erupting from your body and the spear protruding from your chest before you fell forward, vision darkening−

You cried out and fell backwards away from Undyne. You couldn’t move, paralyzed in your fear and not understanding why you were where you were now. Shouldn’t you still be in Waterfall at your last SAVE? Why were you in a house? Why were you−?

“Whoa!” Undyne put her hands up in a placating manner, baffled at your reaction. Your body was shaking and you flinched away at the hands that touched you. You looked up at Toriel and grabbed her arm. Toriel would protect you. She’d promised to do so. She’d promised to protect you.

You didn’t realize that you were mumbling the mantra aloud until you heard Toriel whispering placations to soothe you. “I am here, Frisk. Do not worry. I am here, my child.”
“FRISK, WHAT’S WRONG?” Papyrus asked, his fingers playing with each other in his nervousness. He looked like he wanted to move towards you, but Undyne and Asgore held him back. All three were watching you warily and restlessly. You buried your face into your mother’s (new, clean) shirt and took a couple steadying breaths. Her arms encompassed your smaller form easily. She rubbed your back as you waited for reality to reassert itself. Your eyes found the ring still on your finger and you focused on the factual memories that came with it.

**How does it feel?**

**Your timelines are converging.**

**Interesting.**

You covered your ears. Your mind was filled with static. You couldn’t think. You needed to remember what was real. What was *this* timeline? Everyone was alive. They weren’t trying to kill you. You were panicking over past timelines again. They were becoming worse. You weren’t okay.

You pulled back from Toriel feeling a bit calmer. More under control. You let your eyes drift up from your ring to Undyne. You signed an apology to her as well. She gave you a tentative smile, clearly unsure about how she should react.

“hey.” You turned around to find Sans and Alphys behind you. Alphys was keeping a bit of a distance from you, but she was worrying her fingers. Sans’s smile was reassuring. “you...uh...how you feeling, buddy?”

You glanced at your mother first and then your father before looking at the rest of your friends. Everyone was watching you. These monsters cared about you. You knew this. But right now you felt as if they would attack you any moment. Friends...shouldn’t feel that way about each other. Every instinct told you to leave the room. You resisted the impulse.

“No...good.” You admitted quietly.

“yeah, you look a bit dazed and confused.” Sans considered something for a moment before he slid his jacket off and offered it to you. You took it and slid it on, zipping it up. Your shower-warm skin made you feel a bit too hot in the jacket, but you felt significantly calmer. It wasn’t armor, but it certainly felt more like protection than what you had been wearing previously. You closed your eyes and tried to subtly inhale the scent of the fur in the lining. You relaxed as the familiar and comforting scent filled you. You opened your eyes again.

“Sans...” You glanced around at your friends again, “We...we need to talk about Gaster.” You heard Alphys gasp softly and saw her cover her mouth a bit. Undyne’s fists clenched. Papyrus and Sans, however, shared a look. Sans closed his eyes.

“yeah. this has been...coming a while.” He agreed. You were surprised he agreed so easily. You knew for a fact that Gaster was still a sore subject for him so you had been reluctant to ask him to tell your parents, but he had agreed so quickly. You wondered if it was because of your recent daydreams, or if it was because of guilt. Sans had confessed to you on more than one quiet sleepless night in his bed that the latter bothered him.

“Are you sure about this?” Undyne asked, crossing her arms. She seemed unnerved. You knew that she didn’t like anything having to do with Gaster. “Does it have to do with...well, that crazy reaction to us?” She looked you dead in the eye.

You didn’t respond, unsure.
“N-no. Frisk is right.” Alphys disagreed. She glanced between Asgore and Toriel, both of who were
looking like they were becoming more and more displeased with the conversation, and tugged at her
lab coat. “We need to, um, tell them.”

“Yes, Gaster?” Toriel asked, her voice stern. You winced. Your mother had apparently found the
cause of her child’s distress and had latched onto it. She glared at Sans, and Sans smiled back. You
could see the stress lines under his eyes despite his cool façade.

“I feel...as if I may know that name.” Asgore said, rubbing his beard.

“Gaster is the one who gave the kid their scar.” Sans nodded to your arm.

“You said that you did that.” The king replied. You felt like the steel hidden in his calm voice could
kill a person.

“Sans...you did not lie to me...did you?” Toriel asked quietly somewhere between hurt and angry.

Sans’s jaw clenched a little. “not exactly.” His smile turned a bit bitter. “it’s my fault it
happened...but i didn’t give them that scar.”

“It wasn’t your fault.” You blurted out. You hated that he blamed himself for everything related to
Gaster. It wasn’t his fault that Gaster had attacked you, and it wasn’t his fault that Gaster had been
erased. You didn’t want him telling your parents such things.

“FRISK IS RIGHT!” Papyrus agreed. “GASTER HURT FRISK BECAUSE HE WANTED TO!”

I should have fought him. You thought bitterly.

Sans seemed to brush off both of your comments, though. “point is, gaster attacked frisk. and the
kid...” He eyed you, “...isn’t out of the ballpark yet.”

“What do you mean?” Toriel asked.

“Gaster...” Sans rolled the words around, clearly trying to think of a way to word it, “no longer exists.
but. he’s after frisk. and his attacks...can erase people...and maybe things...from this reality.”

“I do not understand.” Asgore took a seat in his large chair, frowning.

“When Frisk was attacked by D-Dr. Gaster...” Alphys hesitated to say his name, “it started to...erase
them. L-l-like how Dr. Gaster was. Erased, that is.”

“His attack,” Sans shoved his hands into his pockets switching into what you had dubbed “serious
mode”, “damaged the cells of their body. the matter that their body is composed of began to...he
erased is the best term we can use. it would’ve spread and...” he drifted off before continuing, “but i
stopped it. as you can see, though, it left a mark.”

Your parents looked at your arm. You subtly tried to hide the wound.

“But...” Sans started again, “i guess whatever i did...didn’t work completely.” There was an angry
undertone to his voice.

“Sans?” Toriel asked, alarmed.

“Are you saying that Frisk can still be erased?” Asgore demanded, eyes wide at the horror.

“N-Not exactly!” Alphys butt in again. She shook her head and hands. “Physically Frisk
appears...fine! But their mind...” She didn’t appear to know how to answer it.

“What’s wrong with their mind?!” Undyne pressed.

“that’s what we’d like to know.” Sans looked at you. All eyes turned to you again. You swallowed thickly. This isn’t how you’d wanted things to go. Sans was supposed to tell them about Gaster, not force you to talk about what was happening with you. You were supposed to tell him in secret. Only three people total in this room knew about your past, and four of them had no idea. How were you possibly going to explain?

“My...I think...” You didn’t want to talk. You didn’t want to be in here anymore. The eyes on you felt threatening. You didn’t like being watched so much. Why must you be so scrutinized? But you pushed on. “I think...my mind is...scrambled.”

“Scrambled?” Alphys asked gently.

“Like...like my...” You motioned to your arm. “But...” You motioned instead to your head. “It’s...mixing up my...memories.” You saw the lights in Sans’s eyes dim a little. Your throat was getting thick. “-and because of that...I think I’m...h-hallucinating?” Your voice broke. The panic was starting swell again. You hadn’t even considered putting what was happening to you into words. It felt more solid now –more real. And it was terrifying hearing it voiced aloud.

Gaster was still hurting you. But instead of being erased, you were going insane. You felt strange all of the time and nothing seemed real anymore. You felt like the tentative tether that kept you to this timeline had been frayed and you were only hanging on by a thread. What would happen when it finally snapped? Would you start to fade out? Would you forget which reality you actually existed in? The horror of living only in your memories began to overwhelm you and your body began to shake. Tears filled your eyes.

“aw, frisk.” Sans sighed in understanding. “com’ere, pal.” He stepped towards you and held out his arms.

In the light of the judgement hall he looked so tired. His expression was shuttered but his arms were open. Sans was sparing you. You just needed to accept the spare. You only needed to drop your weapon and fall into his arms. Accept his hug for what it was and stop all of this killing. You could be forgiven. There was still redemption for you.

But you weren’t an idiot. You had fallen for that trick before and I won’t fall for it again!!

You swung at Sans furiously. He dodged back instinctively and the vision broke. You were back in your dad’s living room. The lights in Sans’s eyes were pinpricks with his shock. You could see fear etched into the bone of his skull –something that you would’ve never been able to recognize had you not known him for so long. Sans stared at you. You stared at Sans as the weight of what you had just done pressed in on you.

You had just attacked Sans. Sans who, more than anybody else, was just as terrified of you as you were of him. Sans, the one who also had PTSD and reoccurring nightmares of past timelines that haunted him. Sans, your best friend with only one HP.

And you had attacked him with full intent of murdering him.

It was too much. You took a step backwards, shallow breaths entering and exiting your lips. It was too much. You needed to get away. You had almost attacked Papyrus. You actually had attacked Sans. And you could feel the LOVE in your body. It was too much. Why did you have so much?
You hadn’t killed anybody. You hadn’t killed anybody!!

You turned and ran. You only briefly heard your friends call your name, Sans’s voice somehow calling louder in your ears. You didn’t stop. Your bare feet pounded against the ground. You knew you could out run them if you tried hard enough. You just needed to get away before you hurt anybody else.

You could hear a deep laughter echoing in your head. You didn’t know whose it was.

“kid, wait!” Beside you Sans appeared and disappeared. He moved quickly through the shortcuts, used to every one of the shortcuts in Ebott. He tried to speak to you with each shortcut he went through, trying to keep up with you. “frisk, no, wait! listen! stop!”

You refused and pushed yourself harder. You couldn’t outrun his shortcuts, but you knew a place where he wasn’t familiar enough with the shortcuts. You turned towards the mountain. Sans saw what you were doing and you felt blue magic try to latch onto your soul, but you moved out of range. You heard him curse loudly. You could hear Undyne and Papyrus both yelling your name from far too close to where you were. Undyne wasn’t in armor and you knew that you couldn’t run faster than either her or Papyrus when they were really trying.

“frisk!!” Sans called again. You ran into the trees.

It was so easy climbing up Mt. Ebott. It was strange how such a dangerous mountain just seemed to call for people to climb it. Maybe it was the easy slope? Maybe it was the beautiful terrain. The surrounding forest of such a cursed mountain was surprisingly gorgeous. The wind felt good on your face. You felt free, but you needed to be careful. You wondered what had made people disappear. Did they fall? Did they just get lost here on the mountain? Did animals eat them? Did monsters eat them?

Why were you even running? You should just walk. Take your time to enjoy what may possibly be your last moments. You’ll finally be freeing your loved ones of your unwanted presence. It seemed that all you did was cause problems. Your parents would fight so much. You were unwanted. Well, you didn’t want humanity either. Who needed humanity?

You ran for what seemed like hours. Your chest hurt and there was a bad stitch in your side. But still you kept your legs and arms pumping like it was the only thing you knew. The trees began to become sparser. The foliage became denser. You needed to keep going deeper. There was a trail nearby. You moved to follow it. It felt familiar under your bare feet. You didn’t even register the pain in your damaged feet. Plants whipped at your body, cutting into your skin. Yes, the trail was the best bet.

A cave opened up in front of you, immense and yawning. Vines extended inward inviting curious people to take a look. You moved closer and saw a hole larger than anything. You were almost afraid to look down, but you were curious. You knew this hole. Was this...where all of those children had disappeared? You glanced behind you at the setting sun. A warm summer breeze filtered in, brushing against your skin. Your hair waved around you. You turned back to the hole and approached it when your foot snagged and you tumbled forward. Too late you realized you were too close to the hole.

You cried out as you fell down. Only your voice echoed back in the cave.

Chapter End Notes
Hopefully this isn't too melodramatic. And it's fairly in character.

was it too cliche to end it there?
Chara and Gaster

Chapter Summary

You wake up in the Underground again.

Chapter Notes

I'm somewhat worried about the dialogue. I hope you all like it!

“You IDIOT!!”

“Just because there are flowers down here, doesn’t mean you can just go flinging yourself down holes!”

“You’re lucky I caught you!”

“What if I had just let you die? Then you can RESET and just end up back down here anyway!”

“Hey...are you ignoring me?”

“I know you’re alive!”

“Frisk!”

“...Frisk?”

“Hey...wake up already! You can’t just...Wake up right now, you idiot, or I’ll...I’ll attack you!”

“.........Please?”

“Please wake up...”

==

You couldn’t remember where you were. It felt very much like you must have passed out because you didn’t think that you had fallen asleep. Falling asleep was a gradual process, and you certainly didn’t feel very rested. You twitched your fingers and found them brushing something soft. You couldn’t quite make out what it was yet, though. Your toes twitched and a sting of pain laced up your body. Ow. Looks like your feet were injured. From what?

You remembered running. You didn’t often run barefoot because the asphalt could get hot in the city. Shoes were much more preferable. What made you run around barefoot today? Clearly it had been a bad idea because now you were in pain wherever you were at.

The scent of earth and flowers filled your senses. A very specific flower, you recognized, and tried to place it. You had smelled it many times before. You could taste the tea on your tongue. Your head throbbed and suddenly you remembered many instances in which you had smelled the golden
flowers. Your eyes snapped open and you sat up with a jolt.

Your vision swam before you, but you recognized this place. You had been here many times before, after all. It’s where your adventure began every single time. The flowers brushed against you in the breeze from above. Did you...RESET? But...you didn’t remember doing anything like that. You would remember doing something like that, right? Sans would be so upset...Your friends...

You looked up, squinting in the dim light, and found it to be too dark to see. It must be night time. It was never night time when you came here, though. So...maybe you didn’t RESET? Then why were you here? You couldn’t remember. You slowly dragged your legs into your body and stared at your bare skin. Running your hand along them you could feel little cuts and scratches. They littered your body. Your toes, when you wiggled them, felt crusted with dirt. You hadn’t been running through the city, but rather through the forest.

Why?

At least it wasn’t a RESET. You still weren’t quite sure when it was. You buried your nose into the fur of Sans’s jacket. It smelled heavily like your sweat, but there were still the strong undertones of grease and bones. It relaxed you. Whenever this was, Sans already knew the truth about you. You were certain of that. You couldn’t recall any timelines where he would give you his jacket.

“Finally!” You started violently and barely made out a tiny form popping out of the ground. You squinted a little but easily made out Flowey. He appeared annoyed. “How long did you plan on sleeping, huh? It’s not exactly FUN sleeping on a grave...unless you’re into that kind of freaky thing, I guess!”

Despite everything, you were a little relieved to see Flowey. You mentally considered him Asriel, but you struggled with it. You had to remember that this wasn’t really Asriel. Not anymore. You still needed to be wary. Flowey could turn on you anytime.

Still, knowing this, you crawled over to the flower and reached a hand out to touch his petals. He blinked in surprise and then flinched away from the touch with a scowl. “WATCH IT!” He told you. “Don’t get all friendly with me!”

You dropped your hand.

“What are you even doing here, Frisk?” He demanded, some of his offense bleeding away as he puffed himself up. You didn’t respond. You were still unsure yourself, so you shrugged. “That’s a stupid answer!” He huffed and turned away before turning back to you. “Were you trying to RESET?” He asked, grinning maliciously.

If you had been trying to RESET, couldn’t you just reach for your file? You tried to do so. You could sense the power hovering right there. But you didn’t want to RESET, so the power was hesitant. You couldn’t get a solid grip on it if you’d wanted to.

Flowey’s smile dropped into his neutral face seeing your hesitancy. Silence surrounded the two of you. The wind was picking up outside. You glanced up, but you couldn’t see the sky. You wondered if there was a storm.

“Listen.” Flowey finally spoke. “This isn’t the best place for you to sleep. And you can’t see, right? Let’s leave.”

“Where?” You asked. You swallowed because your throat was dry.

“Where do you think?” He said. “I’ll meet you. DON’T die or get lost.” He popped back into the
You stood up and winced at the feeling in your legs. They were stiff and sore like they felt when you had run for a long time. Why had you run up the mountain though? You wished that you could think. Maybe a bath and something to drink would help.

You entered the Ruins. It was still bright underground despite it being night time outside. You supposed that whatever magic that had kept the Ruins lit was still active. You navigated the rooms easily. The puzzles hadn’t been reset. You found a shallow stream of water and dipped your hands into it. Dirt flowed away with the running water. When your hands were decently clean, you cupped them and sipped. The water wasn’t that tasty, but it soothed your parched throat. You didn’t realize how thirsty you were until you were drinking.

After you finished drinking you went further into the Ruins until you found the bridge with water running underneath. You sat down and put your feet in. The water was still pretty cold considering it was spring so you couldn’t bathe well, but you could at least clean your feet. You were better able to see the sores on your feet and frowned at them. You stood up and continued to walk.

Your memories were messed up. Was it from the fall? The shock of it? You weren’t sure. You didn’t know how things like that worked. However, you did remember being with all of your friends. You tried think back through the haze. You remembered climbing Mt. Ebott to...disappear...but wasn’t that a while ago? It wasn’t recent. And you hadn’t freed the monsters back then. So why...?

You made your way across the maze trap by sheer muscle memory alone and once on the other side, you froze. A memory began building in the depths of your mind. You remembered being in your dad’s house. Sans was in front of you. He was staring at you. Guilt and horror sat sour in your stomach. Why? You squeezed your eyes shut against the static in your ears.

Then you remembered. You remembered attacking him and running. You...you had lost control of yourself. Somewhere between you running from your loved ones and you going up the mountain you had been caught in a memory. You...you had tried to kill Sans. That was unforgivable.

Your lip began to tremble and you brought your hand to your mouth. You had fled so you wouldn’t hurt anyone else. You understood now. Something was terribly wrong with you. You didn’t know why you had run up the mountain, but maybe Chara had decided it was time for you to go back to where it all began. If you RESET now, would your memories be intact? You didn’t know.

Toriel’s old house felt empty, but still cheerful as you entered the ajar door. Inside was bare of most of the items considering your mother had moved most of her stuff to the surface. Only a little of her furniture was left over, toys and such from a past time that you had conveniently left behind. You couldn’t find Flowey upon entering, but you explored a bit and entered your old room. There he stood on the ground. There was a blanket and pillow you had left for him as well. He was firmly pretending he hadn’t gathered it judging by his mulish look.

“Flowey...” You whispered, catching his attention.

“How long are you going to stay here?” He demanded instead. “Don’t you have better things to do?” You wondered how much he remembered being Asriel. Probably enough considering he hadn’t attacked you yet. And that line... You blinked and found tears in your eyes. You rubbed them, but they continued to form. Flowey appeared alarmed. “H-Hey! Don’t start crying!! I don’t want your pity, you hear?!”

“S’not pity.” You told him, slumping to the floor in front of him. You covered your face to muffle the sobs that began to escape you. You didn’t like crying if you could help it, but now seemed like an appropriate time to finally cry. You were here, in the underground again, hiding from your loved ones because you were scared you would kill them. Crying was a good option in your hopelessness.
Flowey didn’t say anything as you cried and when you finally gained some semblance of control again you could see him turned uncomfortably away. There was a Crab Apple in front of you that hadn’t been there before. Had Flowey given it to you? You picked it up, sniffling, and took a bite. It was nice and juicy. You could already feel the magic healing you some.

Flowey finally turned back to you as you ate, eying you warily. “So...why are you here, Frisk? Was it an accident? Or were you...?” He trailed off. His voice sounded a bit more like Asriel right now, although it wasn’t as sad as when Asriel said it. Frisk stared at the goat child standing in front of them as he smiled sadly. You needed to actually go back soon. You were going to join your friends in the outside world. But you didn’t want to leave Asriel again. You hated leaving him behind.

You blinked the image away, gazing at Flowey. “I...” You licked your lips and paused before pushing on. “I...something is...wrong with my head.” You admitted. If anyone would understand, maybe it was Flowey. “I think that it’s...Chara.”

“Chara?” Flowey perked up excitedly before he calmed down, narrowing his eyes suspiciously. “Don’t try to trick me! You and I both know Chara is dead!”

“But...” You shook your head. “You know that...Chara can and has...” You pressed your hand to your chest. You wished that you still had the locket on. You had left it at home.

“What, possessed you?” Flowey mocked. “Have you been doing bad things?” He sneered.

You shook your head. “Something is...wrong with me.”

“And what makes you think Chara has anything to do with it?”

“Can you...feel it?” You asked quietly. “My LV?”

Flowey didn’t respond. He didn’t need to. You could feel the strength in you. Strength that you didn’t earn. It sat wrong in your body. You weren’t a violent person. It weighed on your heart and back. You wanted it to go away. It made you so angry. Was this how Sans felt all of the time? This bitterness? This “ghost LOVE”?

You squeezed your shorts with your hands and glared at your lap. “I shouldn’t have this.” You told him. “But I do. And I...attacked my friends. I can’t keep the timelines straight in my head.” You looked at him. “Did this happen to you?”

“No.” Flowey stated bluntly. He seemed wary of you for a different reason now. You wondered how you looked right now. Did you look like Chara?

You laid down on your side and stared at him. “Am I Chara?” You asked timidly. You were terrified of the answer.

Flowey leaned over you, glaring at you. You could smell his petals and the scent of dirt on him. “You never were Chara! No matter how much I...Look. You’re not Chara, period. And Chara is dead.”

“Possession.” You reminded him.

Flowey frowned. “You...You and Chara...have similar souls.” He admitted to you quietly. “That’s not...just because of your determination, Frisk. I’m sure that if Chara had a different life...they may have been able to kind of be like you. Not as nice or as stupid, but still more like you.” He was within reach. You scooted closer so your face was barely touching his stem. He ignored you and continued talking. “So when I...called you Chara...I think I somehow succeeded in bringing them
back. But they shouldn’t be there anymore, right? Because you’re Frisk.”

“Called Chara’s name.” That’s right, you had forgotten that. When Flowey started calling you Chara, you remember that was when you really started to feel Chara. The whispers in your mind. The temptations. The words that convinced you to FIGHT instead of SPARE. The voice that, the more you died, seemed to get stronger. Seemed to pull more on you. The voice that became stronger the more you killed.

Gaster had called you Chara too. Nobody but Gaster and Flowey had ever called you Chara. It shouldn’t be possible, but maybe Gaster had somehow summoned Chara in you. But this experience was a lot different. You heard a voice in your head, but it didn’t sound like Chara. It sounded like your own thoughts...but they weren’t. There was a different tone to them. You weren’t Chara, but was Chara you?

What had Gaster done to you?

“Frisk?” Flowey called and you blinked. He was gazing at you with confusion.

“Gaster...” You whispered, “called Chara. Called me Chara.”

Flowey jerked at the name, face turning furious. “Where did you hear THAT name from?” He demanded. His eyes found Sans’s jacket on you. “Was it that smiley trashbag? Did he REALLY tell you about that scientist? That’s hilarious!” He barked a sardonic laugh.

You sat up. “You know...Gaster?”

“Of course I do!” He snapped. “I told you already didn’t I? I did EVERYTHING this world has to offer down here! I know everything about everyone! I know about Gaster very well considering I was MADE in his lab!” He spat.

You hadn’t considered that. You were so used to being one of the few people who knew about Gaster that you hadn’t even considered that Flowey might know about him too. Flowey really had done everything down here. The thought of the flower being created by Gaster chilled you, but it made sense. You had known that both Gaster and Alphys had worked on the Determination experiments. And Flowey was a product of one such experiment. It was chilling.

“But he’s gone.” Flowey continued, metaphorical feathers relaxing somewhat. You shook your head and explained what had happened to you. By the end of it, Flowey’s entire face was shocked. If he had blood, you were certain it would’ve drained from his face. “Th-That means he’s...everywhere?” Flowey asked.

Of course I am.

You froze at that voice. It was happening again. You were hearing things. You covered your ears, but noticed Flowey looking around both of you. Had he heard the voice as well?

“H-H-Hey!” Flowey nudged you. “L-Let’s...” Whatever he had been about to say died as he stared in horror behind you. You turned quickly to find an unfortunately familiar face.

Gaster didn’t look nearly as solid as he had the last time. He was somewhat transparent. Despite that he still towered over you, he was an amorphous blob. He didn’t seem like he could hold himself together too well. Bits and pieces floated off of him and disappeared into nothingness. You could only really see the shapes of his hands and head. He smiled at you.

“Chara.” He said. You didn’t know why you could understand him so much better now. His
voice sounded drawn out and slow, but he was comprehensible at least. Was it because he wasn’t really here? Was he even here? You sat protectively in front of Flowey.

You shook your head quickly. “Not Chara.” You told him, glaring. You didn’t have a weapon. Would a weapon even work on him?

“How does it feel Chara?” He moved silently around you. You felt vines wrapping around your arm. You pushed it back further so that Flowey could grab onto you better. You kept him hidden behind your back. “How does being erased feel?”

You thought that he may have been looking at your scar. “I’m not...going to be erased!” You told him.

“But look at you. Look at how you work. Your mind plays tricks on you.”

“Make it stop!”

“Did you really think that potions solved all of your problems?” He ignored you.

“Run!” Flowey hissed in your ear. You glanced at the door. You could make that. But what good would running do?

He cannot maintain his form forever. Your SOUL is still free. It was that voice again. Chara? You dare not believe it, but it was true. You could run right now and probably be free of him. But you needed to get information out of him. If he really is the cause of your mental problems, maybe you could figure out some kind of solution through him.

But if he attacked you, you would possibly be erased again. You didn’t have any way of defending yourself, and now Flowey was in the line of fire. You would start jumping timelines again. You didn’t have Sans or Papyrus to help you. And that thought terrified you.

You fled.

Flowey clung to you as you ran as fast as your bare feet could take you. You felt like an attack was going to hit you from behind any moment now. Would a monster attack you? Would Gaster follow you? You couldn’t hear his voice. You could only hear your own panting and feel Flowey’s vines wrapped around your upper arm.

“Look out!” Flowey cried, but you still fell through the broken floor of the maze puzzle. You were unhurt, but it shocked you for a few seconds. “Keep going!” In retrospect you should’ve gone the other way in the Ruins towards Snowdin. Now you would only be trapped. But still you ran until you were back at the flower patch. You bent over your legs, huffing.

“Wh-What was that?!” Flowey demanded, glancing behind you two.

“Gaster.” You managed.

“Indeed.” You both spun around to find Gaster standing there. In the darkness of the cave he seemed so much longer. So much more endless. The reality that he existed everywhere was terrifying to consider, but you knew it was the truth. “Why do you run Chara? Eventually you will be joining me.”
“Leave Frisk alone!!” Flowey shouted. Gaster looked at him.

“A n o t h e r f a i l e d e x p e r i m e n t. W h a t k e e p s y o u a l i v e? Y o u r D e t e r m i n a t i o n c a n n o t b e a t t h e h u m a n ‘ s. W h y d o y o u l i v e?”

Flowey trembled on your shoulder, and suddenly you were angry. You were so tired of being haunted by Gaster. You wanted to kill him. He was a pathetic thing barely existing in some void. The seconds in between.

“If there is anyone who should be dead, it is you!” You told him. His head snapped to face you. You smiled at his surprise. Good. “You say that Flowey should be dead? Then what about you? What are you even alive for? Nobody knows you. You are nothing.”

“S o v i o l e n t C h a r a.” Gaster chided, infuriating you. “D o y o u k n o w n o t h i n g b e s i d e s d e a t h?”

“Frisk...?” Flowey whispered, looking at you.

“I know plenty. I know the warmth of family. I have felt love. I know pain. I know suffering. And...I know that you are nothing. A soul living on the fringes of reality. Gasping for substance in a world that rejects you.” You said. You straightened up and put your hands in your coat pockets. You couldn’t feel any kind of weapon. You doubted you could hit him anyway even if you did have one.

“A n d y e t y o u a r e n o t s a t i s f i e d. Y o u h a d a l l t h a t i n y o u r f i r s t l i f e... a n d y e t y o u s t i l l k i l l e d e v e r y o n e. T i m e a n d t i m e a g a i n.”

You hummed a bit. “What point are you trying to make?”

“A r e y o u n o t h a p p y n o w? I h a v e g i v e n y o u a n o t h e r l i f e.” He seemed so smug about it. He knew everything, did he not? Then why did he honestly think you were happy? Surely this wasn’t the first time this scenario had occurred.

“Life?” You asked him quietly. “As I am now? No. I am not alive. I am barely existing, using this body as a conduit without purpose. I am alive because I am the LOVE that this human carries. LOVE that was never theirs. LOVE brought about to them...to us...by a force that nobody can even comprehend.” You smiled, amused at his shock. “But me? At least I am more alive than you.”

The darkness around him seemed to spread more. You could see the anger making his form blurry. Looking at him you doubted that he could even hurt you. It was laughable, so you laughed at him. If he wanted to hurt you, he would’ve triggered the fighting screen already. As it was, he couldn’t touch you. You turned your back on him.

“...He’s gone.” Flowey told you in surprise. He turned to you. “Chara...is it really you?” The hope in his voice was almost painful to listen to. Your chest hurt as you looked at him. His face was that of a familiar old friend. You didn’t answer him. He looked sad, almost wry, as he asked, “You really are Chara, right? What you said...Is...Is Frisk gone then?”

You were confused. You were still Frisk. You weren’t Chara. Why was everyone calling you Chara? You shook your head and asked, “Flowey?”

“Frisk!” Flowey perked up a little. You blinked in confusion and tried to find Gaster, but he was gone. When had he left? The last few minutes felt like a bit of a blur to you.

Listen. You startled and faced forward. In front of you was a face you had never seen before. They
had similar brown hair to you, but it seemed lighter. They were wearing the same clothes as you and
had a similar build. But they seemed lankier than you, and their eyes...their eyes seemed hard and
sad. They alighted upon you and Flowey and their eyes softened somewhat. Their very presence was
suffocating. You weren’t sure Flowey could see them.

“Chara...” Flowey breathed making you realize that he really could see them.

Greetings. Chara’s mouth didn’t move, but like Gaster it seemed both of you could hear them.
Instinct told you to get away from them and their high LV and EXP, but you weren’t so sure you
would even be able to escape them. Even leaving the underground hadn’t been enough to let you
escape them.

This is a temporary form created by our determination. Chara told you. You see me as I wish for you
to see me.

“Why?” You asked.

To...clarify. Chara considered their next words. I am not what I once was. Once again, I have been
brought back. For what purpose, I do not know. I do not need to be here. I have asked myself why I
have been brought back from death to join you in your adventures again, Frisk. I do not want to kill
anybody. I do not want to destroy this world.

Then why did they want to before? It didn’t seem right.

You. Chara answered your unasked question. You have shown me that...not all life is bad. There are
some things that are worth living for. They paused again. Not once during your conversation with
them did their face change from the smile, but as you paid closer attention you began to notice subtle
differences. You weren’t sure how to feel about any of this.

But. Talking with that scientist, I believe I know why I am here again. Chara pointed at your chest.
Your memories. The boundaries between timelines in your mind is corrupt. Gaster's attack
destroyed the barriers. Your reality, in your mind, is blurring.

So you had suspected correctly. What did that mean for you?

You were not always you. Your perception is incorrect.

“Then...do you know how to fix it?” Flowey asked.

You have scientists working for you, do you not?

It appeared you would have to rely on Sans and Alphys. Which meant that you needed to go home at
one point. You couldn’t stay hiding forever. Gaster would come back for you eventually.

Once you have solved your memory problem, perhaps I can finally rest. Chara continued, seemingly
musing to themselves. I have been with you for much of your adventure. I suspect I will never go
away. Your “LOVE”. Your “EXP”. Those are mine. So I will take them. And that is what I am. You
do not have any EXP. Your friends are safe. They paused. Except smiley trashbag.

Flowey laughed. You couldn’t help the small smile too, but it didn’t last long. You would still need
to be careful around Sans. You would need to warn him. That is...if he still wanted to see you. You
weren’t so sure he didn’t hate you now. What if he started avoiding you? You didn’t want to lose
him, but you wouldn’t force your presence upon him. You would step back. It would hurt to lose
your best friend, but you would do what you must for Sans’s happiness.
“You’re fading!” Flowey cried and you looked up to see Chara was indeed fading. The atmosphere wasn’t as thick anymore. You couldn’t feel the LOVE anymore. You felt a bit more like yourself again. It was a relief.

Asriel. Chara turned towards the flower and for the first time you saw true happiness in their face. It was mingled with sorrow, but their smile was true. After everything...I am sorry. Our plan failed.

Flowey shook his head. “It-It doesn’t matter! I just...please don’t leave!” Tears sprang to Flowey’s face. He no longer looked like Flowey. You could see Asriel’s face there. “Don’t leave me alone, please!”

Perhaps it is time for you to live. Chara suggested. They looked at you. You considered their words. Maybe they were talking about...?

But neither of you got to ask as Chara disappeared completely. Flowey began to sob on your shoulder and you felt tears on your own face. They didn’t feel like your own. You gently wiped your face of your tears and touched your cheek to Flowey. You were quiet as he cried.
Lost and Found

Chapter Summary

Maybe it would be better if you stayed lost.

Chapter Notes

Just a real quick warning:
There are very slight (but also very real) thoughts about what is, essentially, suicide. They are very minor, but I want to make sure people are forewarned. If you have read "Frisk" (one of the previous stories in this series) then you probably know what I’m referring to.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

It was so dark now. You weren’t sure what time it was, but it must be the middle of the night. You were no longer able to see anything around you. Still, though, you didn’t leave the flower patch. The sound of the wind flowing through the large hole was calming. You could faintly hear the wind blowing through the trees and rustling the leaves. It was distinctly cooler down here in the Underground. You were glad to have Sans’s jacket as fine tremors danced under your skin from the chill.

Flowey had stopped crying a little bit ago and had disappeared without a word to you. You had yet to want to leave the flowers. The scent of them, despite knowing what lay buried in the roots and what fed the plants with sustenance, calmed you. And in this place your memories are all the same. Your beginning to your adventure through the underground was the same each timeline. Here you felt stable. There were times you were confused as to why you were there and would get up to go explore, but then you would remember that you already knew what lay beyond those stone arches and sat back down again instead.

A low blue glow began to filter through the room. You frowned in confusion and turned to the source to find Flowey carrying a jar of water from what was probably Waterfall. The water was glowing just as the caves did. There was even one of the luminescent rocks on top of the jar. Flowey placed the container down, his face neutral and refusing to look at you. You sat down next to him and picked up the jar, staring at it.

Silence stretched between the both of you. You didn’t know what to say to the flower. Chara had come back in one of the stranger ways possible. And Gaster was mysteriously gone. You didn’t doubt he would be back, but you worried about what drove him off. Was it Chara? And if it was, why? What had the human child done? You doubted that Flowey would tell you.

You shook your head. You can't go back. Right now your LV was back to 1, but that didn’t mean
you friends were safe. Chara had taken their killing intent from you...but how long until the effects of
multiple timelines made you strike out again? Would Chara come back then? You still didn’t
understand why Chara had done what they had earlier.

“Are you stupid? Do I have to explain everything to you?” Flowey snapped. You nodded. He rolled
his eyes. “Chara was your violence. Their...spirit...or soul...I don’t know! That was your LV and
EXP. So now that they're gone, you’re back to your basic LV. You don't need to worry so much.”

"It could come back." You told him.

Flowey scoffed. "Your memories make you feel like you have all of that LV, but you don't. And
you'd better remember that, because it's your intent that gives you your strength." You didn't
understand. Flowey grew frustrated. "Just...hurry up and find a way to block the stupid memories!
That's what your idiot scientist friends are for!"

You stared down into the jar of water feeling frustration well up. If you went back, you ran the risk
of hurting someone. But if you stayed here, you were guaranteed not to be fixed. If anything it would
get worse. You didn't know how long it would take for Sans and Alphys to find a way to stop your
slow descent into madness, but it may not be soon enough. You didn't think that you could even
suggest to your friends that you stay down in the Ruins alone while the scientists worked. Your
friends wouldn't let you. They would insist on being down here with you, not wishing for you to be
alone. Or trying to convince you to come back to Ebott.

Would they even be looking for you, though? They had run after you, but how long could you hide
down here before they gave up on their search? A couple hours? An evening? Eventually they
would have to stop. Eventually they would just give up on you.

Maybe that was for the best.

"I'll...stay here."

"You idiot!!" Flowey scolded. "You can't stay here! There's nothing for you here!"

You pointed at him.

"I don't want you here! I should just kill you, but you'll just come back right after! So!" His blustered
died down. "So just...just leave. Go back to the surface. You...you have a life to live."

You considered something. "I will...if you come with me."

"What?" Flowey asked, looking a little surprised.

"Come live with me." You suggested again. Chara had told you that it was time for Flowey to start
living, and you had agreed. Flowey...Asriel...had never really gotten the chance to live. Flowey'd
had a year living on his own down here. Maybe now he would be willing to come to the surface.
You didn't want him to stay here any longer.

"No." Flowey rejected your offer. "I don't want your pity."

"It's not." You told him.

"Look, we've already talked about this. Don't tell me you've forgot?" He scowled and then just
looked sad. His voice deadened again. "I don't want to deal with that again. Toriel and Asgore...they
don't need to see me like this."
"They miss you."

"I don't care." He paused and then asked with a bite, "Do you know what it's like knowing people care for you, but unable to feel anything for them? It's hateful. It doesn't matter if I know people love me. I can't return the feeling! I've tried!"

You watched him. In the glow of the water, he looked so sad. You weren't sure if it was the play of the shadows or if it was some kind of ghost of emotion. Either way, it cleared up quickly as he looked you in the eye. "Everybody got a new start. A clean slate. Toriel and Asgore don't need to see me."

"But..." You hesitated, "what if they...want to?"

"I don't want to see them!"

Both of you fell silent. You didn't want to give up trying to convince him. You were certain that if he lived on the surface with all of the other monsters, he would come to like it. There was always something new happening on the surface. It wasn't like the underground where there was only so much one could see or do. There were so many others on the surface. Flowey would get to see new things. He wouldn't get bored.

You could tell that had appealed to him, but he still refused all of your suggestions. He didn't want to talk about it, and the more you pushed, the more he resisted.

Eventually he snapped, "Go to sleep already!" and disappeared into the ground. You felt suddenly cold at being alone. You should to back to the Ruins. There was a bed there you could sleep on. You would be in a familiar (although mostly bare) room. The shadows here felt threatening. Glancing around made you wonder if Gaster was hidden somewhere in the darkness.

But you didn't want to walk back to the Ruins. It was so quiet there. At least out here, there was some sounds of life from above. You could faintly hear grasshoppers and bugs singing in the evening. The wind on the trees sounded like the ocean. You didn't want to be trapped in a tomb, no matter how friendly it was in your memory.

So instead you laid down on your back and stared skyward. The flowers caressed your face, filling your senses with a faintly sweet smell that reminded you of the tea they could be made into. It reminded you of home. You closed your eyes.

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It was daytime when you awoke next. Your body was stiff from sleeping on the hard dirt. You sat up with a wince and looked around you. You couldn't find Flowey anywhere. You wondered if you should go and try to find him. What time was it now? You could see the sun's rays above you, but you had no idea where the sun was in the sky. Maybe it was morning? It was difficult to tell in the coolness of the underground.

You didn't want to move. You felt like you should just wait where you were at. Your chest felt hollow from your dreamless sleep. What were you to do now? You were a lost child without anyone to look for them. Maybe it would be better if you don’t even stay in the underground. If you weren’t in familiar territory, would you still have flashbacks? Would your memories scramble your mind even more?

Perhaps you should leave the underground and just wander into the forest. Become lost and never come back. You were a burden to anybody who relatively cared about you. You stressed out your parents, you attacked your friends, and you had hurt Sans. What was the point of you even being
here? You should just disappear and never come back.

Your heart was trembling in your chest and your hands were shaking. You gripped your shorts between tension-whitened fists. Your mouth felt dry. You couldn’t stop your eyes from skittering around the area, searching for absolutely nothing. Perhaps some kind of reason against leaving. You didn’t understand why you were reacting this way. You knew that disappearing was the best choice...so why were you so scared?

Rocks skittering across the ground made you start violently. You turned towards the entrance to the Ruins and spotted a familiar face. Toriel’s eyes widened at the sight of you as her hands came to her mouth. Even from where you were, you could see the tears building in her eyes.

“Frisk...!” She whispered, her voice carrying on the quiet air. Your throat tightened at the sound of your name. Your mom’s name pressed against the back of your lips readying itself to leave your mouth, but you swallowed it back. Toriel turned her head back towards the cavern she had just left, but her eyes never strayed from you. “Asgore...Asgore, they’re here!” She called.

Your dad was here too? Someone had come for you?

You heard the thudding steps of your father as he rushed to join your mother. His eyes lit up with relief so intense you felt you were going to collapse from their combined joy of finding you. You couldn’t stand against your emotions and dug your fingers into the dirt beneath you to try to recapture your breath. Toriel and Asgore hurried to your side, but rather than hug you they both fell to their knees in front of you. You could tell they both wanted to hug you, but they restrained themselves.

Your eyes felt hot as you took in their appearances. There was a darkness and swelling under their eyes. Both of them had been crying or were stressed. You felt a needle of guilt stab your overburdened heart and you gave a soft keen. You hunched over and began to sob horrible tears and noises that wracked your entire body. You could only apologize to them for what you had done. Everything that Toriel and Asgore had done since escaping the underground had been for you. They had taken you into their homes and had made you a part of their tiny broken family. They gave you everything that you had wanted in life, and you had only returned their kindness with hurt after hurt. You hid things from them, struck out at them, lied to them, and they had still come to find you. They had found you. You were no longer lost.

“Frisk. Frisk...!” Toriel called you in a broken voice. You felt her hands gently touch your sides and you allowed her to pull you into her arms and lap. She held you through your hiccups. It was the loudest you could recall ever being while crying. A tiny part of you cringed at the noises you were making, but no scolding ever came. Instead there were warm hugs and hands petting your hair, checking you for injuries and whispering soothing words. You were too old for this, you realized, but you wanted nothing more than this right now.

“We finally found you.” Asgore kissed the top of your head as your sobs began to subside. “You had worried us so.”

“We had thought we had lost you again.” Toriel agreed, wiping your tears with her fingers. Asgore pulled out a handkerchief from his pocket to hand to you. You blew your nose into it. Your entire face felt far too hot, but the pain had lessened in your chest.

“How?” You asked.

“Oh Frisk. In my experience...whenever a child is lost, they always seem to end up here. So I had
thought I might find you here. And I was correct.” You didn’t know how to feel about that. Your mother idly fixed pieces of your hair as she continued, “Everyone explained about this ‘Dr. Gaster’. Including who he was...and what he is doing now.” She didn’t sound like she was scolding you, but you could nonetheless hear her disappointment in not telling her everything.

“Young one, you should not have hidden this.” Asgore approached the topic directly. His scolding, though heartfelt, was gentle. It helped to lessen the blow to your already fragile self.

“I’m sorry.” You whispered.

“We know why you did.” Asgore continued, “And it is good you kept your friends’ confidence...”

“But you were...are...in danger. And that is something you should never hide.” Toriel pinched your ear quickly, her stern glare was dampened by the lingering relief in her eyes.

“But now that we know, we can help you.” Asgore added optimistically.

But did they actually know everything? Did your friends confess all that they knew to your parents? Did Sans tell them about...?

You needed to know.

“...Did Sans...tell you about...my past?” You asked hesitantly. It was difficult to get the words out not only because of how much your throat and nose hurt from crying, but also because of the weight of what you were about to expose.

Asgore and Toriel glanced at each other before looking back at you. You couldn’t look at them.

“What do you mean?” Toriel prodded gently.

So you began your story. You started back as far as when you had lived with your human parents and what your childhood had been like. You confessed your reasons for entering the underground and how it felt to meet the monsters. You gripped your hands in your lap, unable to see their reactions to you telling them of the power of your soul and your determination. About how many times you had been killed or had died by accident while traversing the underground in multiple timelines. You told them of instances that had not occurred in this timeline, such as your accidental killing of Toriel or any other monster. And you quietly admitted to your more intentional murders. How, after a certain amount of RESETs, you wondered how someone’s death would change the outcome of your story.

Then, after you had explained every “neutral” outcome, you began to tell them of Chara and Asriel. Toriel’s grip tightened around you as you recalled the truth of what had occurred between your two siblings and why they had done what they had done. How it felt, from Asriel’s perspective, to have a human soul in them. How Chara had wanted to kill the humans and Asriel had refused. You told them what had become of Chara’s soul and how it had resonated with yours enough that by calling upon the child, they had become a part of you.

Chara, you knew, had a hatred within them that had stemmed from whatever life they’d had from their time with humans. A story that you still didn’t know, but you related to. Flowey had all but confirmed that you and Chara had come from similar backgrounds...but Chara had allowed bitterness to corrupt them. Or, perhaps, they had already been against life to begin with. You didn’t know. You didn’t want to know.

And with each subsequent death in the underground, Chara’s whispers became stronger in your head. Convincing you to turn against the monsters that killed you time and again. It didn’t matter if it
was an accident. You were convinced they were right, and so you slaughtered monsters until you were no longer you. You had become Chara...and everything that Chara had been had become you.

You began to cry a bit again as you recounted the deaths you caused. How much everyone screamed. How you knew the taste of dust and how even now you didn’t feel completely clean. You could see in your mind’s eye how many times you had fought Undyne the Undying, and how many times Sans had killed you knowing that all he could do was kill you often enough that you would stop “playing” and RESET.

Throughout your talking, neither King nor Queen had spoken or commented. They were completely silent and you were unable to see how they were visibly. Your only feedback had been the tiny movements you could see or feel. Asgore’s large paws clenching and digging into the dirt. Toriel’s hold on you being far too tight...or far too loose. A sniffle. One or both parents turning away from you.

But when you began to tell them what had occurred with Asriel, including the information you learned about Flowey’s origin in relation to Gaster, you heard Toriel gasp out her son’s name in horror. You pressed forward before you lost your nerve as you explained the truth of his existence now, and how he had been the one to truly break the barrier. It had taken him many years...but Asriel had finally freed his people.

“Enough.” Asgore commanded. His voice was rough and it sounded like he’d had to force the word out. Your head shot up to look at him and saw his face buried in his hand. Above you Toriel was looking around, her tears flowing into her fur. “Enough, Frisk.”

You wanted to apologize, but you had done it so many times. It didn’t feel like the words were sincere anymore.

“All this time...you had known about them?” Asgore asked you. You nodded even though he wasn’t looking at you.

“Why did you not tell us?” Toriel demanded. Her eyes were stricken as they met yours. You flinched and hunched downwards. “Our children...our other children...Where is he? Where is Asriel?”

You didn’t know. Flowey had yet to come see you since last night. Maybe he had seen or heard that Toriel and Asgore were in the Ruins and had decided to hide. Maybe even now he hid in the shadows.

“Our son has been alive all of this time...” Asgore whispered. “And I did not know.”

“Because he’s not...Asriel.” You reminded them quietly.

“He is still our son!” Toriel snapped. You flinched. Her face fell at the sight realizing how she had sounded. “I am sorry, my child.” She apologized quietly.

“Tori.” Asgore placed a hand on her shoulder. Toriel moved like she wanted to pull away, but stopped herself. Asgore stoked her shoulder comfortingly with his thumb twice before stopping and looking at you. “He...does not wish to see us.” He sounded resigned. You shook your head sadly.

“I...tried to get him to come to the surface...” You admitted. Your throat felt scratchy. You really wanted something to drink. Was the Waterfall water safe enough? “But he doesn’t want to...” You didn’t know how to explain to them what it was like to reset time often enough to know so much about everyone. Flowey had information on people that had never met him. You didn’t know how it felt to be soulless, and you didn’t think you could explain it in a way that would be adequate enough
to soothe your parents’ hurt.

Toriel cupped your face and smiled sadly. “Thank you...for trying at least.”

“I couldn’t...I couldn’t save Asriel. I tried, Mom. I...I tried so much...I just...!”

“Shush, little one.” Toriel hugged you again to her as she cried softly. “I know.”

“Asriel...Flowey...if he wishes to see us...we will always be there.” Asgore decided. “Perhaps one day he will change his mind?” He sounded hopeful at least. You nodded in agreement. One day, you were sure, Flowey would live.

Toriel sat up and took a deep steadying breath. She shifted under you and you slid off of her lap. She stood and held a hand out to help you up. When all three of you were standing together she spoke again, “Until then...there are more pressing matters. Frisk, how are you feeling?”

You’d had a couple of more realistic flashbacks during your confession, but you weren’t sure if they were actual “flashbacks” or if it was just you remembering them vividly. Either way, they weren’t as prevalent or violent. But you didn’t know if that was because of the location or not. You voiced your fear of striking out at anyone.

“We will have to be more watchful.” Asgore told you. “You have many friends, my dear, and many people who are worried about you.”

“Speaking of,” Toriel pulled out her cell phone and checked something. She typed slowly on the phone a response as she said, “perhaps we should begin to head back. The others are very worried.”

“Yes.” Asgore agreed. “And we must begin your training.”

“Training?” You asked, confused.

“Indeed. Frisk because of the threat to your life...” Asgore and Toriel shared another look as if confirming their decision with each other, “we have decided we will begin to teach you magic.”

“Magic?” You stared with wide eyes. Could humans be taught magic?

"It is a surprise, is it not?” Asgore gave a small chuckle. "There are not many who know that humans can still wield magic. Or, rather, that they can relearn how to use it." You looked at your mother who nodded in agreement. Asgore’s voice dipped slightly as he explained, "Humans have always been able to use magic. It is born of their souls and the strength within them. However, humans cannot naturally learn magic. They need to be taught because it is not natural for them. Only a monster can teach a human magic."

You tilted your head slightly in question. Why did it have to be taught? If a human could wield magic, then why did they need a monster to teach them to do so? Was it just because it didn't come naturally?

"It is a trade off, you see." Toriel explained. You recognized her teaching voice. "A human's soul needs to be called out before they can use magic..." She demonstrated by calling out your soul. You gulped at the sight of it, body tensing for a fight. She quickly released it, and the bright red soul faded from your sight, "because it is only then that they can really connect with the power of their soul. There is, in a way, a bridge formed."

"And so," Asgore took over again, "we will teach you magic."
"For defense!" Toriel side-eyed Asgore. He smiled a little bashfully.

"Of course."

You gaped at the two of them. Humans could learn magic? Why was this not common knowledge? No wait, perhaps at one time it had been? You already knew from monster history that seven human magicians had created the barrier, so of course at some point humans had to be able to wield magic. You had thought that perhaps long ago humans were just as able to use magic as monsters. You had never realized that the relationship between monsters and humans were what was necessary for magicians to be real. A thought occurred to you: is that why humans turned so much to the sciences? Because they no longer had access to magic?

"Come, my child." Toriel held out her hand and Asgore did the same. "Let us go home. There is much to do...and people who would very much like to see you."

You took both of their hands and they led the way back towards the entrance of the Ruins. By chance you allowed your eyes to stray to Chara's grave. There sat Flowey, his face unreadable from the distance you were at. You two maintained eye contact until you and your parents turned the corner and Flowey was gone.

Chapter End Notes

So Frisk's abandonment issues appear again...

On a completely unrelated note:
I've noticed that quite a number of people are coming into this story rather at random. That's totally fine, but you guys are missing quite a bit of the story if you start with "Time Marches Forward (Finally)". So (and I will be adding a note to the very first chapter of this story as well), please be aware that there are six stories that come before this one. And if you have not read them, I HIGHLY recommend that you do. Also if you are not aware, there is a Sans side-story that goes along with this one called "Through Hollow Eyes". Go read the companion fic too!

Alright that's all. Next chapter I will be posting: We finally find out what's going on with Sans!
Training Begins

Chapter Summary

Takes place after "Argument" in Through Hollow Eyes

Chapter Notes

Slow chapter, but here you go!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Things weren’t great. You knew this better than anyone. You knew that everything that your parents knew now had affected your relationship with them. Everything was, in many ways, different. There would be times you would catch your mom out of the corner of your eye staring at you with a strange look on her face. It looked halfway between angry and so very sad. Sans made those faces sometimes. Or, rather, he gave off the same feeling when he stared at you in that way. Other times your mom would be a little too attentive towards you. She would insist on being in the same room with you no matter what either of you were doing. You went along with it, but only because you understood she was trying to keep an eye on you. After all, your daydreams hadn’t exactly gone away.

Your dad didn’t seem so different, though. He treated you the same, smiled, and played with you. However, there was that air of sorrow about him that he’d had back in the underground. You would find him sometimes staring for hours at the mountain from his backyard when he was supposed to be cutting the grass. You would sit next to him and stare as well, hesitant to reach out and disturb his thoughts. You never knew what to say in those situations.

Even your friends were different. It was like since you fell into the underground again, the entire outside world had shifted while you were gone. Sans still flinched around you occasionally. They were tiny movements, but you were so used to his presence that you almost always noticed. He tried not to let you see how his bones would tremble around you or the space he put between you two. You didn’t call him out on it. The haunted look you sometimes saw in his sockets was enough to keep your mouth shut.

You hadn’t seen much of Undyne in the past few days due to her work schedule, but she hadn’t been messaging you as much. Alphys was still working hard with Sans, but you barely saw the woman. She always left rather in a hurry whenever you arrived. You didn’t understand what you had done to upset her. Asking Sans yielded no results as he just shrugged and told you to ask her. You didn’t ask Alphys. Maybe she needed some space as well.

Papyrus was the only one who honestly acted the same as usual. It seemed that even the events that had occurred a week ago (had it only been a week since you had run away again?) hadn’t altered his opinion of you. It was a relief, like having a rock in a storm. Everything around you was the same, but it was so different. Papyrus and your school life was the only thing that kept you buoyant in the shifting world you found yourself in.
You had yet to begin learning magic. You didn’t know why, exactly, but you didn’t press for it. Your parents were already stressed and dealing with a lot of new information, so you could wait to learn magic. It seemed like what you had told them in the underground had once again strained their still-weak relationship. You had ripped open old wounds, and the thought made you cringe. Icy silences always followed the mention of one parent’s name to the other. You were being a burden again. If it wasn’t for the fact that you weren’t exactly allowed to be left alone for long periods of time, you would’ve hidden yourself away in your bedroom so as to not cause more trouble. It was strange, though, because they didn’t seem to blame you for any of this.

You couldn’t understand it.

You decided it would be better if you gave them space. You stayed close to your friends instead.

Today was overcast, threatening to cover everything in a torrent of rain. The dark clouds on the horizon were foreboding and made you shiver as the temperature was lower in the late spring air. You were outside today because Sans had called you to ask you to come to the park. Toriel had decided to join you. She was eyeing the weather dubiously, but she smiled at you when she caught you looking at her. You wondered if after it rained she would take you to maybe go snail hunting again. Somehow you doubted it. Toriel didn’t suggest holding your hand today.

When you two arrived at the park, you were surprised to see Alphys there with Papyrus, Sans, Undyne, and Asgore. She was holding something in her hand that she was fiddling with, focusing on it as her mouth moved silently. Asgore and Toriel’s eyes met briefly before looking away. For a moment it seemed like your father was angry, but his face changed into his usual smiling self when he saw you. That was strange. You didn’t recall ever seeing your dad actually angry before. Was it a flashback from a different timeline...?

“Hey! There you are!!” Undyne called brightly. She grabbed you and ruffled your hair a little violently. You tried not to cringe under her friendly onslaught, patting her arm to get her to let go. When she did she asked, “How’re you, squirt?”

You signed to her that you were doing okay.

She hesitated, and then asked “No crazy flashbacks?” She gave you an awkward smile, perhaps realizing that she could’ve triggered something like she had last time by hugging you. You quickly gave her a reassuring pat and shook your head. Your flashbacks were occurring less than before you had run off. Maybe it was because you were more aware of them? More likely, you had considered, it was Chara. They had said they were “taking your LOVE” but did that mean it helped with your memories? You weren’t sure.

You had yet to talk to Sans about Chara. You didn’t know if maybe your parents had mentioned it to him. You weren’t sure he was feeling up for discussing the other human. You looked at him. He seemed okay today, if a little bit tired. You didn’t like keeping secrets, but you assured yourself that it wasn’t a secret. You just were biding your time before you informed him of what had really gone on down in the Underground. You weren’t sure how much stress the skeleton could take at one time.

“So, why is it that you have called us here?” Asgore asked curiously.

“figured you two would like to stay in the know,” Sans told them and motioned to Alphys. The woman muttered something to herself before addressing them.

“U-Um, this is...well...it’s a shield! It’s made of anti-time material...to help Frisk. Just in case Gaster shows up and nobody is there...” She held out the small cube to you. You frowned curiously and took the cube, rolling it around in your hands to look at it. There was a notch on one of the corners
that you were about to push when Alphys called, “N-No wait! Stop!” You froze.

“It doesn’t really look like a shield.” Undyne pointed out, looking at the cube dubiously.

“Hold it out in front of you, like this!” Alphys held her arms out and you copied her. “Now press it!” You did so and gasped as the cube unfolded. It flipped and spun in your hand, flattening and extending outwards until you were holding a relatively flat disk about half the size of you. It was without decoration, but the bright silver color reflected a number of different colors in the sunlight. Parts of the shield that weren’t completely flattened appeared darker, like the metal became more silver the more flat that it was. You marveled at it.

“That is amazing!” Asgore cheered.

“I LIKE IT!” Papyrus declared.

“It’s really small, though!” Undyne told them, a worried frown on her face. “Will it be enough to protect them?”

“It is about half their size. How does it feel, Frisk?” Toriel asked. You shifted the shield so that it would block you, and then spun in a couple of different directions to test the weight. It was pretty heavy, and the movement made you slow, but it felt sturdy enough to protect you. You wondered if it could block all of the attacks you needed. You should probably practice dodging with it.

“it’s better than nothing.” Sans said. “we can’t make anything else right now. no materials.” Sans joined you and knocked his knuckle lightly on the shield. It made a noise that sounded similar to a steel drum. “this should be enough to counter his attacks. at least, the time-alterin’ ones.” He smiled at you. “be careful about other attacks, though. this stuff isn’t that strong. don’t use it for casual defense.” You nodded in understanding.

“So you think the punk’ll be good with this?” Undyne asked as she snatched the shield from you. She tested out its weight and movement while you watched. For just a moment you thought you saw her swinging around a spear, and you instinctively jerked to bring up your own green magic spear to block her attack...but you abandoned the action quickly, realizing your hands were empty. You closed your eyes and took a deep breath to steady yourself.

“It is better than nothing.” Toriel said. Undyne handed you back the shield and Alphys quietly told you how to make it small again so it would be portable. You noticed that she didn’t look you in the eye while doing so. Her body language seemed more withdrawn than usual. You were worried.

“Then.” Asgore spoke up, catching every person’s attention there with his kingly tone, “Now, I suppose, would be a good time to begin your training, Frisk.” You perked up at the thought.

“TRAINING? WHAT KIND OF TRAINING? I WANT TO TRAIN!” Papyrus said eagerly.

“YEAH!! You holdin’ out on us, Asgore?!” Undyne gave the king a playful shove.

Asgore chuckled, amused. “Perhaps a bit.” His eyes flickered to Toriel’s and away. You looked at your mom. Her eyes were a bit cold as they regarded Asgore. You shrunk down a little. Apparently you HAD ruined their relationship. You did not have any kind of illusions that Asgore and Toriel would one day get back together again (although that wouldn’t be anything bad in your eyes. You wouldn’t mind having your family all together in one house), but you had wanted them to at least be friendly with each other. Now they were back to just being civil like they had when you all had first left the underground.

Why did you have to ruin so many relationships?
Your heart hurt. You wanted to hide somewhere far away from your friends and family. Maybe then things would be better. Wouldn’t their lives be so much easier if you were no longer there? They wouldn’t need to worry about you anymore. You wouldn’t be there to cause any more rifts. Sans would be happy again, Alphys wouldn’t avoid you, and your parents may have actually had a happier life. But you were there, so all they did was worry and fight and stress—

Arms scooped you up and onto bony shoulders, startling you. Papyrus laughed merrily as he held onto your thighs. Papyrus didn’t lift you like this often. You were getting big and heavy, after all. Had he noticed your sad thoughts? Your throat burned with gratefulness. “WE SHOULD GO BACK TO THAT FIELD!” He suggested, bringing you back into the conversation. He looked up at you, his smile infectious. “THE TRAINING ONE!”

“Syrus?” You asked.

“Oh that one!” Undyne nodded. “That would be a good place. Hey, what are we practicing anyway?”

“We will explain when we get there. Please lead the way.” Toriel said.

On the walk over, Papyrus still didn’t let you down. He didn’t even seem to really notice your weight. His fingers massaged your thighs comfortingly, though. When nobody was looking, you placed a kiss on the top of his skull. You saw his cheekbones burn and couldn’t help smiling a little at the sight. You glanced down at Sans to see if he had noticed. He wasn’t paying attention, though, as he conversed quietly with Alphys. You weren’t certain, but he seemed a little disgruntled. Alphys was looking away from him. You turned away from their private conversation.

The field was only recognizable to you by the large strip of destroyed land leading out into the trees that Syrus had blasted away. Since then some grass had grown into it along with a few tree roots. For the most part, though, it was still scorched dirt. Papyrus set you down on the ground among some wildflowers that were barely blooming. You wondered if this field would be speckled with all kinds of colored flora when summer fully came.

“There is not much we can teach you right away, Frisk.” Mom told you while Asgore explained that humans could learn magic to the monsters. It really wasn’t common knowledge, as each and every one of your friends were stunned to learn this information. “You cannot learn anything until you can summon out your own soul.”

You asked her how using your hands.

Toriel motioned for you to sit, and so you did. One by one your friends and family joined you to watch. They gave you plenty of distance, but were all interested with the proceedings. You flushed a little at the attention. Toriel made sure to sit in front of you.

“I will show you first. I want you to focus on the feeling and the connection between your body and your soul. You need to be intimately aware of your own soul.” She instructed.

You nodded. Toriel slowly and gently called your soul out. By now it was a familiar feeling having your entire attention focusing in on your soul. You could move it freely if you wished, but you were still aware of your body. Your body, though, felt as if it was in the back of your mind. Your soul felt more like “you” at that moment. But Toriel had asked you to focus on the connection, so you did. You closed your eyes.

While your soul was out, you felt like you were half asleep. Your body felt solid and you held the knowledge that you could move it if you were inclined to, but at the same time you never felt the
need to. You were loose and almost ghostlike in this form. You were not in battle, so the monster’s soul didn’t set boundaries that your own soul could move. But you didn’t move either body or soul.

You opened your eyes and stared at the heart in front of you. Your friends were surprisingly quiet. You weren’t sure what you were supposed to be feeling. You didn’t understand what connection there was.

“IS IT WORKING?” Papyrus asked.

You shrugged.

“MAYBE IT’S LIKE WHEN WE FUSE, SANS.” Papyrus suggested. “HOW WE FOCUS ON OUR SOULS!”

You looked at him and then Sans. That sounded about right. “maybe.” Sans agreed.

“Hush.” Toriel scolded gently and guided you back to look at her. “It is similar, but not the same Papyrus.” She said. “Almost our entire being is magic, and very little is physical. It is easy for monsters to sense magic, because they are magic. It is the opposite for humans. They are almost entirely physical, and very little magic.”

“But what magic they have is extremely powerful. Their souls contain every bit of their magic, after all.” Asgore continued. “And it is magic that draws the soul out. And it is magic that, in a way, ‘activates’ the soul.” Asgore brushed a strand of hair out of your face. “Child, notice how when your soul is out of your body you can control it. How is that so?”

You contemplated that for a moment. You ran your hand between your chest and your soul, but felt no resistance. Your soul shifted a little with your movement. You focused on keeping it still.

You shook your head, not understanding.

“Your soul is part of you. Magic runs through your body, like your blood does. Your soul pumps tiny traces of magic through your body just as your heart pumps your blood. Even when it is out of your body, it is still part of you. That is the connection. The knowledge that this soul is connected to your body is what will allow you to summon it.”

You still didn’t really understand. You weren’t calling the soul out right now, though. “How is it that...monsters can summon my soul...though?” You asked. Toriel released your soul, allowing it to melt back into your chest.

“O-Oh! I know this one!” Alphys called. “It’s because magic attracts magic! Th-that’s why...color magic can affect souls...” She wound down a little, embarrassed at all of the attention on her.

“Correct!” Toriel told her before addressing you again, “Which is why it is very easy for us to learn magic. Or, rather, the magic available to our forms.” She motioned to her body.

“What is color magic?” You asked.

“That’s a lesson for another day.” Toriel told you. “One thing at a time, my child. Focus now.” You nodded and closed your eyes to once again try to focus inward. This time you searched your body for the feeling of your soul. You intimately knew what your own soul felt like—and even what a few other human souls felt like—so hopefully it wouldn’t be difficult? But it was hard. It was like trying to find air within water just by looking. You knew what air felt like, but how were you supposed to just spot it in water?

“so, say the kid does learn how to summon their soul,” Sans’s voice caught your attention. You were
torn between focusing on him and on your own body, “what magic are they gonna learn?”

“I’LL TEACH THEM BLUE ATTACKS!” Papyrus said.

“NOT IF I TEACH THEM GREEN MAGIC FIRST!” Undyne crowed.

“Y-yellow magic may be useful...projectiles...” Alphys murmured.

“We were going to teach them how to summon fire.” Asgore looked a little troubled. “But...learning magic is not easy.”

“They are young. It is much easier when they are still young.” Toriel said curtly.

The thought of learning all of those types of magic was very exciting to you. You could make yourself light and play like you’re on the moon. You could maybe run across water with blue magic! And with green magic, you wouldn’t need to worry about carrying a shield. You could protect yourself from anything. Would you somehow be able to summon a weapon? And with yellow magic you could practice your aim with shooting things. And fire magic will let you warm food up without a microwave! It sounded fun and useful!

But first, you needed to actually summon your soul. Judging by the lack of grasp on any sort of magic, it wouldn’t come easily. You sighed a bit. You hoped that it would become easier.

Chapter End Notes

So I've decided on a theme song for the whole series. It's "Home" by Phillip Phillips.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f95lAIL8to
The First Step

Chapter Summary

You practice summoning your soul.

Chapter Notes

I actually had more planned for this chapter, but I didn't realize that just this little scene would be so long, so I'll save the rest of it for another chapter.

Also, sorry this is so late. I had a...very rough week last week and I was in no mood to type. Or when I was, something came up. So I'm sorry. I'm gonna possibly get another chapter out this weekend.

It seemed that even practicing wasn't helping you very much. It had been a number of days since you were first instructed by your parents on how to summon your soul, but you had nothing to really show for it. Even extra tutoring didn't help you. You just couldn't seem to get a grasp on what your soul felt like, exactly. You kept closing your eyes and grasping around for something that wasn't physical or solid. It was as if someone had asked you to pull out your beating heart without even touching yourself.

And it was exhausting.

Each of your friends had offered some tips on how to go about it. Torial and Asgore both continued to coax you into feeling for magic...but you weren't even sure what magic felt like exactly. You had felt all different kinds of magic before, but what kind of magic did your soul feel like? It was too vague of an idea for you to even fathom.

Papyrus recommended that he summon your soul so that you could actually try to feel your soul's magic. You had readily agreed thinking that perhaps that would be the best way, but you weren't actually able to touch your soul with your hand. Your hand would just go through the little red heart without resistance. However, you did feel a very tiny jolt every time you did it. It made your entire body tingle in an oddly energized way. You weren't sure if that was magic, though.

Undyne had tried a similar method. She summoned your soul and then cast green magic upon it. It left you unable to move from your spot, however it also granted you a shield in the form of one of Undyne's spears. The same strange jolting feeling went through your body while holding the spear, but it was much weaker. It almost reminded you of that time you had licked the end of a battery. Undyne's magic felt...harsher in comparison to touching your own soul. You weren't sure what that meant.

Alphys had cautiously suggested you be hit by a very weak attack from someone to your soul. You had been attacked, of course, many times before in the past, but you had never focused on the feeling. You were reluctant to get hurt, but you were willing to try. After all, one damage point wouldn't bother you too much. So Alphys gave you a small shock with her own magic. Your entire
body, though not hurt, felt electrified. You could always somehow taste yellow magic on the back of your tongue. It reminded you of cooking with a robot, and of cowboys. It didn't seem like this information was very helpful to you.

You had tried to stick around Alphys a little longer afterwards, wanting to catch up with her. She managed to make some small talk with you about some anime she had been watching. You had also gotten her to open up about what new technology she was currently working on for her job...but you didn't understand most of what she had said. The entire time she seemed distracted, or she watched you too closely. She must have expected you to have a flashback around her, but it never happened. You left her house feeling unsettled and a little lonely. You wondered what you had done to mess up your friendship.

Now you were with Sans in his bedroom, lounging together on his bed. He was sprawled on his back, drifting in and out of sleep, while you concentrated inwards. Your parents had told you that magic pulsed through your body like your blood did, so you focused on the beating of your heart. You tried to sense if maybe there was another beat somewhere within your chest. Magic, you determined, felt like energy. It made you feel a little jittery and like you could run around a bit or flap your arms. It almost made you feel like you had too much caffeine in your system. Your body didn't feel that way right now, though. If human souls were so powerful, shouldn't it be easier than this to locate it?

You sighed and opened your eyes. You just didn't understand. You felt like there was a clock hanging over your head, ticking down how much time you had left until Gaster confronted you again. You don't know what scared him off last time (though you had a suspicion), but you probably wouldn't be able to do it again. You had a shield to protect you, but if you were alone and your only option was to FIGHT, you didn't know what you were going to do. Weapons didn't work on him, and you doubted you could attempt anything else to pacify him.

What did Gaster even want from you, anyway? Your body? Your soul? You weren't sure. Or, rather, you knew he wanted your body for something...but was it just for the matter within it? What was the point of him taking your body? What good would your body have on a monster? Most monsters would rather have your soul. And why did he keep calling you Chara? Surely he must’ve known that wasn’t who you are, correct?

"no dice?" Sans asked, breaking you from your thoughts. You shook your head. He yawned and stretched, a few of his joints popping as he did so. He groaned with satisfaction at the feeling. Papyrus hated when Sans popped his joints. He would always turn that orange-red color and yell at him about it. Sans never looked particularly troubled. You wondered how he could even pop his joints after you had learned in biology what caused joints to pop. You supposed it was just another mystery to skeleton monsters that you just wouldn't really understand.

Sans scratched his skull and watched you. You watched him back, not caring that he knew you were staring at him. It seemed that lately he was doing better around you. He didn't look nearly as nervous, and his slight jumpiness had calmed down. He let you hug him without flinching or stiffening in any way, and you were allowed to sleep in his bed with him again. Which was good, because your nightmares had been back with full force lately. You briefly closed your eyes, recalling jolting awake from a dream where you had fallen straight to your death. You could still imagine the feeling of your skull indenting and your body crumpling and the yellow flowers being splattered with red--

"so talking to the others didn't work either?" You shuddered at your own thoughts and shook your head, both to clear it and to answer his question. Sans considered you for a moment before he sat up. "alright. i have an idea." He seemed reluctant with whatever idea it was that he had. You tilted your head as he made a motion for you to come closer. You were already right next to him that if you just
shifted slightly your leg would brush against him, so instead you moved so you were fully facing towards him, legs crossed in front of you. He tapped a finger to your chest.

"...do you remember how i fused with pap?" You nodded, recalling how he had melted his body into magic so that he could merge his body with Papyrus's. He had been like a cloud of glitter. "right. well. everyone has been showing you their magic to teach you...but that isn't working for you. so. i'm gonna, uh, try something." Whatever he was thinking of seemed to be bothering him. You didn't protest, but you worried about why he was putting himself in an uncomfortable position.

You brought your hands up and asked, "Fusion?"

"nah. can't fuse with a human. unless it's, y'know, the other way." He shrugged, hand leaving your chest so his hands could also shrug with him. "it'll just be easier for me to just do it." He paused, and then said, "if it bothers you, tell me. i'll stop then." You nodded, still not quite understanding what you're agreeing to, but trusted Sans. "right."

His finger touched your sternum again, and you watched as the finger there melted into that glittery blue-ish magic that you recognized from the fusion day. Your body jolted with the cool feeling of Sans's magic as it melted into your chest. You could feel the thin line of it actually entering your body, sending your heart rate skyrocketing. You weren't sure how you were feeling at that moment. You could only focus on the sensation.

His magic didn't go far before it touched something within you. Your back straightened automatically as the cool feeling hit that strange jolting feeling you'd felt when you had tried to grasp your own soul. You worried for just a moment that the feelings would blend. You could feel the urge to do so, wondering what it would be like to merge the magic. Sans made a strange noise and it caused you to blink your eyes open, not realizing you had even closed them.

“Sans?” You asked quietly, wondering exactly what you were feeling.

Sans’s eyes were half-mast staring at your chest, but you could tell he was focusing. “feel that?” He murmured.

“My...soul?” You asked. You could feel his magic on the fringes of something larger. Something alive. Something that felt like you. Had that always been there and you had never noticed?

“yeah.”

So that was what your soul felt like. It was a bigger thing than you had been expecting. It felt much...larger in your chest than it did outside of it. Like the edges of your soul were not as solid within you. You could feel Sans’s magic inching along the edges of some boundary that you didn’t realize was there until his magic brushed by it. Was he not directly touching your soul, or was that just where the edge of your soul was? You shivered a little.

It all felt a little intimate. You could feel heat on your cheeks. Sans had been reluctant to do this...was it because of this feeling? It was much different from when monsters just touched your arm. It felt like Sans was skating the edges of something that felt a little closer to you. Suddenly it occurred to you that your soul was you.

Sans cleared his throat quickly. You looked at him. His cheekbones were a little blue as he looked away from you. “kid, don’t think about it too hard. it’s...you’re right in that it’s, uh, a little more than what two friendly monsters should do for each other. but it’s nothing like...” He trailed off and you caught his meaning. It made you squirm and look away from him, hands playing with the cloth of his blanket. “i’m only doing this to help you find your soul. this kind of...personal...of a way for me to
show you...but it was a last-ditch effort.” He paused. “sorry.” He added.

You shook your head. You didn’t mind, particularly. He had already told you that what he was doing wasn’t something that could be compared to, well, sex. So you pushed the thought away. You instead tried to think of it like what he and Papyrus had done when they had fused.

“there you go.” Sans agreed.

It was a nice feeling that Sans was willing to try something with you that he had only tried with his brother before. Fusion was a major sign of trust...so this must be too, you decided. It warmed you that Sans trusted you so much even after everything that had happened. You wished that you could somehow return the favor, but hugging him right now probably wasn’t the best idea when technically his finger was in your chest. Instead you smiled a little at Sans to try to show him how much you appreciated his sentiment. He still seemed slightly flustered, the blue still not gone from his face. He scratched his skull with his other hand. Wait, you hadn’t spoken during this at all. Why did it seem like he could hear you? Could Sans...actually read your thoughts right now?

“yeah.” Sans confirmed. You stared at him. “it’s, uh, cuz of the magic. like you thought, your soul is you, kid. it’s the essence of your being. right now, doing this, i can sense a number of things about you.”

“Like?” You prompted, curious.

“your thoughts.” He said. You waited, knowing there was more. He sighed, reluctant to continue it seemed. “uh...your heartbeat. i can feel your wounds.” He glanced down at your bare legs, still recovering from certain wounds. They looked much better, though, since it had been a number of days. “that’s about it. just physical things, mostly.”

If he pushed further, would he be able to feel more? Your emotions? Your memories?

“not a good idea.”

You decided not to press, though you still wondered why he didn’t try. Would you be able to hear his thoughts if he did press further?

You turned your thoughts more inward, focusing on your soul. You had forgotten the whole purpose of this situation. You took a breath and tried to move your soul inside your body much like you had done with it outside of your body. It responded, pressing forward. Sans suddenly jolted backwards, startling you and breaking your concentration. You lost your grip on your soul as Sans’s hand flew to his own chest.

“Sans?” You asked, alarmed. Sans ran his hand over his face, wiping at sweat and looking a little exasperated.

“kid.” Sans shot them a look somewhere between amused and stern. “warn a skeleton before you do that, alright? you almost did something not okay.”

You worried his blanket, confused and nervous. What had you done wrong?

“remember that monsters can absorb human souls, frisk. it doesn’t take much. if my magic got any more of a grasp on your soul the way it was, i would’ve accidentally taken it.”

That...definitely would not be good.

“Sorry.” You apologized.
“yeah.” Sans looked at the blanket. A silence fell between you two. It was a little awkward, you realized. What would happen if Sans accidentally absorbed your soul? Would you still be able to talk to him? Would he transform like Flowey had? Would he be able to put you back into your body? What would happen to “you” when you decided to give your soul to a monster? Asriel had hinted at it, but would it be different for one that was not a Boss Monster? For one without even a monster soul?

“summon your soul already, buddy.” Sans poked your calf to get your attention. You closed your eyes and tried to get a feel for your soul now that you actually knew where to look and now that you had a better idea on how your soul actually felt. But you still weren’t sure about the edges of your soul. You weren’t exactly sure how it felt to really summon it. You tried to focus on your soul...but it was too hard for you to grasp. You sighed and shook your head.

“Again?” You asked him cautiously. If he didn’t want to do it again, he didn’t have to. You wouldn’t hold it against him.

Sans seemed disinclined to try again, but he gave in. “this time warn me first.” He told you. You nodded. He once again pressed his finger to your chest and allowed his magic to phase through into your body. You shivered again at the sensation, wondering what made magic feel different. Why did Sans’s feel cold? You could taste blue.

This time you were faster in grasping what was essentially your soul. You had only just thought that you were ready, and Sans pulled back. You were left holding onto your own soul without any support. It pulsed lightly within you, the pulse much weaker and in tandem with your actual pulse. It felt...much like it would outside of your body. But you would need to force it out of your body with your own magic, you knew. Carefully you moved it forward. It moved readily, pushing out of your chest without resistance. You gasped lightly as, just like when monsters summoned your soul, your consciousness seemed to focus in on the little heart and your body became background for you. You were a little disoriented.

“great job, kiddo.” Sans praised. You smiled, ecstatic. You had done it! You had performed magic! You didn’t know what you wanted to do with yourself. It felt so much different supporting your soul on your own energy. Already you could feel a little bit drained. You supposed using magic may be like working a muscle. You leaned forward and hugged Sans. He patted your back.

You broke the hug and signed a thank you to him. You couldn’t wait to show everyone what you had done. But first, it would probably be best that you put your soul back into your body. You wondered how exactly you were to do that. Did you just...release your soul? Or did you lead it back into your chest? You were unwilling to release the “grip” you had on your soul, afraid of what it would do. Would you lose the connection you felt with it? You didn’t know. Instead you eased it back towards your chest. Unlike when the monsters controlled the summoning of your soul, you could easily put it back in your chest. There was no other magic blocking your way. It entered your chest and settled quickly. The moment you released it, it seemed to meld back into your body. You opened your eyes again.

“guess you’re ready to learn actual magic.” Sans said.
You closed your eyes and breathed deeply. Despite your eyes being closed, you could still “see”. You had not understood while you were in the Underground why while battling, the monsters lost their colors and you had seemed almost trapped in a magic-bound box that contained your soul for the duration of the battle. But now you understood that you were seeing magic as it actually looked, and how your soul saw other souls. In front of you was your mother bleached of all of her colors, just as you had first encountered her what felt like so long ago. She had fire dancing lackadaisically around her, its movements slow and small so you could get a better sense of the magic it was made of. You knew, through the use of your body’s eyes, that they were all different colors, but they only appeared to be black and white to your soul.

Everything was quiet as you focused. You had been practicing for days on keeping your soul out of your body, but you felt as if you hadn’t made too much progress with your magical stamina. Right now you had been instructed to try and summon your own fireball, but it wasn’t as easy as it seemed. The soul had already been present inside of you. It was, in essence, magic itself. Now you somehow needed to channel the magic from within the soul and force it to pump more magic through your body. Magic already flowed through you (you were starting to become accustomed to what it felt like, but it was still a vague concept to you), so you just needed your soul to push out more magic. You didn’t know how that was possible. Shouldn’t a heart already pump out whatever was already in it?

“Not exactly, little one.” Toriel had explained to you when you had first begun this session. “For monsters, the answer would be yes. However, humans have a much larger store of magic within their Souls. The difference is that human Souls do not need to push out more magic than necessary to sustain who you are. Your body maintains itself. Your Soul, however, maintains you. And as a human grows older, they need less magic to sustain who they are.”

Did that mean that children were more in tune with their magic?

Toriel chuckled, nodding. “Of course! Which is why learning from a younger age is much easier. It is not just a physiological thing for humans; it is also due to the amount of magic. Your Souls have not had time to settle into their physical forms – because your physical forms are still settling themselves – so more magic is released through your bodies to help balance you all in a new world.” She paused. “Does that make sense?”

It was confusing, but you believed that you understood. You wondered how difficult it would be for a full adult to learn magic. You were still in the middle of puberty yourself. Did that affect you at all? Your body was changing into an adult’s body.

“Now focus.” Toriel instructed you calmly. You took a deep, centering breath. “Think about how
your magic feels. Try to let your magic flow into your hands.” Toriel’s large hands gently picked up yours and brought them together to form a small bowl. “If it helps, try to visualize something.” You gave her a confused look. Toriel considered it. “Picture . . . water, perhaps? Pooling in your hands. Something that flows.”

You pictured yourself back in Waterfall with the water running over your shoulders and arms. You imagined the sensations of the trails the water would leave as it gathered in the palms of your hand. Your body tingled with a strange sensation. You felt like you had sudden energy to spare, leaving you a little jittery. And yet, your body didn’t seem to be experiencing the same thing.

“Excellent, my child!” Toriel praised softly in an effort not to break your concentration. “You are doing quite well! How are you feeling?”

You swallowed. That strange sensation honestly felt like it was building in your palms. You were holding something, but you were afraid to open your eyes and see what. You didn’t want to ruin it. You could only compare the experience to holding a bubble in your hands. It could burst at any moment. It made your hands feel heavy.

There was a heavy pause in which you could tell your mother was considering something. And then she said, “What you are feeling, my child, is magic.” There was a proud lilt and a smile to her voice. You gave a nervous but pleased smile back. “Now, try to make it into fire.”

That seemed easier said than done, in your opinion. How were you possibly going to turn this bubble into fire? Would you hurt yourself? You knew that Toriel’s fire could either be warm or hurt you. You were scared. You could already imagine a ball of flame singeing your hands. The smell of burning skin wafted into your nose. Your hands started to feel warm, and then hot.

“Yes, excell−” Your mom began to praise, but you whipped your hands back with a small terrified cry. Toriel was instantly on you, gently pulling your hands into hers and examining them. You shivered at how close you came to burning yourself. Your skin was reddening a little. “It is alright.” Toriel’s magic wrapped around your hands, soothing the tingling there. You could still feel the magic on your palms. It reacted to hers, calming the jittery feeling within your arms.

When you had your hands back, you apologized. You had messed up. You had been doing so well too!

Toriel quickly shut down that train of thought. “Do not worry. Fire magic is difficult to begin with.” Toriel’s thumb brushed across your cheek. Her brown eyes were soft and the pride was still there. “You have been doing so well, Frisk. Do not be discouraged.” She grinned then and wrapped her arms around your torso, dragging you into her lap. You gave a tiny squeak, and then smiled wider as she plopped a kiss into your hair. “It is rather amazing how easily you humans can learn magic.” She said.

You gripped her sleeve and turned in her lap. Because of her size, you always felt like you were a child when you sat in her lap. It was embarrassing to act younger than you were, but you liked to indulge once in a while. It made you think about the things you had missed out on when you had been little, so you allowed yourself these moments. Toriel, after all, seemed not to mind.

You signed to her, “You teach other human?”

Toriel developed a slightly wistful look as she smiled and shook her head. “No, not I. Asgore has, I believe. But mostly it was my teachers who had taught the other humans.” She paused. You watched her and waited for her to continue. “Frisk . . .” She sounded a bit guarded. “I would not be surprised if most monsters are against the thought of humans learning magic again. It would be best if . . . you
do not allow others to know of your learning.”

You nodded, understanding. It was in the monsters’ history that humans made the portal. Humanity itself had forgotten what they had done to the monsters. The story that your father had fed the whole of the world had been the basics of what had happened. He had been able to avoid explaining how the barrier had gotten there in the first place. None of you doubted that the humans would use the ancestral humans’ reasons to lock the monsters away against the monsters today. It was better for the humans to make their own assumptions until monsters were more integrated into society. Already there were issues of equality happening. There were two different worlds trying to coexist and, hopefully, come together again.

But Toriel hadn’t answered your actual question. She had misinterpreted your words. You were reluctant to bring it up, but you had not discussed it with either of your parents since that fateful day. You didn’t know how to gauge their reactions. You didn’t doubt that they were hiding how they truly felt from you. Sans had hinted that Toriel and Asgore had gotten in a fight, and the way they reacted towards each other just solidified this theory. You hated conflict, but you didn’t want your parents to fight with just each other. You were at fault too.

“I meant...” You began slowly, glancing down at your lap before looking back at Toriel again. “Did you... ever teach... Chara magic?” Just saying their name still made something clench unpleasantly within you.

Toriel seemed to freeze momentarily. Something hardened in her eyes—something you couldn’t name—before she deflated. “Ah.” She murmured, realizing her mistake. She didn’t continue for long time. You just watched her and waited. There was an old sadness you could see in the lines under her eyes. The fur there did not completely hide the shadow of her pain. You wanted to comfort her somehow, but you decided against it.

Finally she sighed. “To answer your question, we did not teach Chara. Please understand when I say that it was our intention to never let humans learn magic again. We few monsters who still live and remember the war all agreed on it, and it is with the last of them that Asgore and I needed to ask for permission to teach you.” She brushed your hair behind your ear. Her dulled claw felt good against the back of your ear. “Of course they allowed us because of our old positions rather than because they agreed.”

“Chara... was our beloved child just as much as... as Asriel was.” Her voice tightened on her son’s name. You bit the inside of your lip hard. “But even they could not be taught magic. Your situation is an exception... and we trust you will not use your power for harm.”

With the exception of Gaster, you guessed. Your magic was being taught to you for defense, but you already had your shield for that. Toriel must not like the idea of that, but you had yet to hear her complain. Maybe she thought that sometimes violence was necessary? She had thought so back in the Underground, after all. Your feelings were much more ambiguous on the matter.

“Frisk, allow me to tell you something.” You were drawn out of your musings. Your mother motioned for you to move, so you climbed off of her lap to sit next to her. The late evening sunlight was steadily trickling in through the windows in the living room. The windows were open to allow the strong breeze that broke the stagnant heat of the world outside into the house. It felt good on your sweaty skin. Toriel’s body heat near yours didn’t help to cool you, but soon enough it would be night time and the temperature would drop. And you could go to take a bath soon.

“Asgore and I reacted quite differently to our children’s deaths. You know this as not many people do. And the information that you gave us... has not made it any easier.” Your head lowered, ashamed. Toriel didn’t try to comfort you, but she still moved to place a hand on your back.
“I’m sorry.” You said, but she held up a hand and cut you off.

“Please, do not.” You fell uneasily silent. Her smile was sorrowful. “We do not blame you. It has all been very . . . difficult. And complicated. I do not wish to bring you into the middle of my feud with him.” She sighed. “That being said, it is not completely unavoidable. I wish to placate you, my child. Do not blame yourself for our disagreement. It is an ancient thing.”

That did help to soothe you some, but you still didn’t feel completely better. You leaned against her arm and closed your eyes. You were unsure of how to explain how you felt guilty about everything. You hadn’t been able to save Asriel. He was still trapped in his own hell all alone. Chara had still killed everyone multiple times because you had allowed them to. You didn’t know how to tell her that you wanted to be yelled at. You wanted someone to blame you. You didn’t want Toriel to be proud of you. You were not a good child.

But you said none of this. Sans already showed you what it was like to be hated. The thought of any of your other friends looking at you coldly burned you. You had seen Undyne’s hatred for you before she had gotten to know you, but that was an impersonal hatred. It was a general dislike of human beings. How would she view you if she learned the truth?

You didn’t want Toriel to hate you. Perhaps you should leave whatever punishment you felt you deserved to Sans.

Toriel seemed to sense your distress. “. . . We were aware of the reason Chara fell into the Underground.” You blinked at her, surprised. You had assumed that only Asriel had known the real reason. Had he told his parents too, or had Chara been more open than you had thought? “It was, like you had said, not a happy reason. Many of the children who ended up falling into the Underground did not have a happy reason for being there.”

You wondered if all of the children had bad lives. Were they unhappy with their families? Or with their lives? Did they also climb the mountain for less-than-savory reasons?

Toriel shook her head. Her ears seem to droop lower than usual. “I only meant, my child, that falling into the Underground itself was not a happy reason for being there. Each of those children told me their reasons for being there. Most had fallen by accident while exploring the mountain. Others had escaped from bad places. And others still,” she placed a hand on your hair and stroked it, “fell on purpose. All of them left me in one way or another.” She paused unhappily. “And some did not even manage to leave the Ruins.”

You recalled the torn ribbon you had found within the Ruins, and the toy knife lost amongst the great abandoned city. Your fists clenched against the rug.

“My hope is that they were happy while they had lived with me. Short as that time may have been. Those children were also my own children. I cared for each of them greatly.” Her eyes were damp, but she didn’t cry. The pain was far too dulled by time and repeated exposure. “It is why I cannot forgive Asgore. Perhaps I never will. And seeing you, Frisk, I was reminded of Chara. You are . . . in certain ways similar to them. Mostly in appearance.” She tweaked your nose playfully.

“It is difficult not to have recognized a bad child, but I suppose I had either willfully ignored the signs, or I simply did not pay close enough attention. Frisk, I am sorry for the pain Chara inflicted upon you. I know now the both of you are similar in more ways than I would wish upon any child.” She cupped your cheek, and you stared at her. “I do not know if Chara was happy living with us. But I wish for nothing more than for you to be happy here, no matter the deeds you have done in a life that we do not remember. Frisk, we can allow such sorrowful dreams to stay dreams only.”
You didn’t understand why she was telling you all of this. She just wanted to ignore what you had done? You didn’t want her to. You didn’t want to forget the atrocities you had committed. You felt a weight lifted off of you at her forgiveness, but it didn’t feel earned. You didn’t feel like you had the right to accept her forgiveness yet.


“We all have done things we are not proud of. Of course I am not happy to hear about your situation, however I do not completely fault you.” She swallowed audibly. “You are not the first child to murder in your own defense.”

“It wasn’t always in defense.” You admitted.

“No,” Toriel agreed. “But you have proven to us that you regret your actions. And that is, for the sake of things, enough.” She pressed a kiss to your hair. “The past, my dear Frisk, is in the past. It is best that we move forward from here.”

You wondered if those words were not just for you, but for her as well.

Maybe you could do that as well. Maybe you could move forward. You couldn’t change the things you had done, but you could try to make amends. You had already started with Sans. You didn’t think he would ever fully forgive you, but promising not to mess with the timeline seemed to be enough for him. Papyrus had forgiven you without thought. Alphys and Undyne . . . you weren’t sure. And you would need to talk to your father as well. But you would try to make amends to all of the monsters. You would help secure a future for all of them. You would make them all happy if you could.

There were a few loose ends that you needed to tie up first. You had ideas floating around in your head for how you could solve your problems, but nothing solid. You supposed it was better to take things one step at a time. You had a more pressing matter to attend to. You would take care of the second one later.

You took a breath and cupped your hands again. You would need to practice more.

Chapter End Notes

Originally this scene was going to go down differently, and it was going to be with Asgore instead. But I feel like Mama Toriel should have a say in what she thinks of the past.
Chapter Summary

You enter the Underground again to revisit Waterfall with your friends.

Chapter Notes

I'm gonna be writing this chapter from Sans's POV next, but hopefully I can do that before the end of the week. No promises, though, because I have two essays due that I need to finish first.

Yesterday Sans had a Bad Day, so you had decided it to be more prudent to stay away from the skeleton household for a while. Even now you still felt shivers run through your body at the distrust Sans had stared at you with. It hurt every time because you knew that you deserved his malice. You regret having decided to spend the night last night, but you supposed that something good had come out of it. Namely you had finally been able to discuss Gaster with someone who didn’t hold hatred for the monster.

You had known since long ago that because Gaster was hunting you, something had to be done. And it seemed that most of your friends were in agreement that Gaster’s end needed to be brought about. The accident from so long ago should have completely erased him so that nothing was left, yet he still existed on the fringes of time and space. And as long as he was still there, chances were that he was still going to come after you. Sans had decided that first day that Gaster needed to be killed. No he had not told you this, but you could see it in his actions and reactions when Gaster was brought up. Undyne preferred to just destroy a menace, and Alphys had reluctantly agreed with her. Or, at least, she had yet to object or offer another choice. Even Toriel and Asgore seemed to be resigned to somehow helping to destroy Gaster considering they were teaching you offensive magic.

You, however, were not so sure you wanted things to end this way. Why was it that no matter how kind these monsters were, it seemed that all sentient races decided that death was the best way to protect others? You were torn in your thoughts because on the one hand Gaster was barely living to begin with and it might be a mercy to destroy him, but on the other hand was it really your right to end someone’s existence who clearly wanted to live? Wasn’t that exactly what you were guilty of in past timelines? If you destroyed Gaster . . . wouldn’t you be like Chara?

You didn’t want to hurt anyone, and Gaster was no exception. But you weren’t quite sure you had any other choice. Trying to talk to him had resulted in nothing, and you didn’t have many other options. This wasn’t like Papyrus who wouldn’t kill you no matter what. And this wasn’t like Undyne, who you just needed to run from. Gaster was everywhere, and eventually you would have to confront him again. It was more like your battle with Sans: if you wanted to continue forward, you would have to defeat him.

You didn’t know what to do.
At the very least, Papyrus seemed to agree with you. He didn’t think that Gaster deserved the death sentence, and you couldn’t believe how much of a relief that was to hear. You hadn’t known if you were being too idealistic in your thinking. This wasn’t like the Underground where you heard mixed things about the King, and thus you had thought you had the chance to reason with him. Everything you had learned about Gaster led you to believe that he wanted to do something terrible to you, and past failures made you believe that you wouldn’t be able to talk your way out of this one. Despite Papyrus’s encouragement, you were still left unsure about your situation.

You supposed that it was time to just focus on your magic. You would cross that bridge when you came to it. Wasn’t that how you figured out all of your problems?

In the meantime, Undyne and Papyrus had a much more interesting idea to help you overcome some of your trauma. That was what led you into walking back through New Home towards the Core once again.

“Have you ever gone swimming in the waters of Waterfall, kid?” Undyne asked as the temperature rose while riding down in the elevator. “It’s always cold! And nothing clears the mind more! And it’s the BEST PLACE TO TRAIN!”

“I THINK IT’S ACTUALLY TOO COLD TO SWIM IN.” Papyrus told you.

Undyne laughed, grinning. “Papyrus, you can’t even FEEL the cold!”

“THAT DOESN’T MEAN I DON’T KNOW IT’S COLD! MOST OF THE WATER COMES FROM SNOWDIN, AFTER ALL!” You agreed that made sense. The water was cold enough along the main routes that ice blocks could navigate the length of it until it reached the Core. “I DON’T BELIEVE IT’S REALLY SAFE FOR A HUMAN TO SWIM IN.”

“The POINT IS.” Undyne said loudly, ignoring Papyrus’s comment. She paused, conflicted, before sighing and giving up. Her hands moved to tie her hair up. “Look, the whole point of this is to help Frisk get over their fear, alright?” She looked at you. You watched her. “Because you’re scared to go back into the Underground, right?”

You had to admit that you felt some nerves about entering the Underground again . . . especially the Core. It was a strange mixture of familiarity, and fear. You didn’t like feeling as if you would be attacked at any moment. It wasn’t like Gaster couldn’t find you literally anywhere, but he seemed to prefer the Underground. It had happened twice already, so were you chancing fate by trying for a third time?

“A CHANGE OF PACE MIGHT BE NICE.” Papyrus agreed cheerfully. “AND YOU LIKE WATERFALL, RIGHT?” You nodded. You honestly preferred Waterfall over most of the places in the Underground you had seen, but more for the sounds and the sights than anything. The last time you had been in the Underground you had run the risk of being confronted by Undyne if you lingered anywhere, but maybe this time you could enjoy yourself. You wouldn’t mind exploring the Echo Flowers, and you wanted to look at the singing statue again. The thought of the melancholic music filled you with sadness, but you still loved the music.

The elevator dinged open, and you tensed automatically. The wave of heat left your hair sticking to you immediately. You were rather glad you weren’t wearing Sans’s jacket today. Your bathing suit also made everything much more tolerable considering the material. You hoped that your sandals wouldn’t somehow sizzle here. Maybe you should’ve actually worn sneakers.

“Let’s find the others before we go to Waterfall.” Undyne said, though she looked annoyed just being in the hot place. She tugged at her collar, grimacing. “And let’s hurry!”
“Others?” You asked as you hurried after her and Papyrus. Their feet were loud against the metal of the Core.

“Alphys and your parents!”

“AND SANS!” Papyrus added.

Undyne glanced at him over her shoulder. “Him too? Didn’t think he wanted to come down here after the last time.” Static faintly rebounded in your head at the memory. You shook your head to clear it.

“I THOUGHT SO TOO, BUT WHEN HE HEARD THAT THE KING AND QUEEN WERE COMING DOWN HERE HE DECIDED TO JOIN THEM!”

You tugged gently on Papyrus’s hand to catch his attention. “Sans feeling better?” You signed.

Papyrus nodded and signed back, “A lot!” That was good. You didn’t like the days when Sans couldn’t seem to recover from particularly bad days. You could never tell when those were because they all looked the same to you. You suspected that having Papyrus to be with him helped to lessen the blow, but some days you knew just couldn’t be helped by anybody. It was why it was better for you to stay away.

The three of you found your friends all standing in front of a large screen looking at complicated readings and what looked to be possibly a map of a city. Perhaps a city in the Underground? The numbers on the screen made your mind spin. The graphs that Sans slid up from his laptop to the large screen looked jagged and confusing. You wondered what all of the readings were, but you also really didn’t want to know.

“Frisk!” Asgore was the first to notice you, and he seemed a little unhappily surprised. Considering the circumstances, you could understand. “What are you doing down here?”

“We’re off to Waterfall.” Undyne grinned, pointing with her thumb in what was possibly the direction of Waterfall. “Thought we’d show the kid some of the underwater caves and such!” You wondered if there were really “underwater caves” when technically you were already underground. And in a cave.

“The water is awfully cold.” Alphys pointed out, fiddling with her fingers nervously. She glanced at you, and then away. You tried to pretend you couldn’t feel the distance spanning between you and her.

“Yeah, but that’s why I get the kid some of those human wetsuits!” Undyne grabbed you and tugged down your tee shirt to expose the skintight waterproof wetsuit. You weren’t used to any of your clothing clinging to your body in such a way, but it was to help keep your body temperature normal while swimming.

Toriel shot Undyne a slightly irritated look at her tugging on your clothing, and gently pulled her fingers away from you so she could straighten your clothes. “I see. Is this safe?” She asked.

“DON’T WORRY! WE’LL BE WITH THEM THE ENTIRE TIME!” Papyrus reassured.

“Yeah! Gaster won’t be able to get anywhere close to Frisk with us here!” Undyne crowed. She wrapped an arm around Alphys’s neck, lifting her up. “And you’re coming with us, right Al?”

“Uh, actually I was helping . . .” Alphys stopped, staring at Sans, and then seemed to change her mind. “Actually, I will!” She touched Undyne’s arm, smiling shakily. “B-But I’m not swimming.”
“DUH!” Undyne scoffed. “Someone as cold-blooded as you can’t swim at Waterfall!”

“Frisk, try not to become sick. Keep warm, my child.” Toriel said.

“Not coming?” You asked, glancing at her and Asgore and Sans.

“we gotta finish lookin’ at things here.” Sans said. He hadn’t looked away from the screen once. You stared at him. Sans finally glanced your way. His smile didn’t seem too tense, which was a significant improvement from yesterday. He reached over and ruffled your hair hard enough that you ducked your head some. You smiled at him from under your fringe. It wasn’t an apology, but it was as close to one as Sans usually granted you. “have fun, kiddo. we’ll come meet you guys after this.”

The four of your hurried through Hotland then wanting to get out of the heat as soon as possible. Undyne complained a majority of the time about how heat-resistant armor dust didn’t work one normal clothing. You were instead wondering what it was that Sans and your parents had been looking at.

“We were, um, searching for any . . . disturbances in space.” Alphys admitted at your questioning. “We were sharing the information between our computers. The power from the Core allows for a much, um, wider range! Plus there’s a map of the whole of the Underground nearby.”

So they were still looking for Gaster . . . or perhaps where he may show up? You didn’t understand all of this time phenomena. What was the point of searching for this stuff when Gaster could just change where he could be found? Your head hurt.

“DID YOU FIND ANYTHING?” Papyrus asked. The heat was slowly transforming into a cool wetness as they made the transition into Waterfall. It also got darker the further along you all went, but it allowed your eyes to slowly adjust to the darkness.

Alphys opened her mouth, but she hesitated. You looked at her as her pause went on for a little too long, and so she stuttered out, “A-Ah, um, no. Not really?”

“THAT’S A SHAME.” Papyrus said. “BUT I’M CONFIDENT YOU AND MY BROTHER WILL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT!!”

“Yeah.” Alphys murmured. She didn’t seem to believe it herself. You wondered how she was doing, but she didn’t seem inclined to talk to you. You weren’t sure how to approach her. You wanted to rekindle your friendship with her. Maybe you just hadn’t paid enough attention to her these past few weeks. You moved closer to her and planned how you wanted to go about this.

“This place brings back memories!!” Undyne called as you all passed through the cave where you had fought her.

“IT DOES! IT REMINDS ME OF WHEN YOU TRIED TO KILL FRISK!”

Undyne cackled. “I wasn’t trying to KILL them! I was trying to catch them!!” You decided not to point out that Undyne’s method of capture ended up being fatal one-hundred percent of the time. You couldn’t recall a single timeline where your defeat had ended in capture. Especially those times you had frustrated Undyne.

You all travelled deep into Waterfall until you were almost back near Snowdin. However, you stopped in the Wishing Room and stared up at the “stars”. You had grown up seeing the sky for so long that picturing all of the monsters making wishes on their glowing stones felt raw and fake. There was a part of you that felt sorrow and claustrophobic at the thought. You shook your head and watched as Undyne and Papyrus went a little further ahead. You decided to enact your plan.
“Hey.” You said into an Echo Flower, and the flower repeated it. She looked surprised to be called. You smiled teasingly and deepened your voice. “Are you trying to tickle me?” The words reverberated. Alphys’s hands immediately flew to her mouth to stop her giggles. You buried your face into your arm and tried to contain yourself long enough to say, “Take a step back!” However it came out broken and higher pitched as you both burst out into giggles. These were such old jokes, but they were beloved by the both of you.

Alphys hurried over to a different flower and whispered something into it. She then stepped back and watched you expectantly, biting her lip. However, you weren’t close enough, so you approached the flower and put your ear to it. “John Madden.” Your laughter was loud enough to draw Papyrus to poke his head back around to corner. He grinned with delight at the sight of you two.

“HURRY UP!” He called, waving you both over. You and Alphys continued to crack old memes at each other as you went deeper into Waterfall.

The place you all ended up hanging out at was in the shallow waters where you had to build the flower bridge. It was still there sitting in full bloom even nearly a year later. Undyne and Papyrus just hopped the small river, but you and Alphys had to walk across the flowers. You liked the springiness of the bridge.

“It’s really shallow here!” Undyne complained.

“WE DIDN’T BRING ANY SCUBA GEAR!” Papyrus protested, already placing down the bag with the towels. Undyne stripped off her clothing to expose her athletic bathing suit. You found yourself admiring Undyne’s body a lot more in the past coming months. You could understand why Alphys liked to oogle her so much. She was stunning, even if it felt a little strange for you to be staring at your friend’s body. You quickly turned away to pull off your own clothes before hesitantly walking into the water. Instantly you shivered, your teeth set on edge from the chill. Maybe this wasn’t such a great idea.

“Cold?” Alphys asked you, smiling a little. You nodded, not wanting to move any deeper. Instead you climbed back out of the stream. Undyne had no qualms, however, and plunged right in. It didn’t go up very high on her, but she made up for it by splashing the lot of you. You gasped and kicked your submerged feet, splashing her back.

“Oh-HO! A CHALLENGER!!” Undyne crowed. Oh no.

“YOU CAN BEAT HER, FRISK!” Papyrus cheered, but stayed back like the traitor he was. You only had the chance to shoot him a helpless look before you were grabbed and pulled in. You cried out once, but luckily Undyne had the sense of mind not to just dunk you into the water. You didn’t need the shock to your system. Instead she held you and began to spin quickly around, the lower half of your body dragging through the water.

“This is what I call, the WHIRLWIND OF PAIN!!” Undyne called. “Uh, 2.0 because it will be the WHIRLWIND OF SOAKING!!” Her spinning caused you to fling the water everywhere, effectively soaking the surrounding area and friends. Alphys whined, but you didn’t get the chance to hear her complaint as Undyne pitched you into deeper water. You were submerged in the clear but chilly water left something to be desired.

You pushed off of the ground to break the surface of the water. It was just deep enough that you had to kick your feet to stay above the water. You glanced upstream to find Undyne going after Papyrus now. You climbed onto the short dock to discover a familiar bench in front of you. You stared at it, your body feeling a bit colder.
“I just wasn’t ready for the responsibility.” You watched your mother leave, and her shadow took on the shape of an Echo Flower. The lights of Waterfall were headlights reflecting sunlight off of their glass. There was a feeling of confusion in you, but it was muted and dull. It had happened so long ago (so many lifetimes ago) that you hardly felt anything for that moment anymore. You gazed at the quiche sitting under the bench, waiting and scared. Would its mother come back for it? You turned away and walked back to your friends. You were at a better time in your life.

Eventually the cold started to become too much for you even in the wetsuit. You all instead dried off on the rocks laughing with each other. Occasionally you saw Undyne send a gaze Alphys’s way that embarrassed you, so you and Papyrus would casually give them some space. When Alphys realized what you two were doing, she would fluster and hurry to get you guys to rejoin them. Undyne laughed at your embarrassment, teasing Papyrus.

You headed back towards the surface. In the end, nothing bad had happened to you. You were glad to see everybody’s smiling faces, which in turn made you give an exhausted smiling. Today had been tiring, but rewarding. The evening sunlight was streaming down from the surface as your friends went ahead of you. You allowed yourself a moment to gaze back at the Underground. You wondered how long it would be until you came back here again. Hopefully not for a while yet.

"How was your trip?” Toriel asked you, smiling brightly. You were happy to see her in such a great mood. "Was it fun?” You nodded before looking back into the sunlight. It was almost blinding from this angle. The summer breeze felt great on your skin.

Sans left first as you watched his back. Papyrus rushed onto the surface with an energy you just didn’t have. Sometimes you wondered if you were even a child anymore considering how tired you felt. After everything you’d been through, what would you define yourself as? You were no longer sure. Maybe you just needed to keep taking small steps. The way out of this place is through, after all. So you moved forward.

Hands grabbed you, causing you to cry out as you were yanked back into a chest. You gasped and turned your head to see Sans, the lights of his eyes barely visible even at this distance, and his grin more of a grimace. What was he doing? Why did he suddenly appear behind you?

“kid, move!” He told you, his voice panicked. His arms around you were crushing you. You didn’t understand was happening as he jumped backwards, but jolted to a stop. A door slammed shut. Sans spun around, relinquishing everything except his grip on the back of your shirt as he cursed loudly. You didn’t look behind you. Instead you stared ahead at a familiar black shape as your flashback jarringly ended.

You were trapped. Again.

Chapter End Notes

The beginning of the end.

(This chapter is unbeta'd, but will be fixed tomorrow)
You were confused. This wasn’t the exit from the Underground. You had been certain you had been about to leave, though. Had you taken a wrong turn at some point? This monster is so unfamiliar. You didn’t like this room. Darkness was blooming around every corner, but it was completely unlike the darkness you were used to. The darkness in the Underground had things hidden within it: monsters, secret doors, and plants. This darkness was empty. It was nothingness, and that terrified you.

You knew this type of darkness, though. The last time you had been in a place such as this, you’d been confronted by Flowey. This darkness was all-encompassing, but it was still different from the “SAVE” screen. While that darkness seemed to go on endlessly, this one felt more suffocating. The air felt thick with potential energy for, what you could guess, almost anything to occur. You didn’t like it at all.

You wanted to move backwards, but you felt as if you could barely lift your legs. Your heart was racing in your chest as the darkness seemed to take a shape. You whimpered a bit, calling out your companion’s name before you accurately registered that Sans was still with you. A jumpier part of you worried that he would attack you, but you pushed it away as instinct drove you to his side. You could feel his hand still gripping the back of your shirt. You reached blindly for him and grabbed his sleeve as the darkness settled into a figure you recognized.

Gaster’s form seemed much more solid than last time despite the fact that a majority of his body blended in with the darkness. You could only really see his face and hands and maybe the top of what may have been a shirt. The darkness seemed to bore straight through his eyes. Was this entire room made of Gaster? Was this the “void”? How had you gotten here? Your arm stung with phantom pain.

“Hello Sans.” His voice was wispy, like the quiet hiss of static from a distance. Sans didn’t respond, but he did step up next to you. You didn’t release your grip on him yet. “You We Re Not Supp Ose D To Com E A s We l L.” As Gaster’s shape seemed to solidify –black on black– his voice also seemed to solidify.

You glanced at Sans. The smile on his face was tense, but not angry. You wondered if he was hiding his anger for your sake, or if he just wasn’t angry. You couldn’t tell. His jaw was tight even as he shrugged nonchalantly. “you know i always seem to show up uninvited. it’s a bad habit, see, but it ain’t right to let a kid go off to meet a strange monster alone.”

Gaster, somehow, seemed amused. “We Ar E Acq Uaint Ed, Th Ough.”
“yeah, you make great first impressions.” Gaster glitched suddenly, half of his body jerking separate from itself. He seemed to struggle to put himself back together. You flinched involuntarily. Sans inched his way a little bit in front of you. He shot a look at you, trying to convey a silent meaning. You stared at him, confused. Sans dislodged your hand and made a quick sign: “shield”.

You blinked in agreement, and turned back to Gaster as the monster reformed himself. You reached into your pocket to keep your hand on your shield.

“How many times have I heard that?” Gaster asked as the static in his voice lowered to a steady hum. “Count less, surely.”

“Yet you still find it funny.” Sans told him.

“Sometimes.”

“How’ve you been, pal? why don’t we catch up and let the kid go play somewhere? leave ‘em with papi?” Sans suggested, smiling.

“No. I think not.”

“It is not as if you have not helped with this work before. Why the change of heart?”

“I don’t think you get it.” Sans said. “This kid is under my protection. I promised a friend a long time ago, after all. And I’m not letting you have them.”

“You would impede our progress?”

Gaster’s voice dropped almost all signs of static as his body began to tremble. His words were no longer stilted. The fragments of his Soul seemed to glow with a red sheen as for the first time you began to see Gaster as what he really was. The black blob of his body shaped itself into a lab coat and white pants. His face still seemed to glitch as hands and strange symbols began to materialize around him. You tensed in preparation.

“What progress? you taking the kid’s soul?” Sans demanded, his bones moving faster now. His eyes darted around taking in the symbols. Perhaps they were words? You couldn’t tell as large hands began to materialize as well. You inhaled. “you’re everywhere and when, right? just take another human’s soul.”

“You do not understand.” Gaster hissed. Despite the smile built into his face, he appeared to be
becoming angrier. "Our Mission. Our Studies. Our Work. It Cannot Be Done With Just ANY Human Soul." Gaster grinned now, a gaping void where teeth and a mouth should be. The glitches began to appear then. The whole of the Void seemed to twitch sideways. You gasped in shock as your leg disconnected from your body—sliced clean through—only to reattach immediately. You stumbled backwards. Sans grimaced as the line that seemed to cut through the Void sliced his hipbone, only to also reattach immediately.

"all humans have powerful souls. you don’t need frisk’s."

"Chara’s Soul Is Necessary. It Is What I Need." He looked straight at you then. "Give It To Me." The symbols disappeared out of existence only to appear around you. You brought up your shield and dodged sideways, ducking underneath some of the symbols. They flew after you, refusing to let you leave their line of attack. You ducked behind your shield, causing them to crash into the metal and explode outwards. Sans moved to avoid the debris as Gaster made an annoyed noise.

You could sense it was your turn. You looked over at Sans, worried, but his face wasn’t giving you any hints as to what to do. You didn’t know what to do against Gaster. Everybody told you that you needed to attack the monster. You needed to destroy him in order to save yourself, but why did violence have to be the only answer? Papyrus was right in that Gaster can’t be all bad. You didn’t want to kill him. Maybe you could reason with him? Every monster could be convinced to stop hurting you. Even Asriel, in the end, just needed someone to talk to.

You decided to Act and told Gaster, “I don’t want to fight.”

"Do Not Fight Me, Then. It Is Easier That Way."

Sans, however, had different intentions. It was his turn. He threw his hand out which caused the bones he had summoned to fly towards Gaster. Each one went right through him without harming him. Sans cursed under his breath. Your friends had suspected physical attacks wouldn’t work, but Sans had wasted a turn testing the theory.

"this ain’t chara. if you want that human, you need to go further back on the timeline!” Sans tried.

"Forwards, Backwards . . . These Mean Nothing To Me Any Longer. I Exist At All Points. It Is Hell.” The hands, larger than even the tall Gaster, launched towards you. You had yet to see Gaster attack Sans. One of the hands glitched out while the other was somewhat transparent. The holes within them were large enough that your entire body could duck into it, but which one would you go for? Your Soul only had so much room to maneuver, and Gaster was coming to fill up the entire area.

You took a risk and dodged for the hand that hadn’t glitched. You ducked into the hole in the hand just in time for the other hand to expand and overlap the hand you were in. Only the spot you had hidden in was safe. Your instincts saved you yet again. The hands shrunk and warped back to Gaster.

Shaken, you tried again to Talk to him, “Why my Soul?”

"Is It Not Obvious?" There was scorn in his voice, treating you like a young child asking tedious questions. You swallowed at the sound. "Apparently Not. Sans, You Always Did Have Such . . . Interesting . . . Friends."

"some of us like to be friendly.” Sans responded. He tried again to attack, this time applying magic to his bones. They spun rapidly around Gaster, trapping him and closing trembling momentarily before
the suddenly closed the gap. Gaster, however, dodged under them and out of the way. His façade of a smile turned into a sneer.

“Friendly With Those Not Necessary.” It sounded like an old argument. “I Need Your Soul To Come Back To Reality. You Must Try To Understand When I Say That I MUST Return. I Cannot Bear It Here Any Longer.”

He repeated his attack with the symbols. You were better prepared this time and ducked behind your shield as soon as they shot at you. The explosion sent glitches flying in all directions. Gaster hissed in annoyance, glaring at your shield. His body temporarily jerked backwards, more of a glitch than of its own accord. You wished that you could get closer and maybe force Gaster farther away, but with your shield up you could not move.

You decided to appeal to Gaster’s ego. “I know I’m not as smart as you . . . so can you please explain why I am so, um, necessary?” You ducked your head demurely. Sans shot you an unamused look. You could tell he was getting annoyed that you weren’t trying to attack at all. Sans’s repertoire of attacks were not entirely magic-based, and the ones that were would exhaust him if he went on for too long. Neither of you knew how long you would need to last.

Gaster seemed very put-upon, but he did say, “Very Well. For Ever I Have Been Trapped Here. My Soul Is Shattered, And My Matter Is Gone, Destroyed By My Erasure. The Only Thing That Has Kept Me Alive Thus Far Is My Own DETERMINATION.” He paused, thinking to himself. His body grew fuzzy along the edges and his clothes began to form back into an indescribable shape as his anger decreased some. His magic’s grip on your Soul did not yet release you. “We Knew About Determination, But Not How Powerful It Was. How Is It That Through Sheer Force Of Will Alone I Can Still Exist? And How Is It That A Child Can Do What Science Could Not?” He began to grow angry again, his body solidifying. “Determination Is What I Have, But I Have Not The Power To Direct It. I Can See All Of Time, But I Cannot Interact With It Like I Wish To. Appearances Mean Nothing. Temporary Access To My Cell Exhau

“you can’!t!” Sans cried, for the first time sounding upset. You could see the sweat coating his skull, and the fear in his eyes. You shrunk down a little. What had he realized? You still didn’t understand why Gaster needed your Soul. “gaster, this is madness. if all of this showed me anything, it’s that time isn’t something to be messed with. we never should have tried to change anything. don’t do this.” Sans was begging.

Gaster ignored Sans entirely, instead choosing to attack you again. Hands appeared all around you. They grew and shrunk as they appeared, reminding you horribly of one of the strange amalgamates that had been in the True Lab. The one that had disappeared. You dodged each attack desperately even as they picked up speed. The Void was shaking. Your chest felt strange and terribly wrong.

“Sans!” You cried, realizing that the attack wasn’t going to stop. It was still Gaster’s turn, but it should’ve ended by now. The game was breaking. Hands were appearing around Gaster. From what you could see, they looked almost like they were speaking sign language. Sans glanced at Gaster helplessly, and then at you. Your Soul wasn’t fast enough for this. You couldn’t throw yourself out of the way fast enough.

“hang in there, kid!” Sans told you and threw his arm out. Blue magic wrapped around your Soul as Sans took control of where you were going. He switched the gravity upon you, forcing you towards him. The range of your Soul extended with it much like it had done when you had fought him. He
caught you and held you steady now that you were free from the relentless attack. It was officially “your” turn. You were too shaken up to do anything yet. The hands kept signing around the three of you, enclosing you all in like a fence. Symbols began to form words that you didn’t doubt Sans could read. He released you, but you both stayed close.

“frisk, buddy, i don’t think the pacifist route is going to get you out of this one.” Sans muttered under his breath to you. “fire magic is stronger and more durable than my attacks. if he insists on breaking the battle, we can take advantage too.”

You shook your head. You didn’t want to fight. You didn’t even have a weapon, unless your shield somehow counted as one. Sans’s eye flashed blue causing you to look away from him. He began to prepare his next attack despite your refusal to fight. You tried to explain to him why he should stop.

“Please,” you said, trying to raise your voice above the static that was starting to hurt your ears. The smell of ozone had disappeared, replaced with

[ERROR]

Whatever this place smelled like, it was omitted from you. Everything was wrong about this world, “it’s not worth it. Changing time . . . only proves to give you the same outcome. Everyone is hurt. I . . . I just want this cycle to end. We’re . . . we’re going to move forward. No more looking back.”

“Yes, I’ve Heard Your Little Deal.” Gaster said. “Time, However, Has Forgotten Me. What Do I Care For Its Desires? No, I Shall Do What I Wish To Do.”

“not when i’ve finally stopped this endless cycle.” Sans scowled, startling you. You hadn’t seen him so visibly furious in a long time. The eye socket closest to you was empty, but you could see the burning of his magic in the other one. Your hands shook as you feebly gripped your shield for protection. It was the only warning you got as multiple blasters formed behind Sans. Your instincts told you to move away from Sans, but you knew being closer to him was safer. Gaster had yet to attack Sans. “I won’t let you send me back to my own hell!”

The blasters erupted with magic, shooting their beams straight at Gaster. He dodged two of their attacks almost effortlessly, but didn’t try to avoid the third one. You understood why when the void around you jumped again, and sudden the beam was veering off to the right of Gaster instead of directly at him.

Gaster didn’t attack right away when Sans’s turn ended. Instead he stared at Sans emotionlessly. Sans panted a little beside you. You bit your lip.

“You Really Have Come To Hate Me That Much.” Gaster said quietly. His form was fizzing badly like an old television. His head clicked a little to the side again and again. Sans didn’t respond. His usual smile was there, but combined with his blackened sockets he looked positively livid. His cold fury affected even you, burning frozenly in your chest. You pulled your Soul a bit closer to your body.

Gaster seemed to consider his next words before he sighed heavily, as if Sans’s hatred was a tantrum his child was throwing. “I Can See There Is Still Much I Must Teach You. I Cannot Do It With That Child With You, So Protective Of The Human Creature That You Are.”

“great idea.” Sans’s voice was falsely jovial. “so let’s send frisk here home to their parents and we can have a chat. what’dya say?”
“I Have Used Up Much Power Bringing Them Here. I Cannot Risk Another Chance. No, I Think I Shall Prove My Point To You. You Always Were A Visual Monster. Seeing, I Suppose, Is Believing.” He grinned widely, both eyes popping open. Your Soul was released suddenly ending the battle. You only managed to catch a flash of white in the socket of Gaster’s face before the darkness lunged at Sans and captured him. You cried out and reached for him, but he was abruptly not there. There was nothing but void in front of you.

You turned sharply to tell Gaster to bring Sans back, but Gaster was gone too. All around you darkness stretched endlessly.

You were alone.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter I post will be in “Through Hollow Eyes”. The following chapter will be back with TMFF picking up where we left off.

I'm going to ATTEMPT to get all three chapters out over the course of this weekend. I will probably try to close this story by next weekend, but it depends on how much I'm writing. I've had my endings planned for a long time, so hopefully quick! Anyway please leave me a review on how you felt during this chapter because I'm honestly curious about how I did. These kinds of things are difficult and I want to be sure I got the atmosphere right.

Feel free to follow me on tumblr at tsukithewolf.tumblr.com for updates or just for the shits and giggs!
Thank you!!
You looked around yourself, your heart leaping with terror. There was nothingness surrounding you. If you strained your ears, you couldn’t hear anything but the ringing in your own ears. When you held your hand in front of your face you could see yourself as if you were lit by a light, however there were no other sights to see. You pulled your arms to your chest and dithered.

You were alone.

“Sans?” You called. Your voice sounded pitiful in the void. You began to question if someone who stood nearby you would be able to even hear you. You couldn’t stand the thought of standing in the darkness alone. If you looked at the ground it was as if you weren’t standing on anything. Your mind swirled with vertigo, disorienting you. Had your feet not been on solid ground you would think you were falling endlessly through space. Even now your limbs tingled with anticipation, as if the floor would drop out beneath you. A primal terror filled your heart. You were reminded of when you had fallen into the Underground.

You squeezed your eyes shut and shook your head. That only worsened the dizzy spell. You took a few calming breaths. What had your dad taught you about moments like these? Deep calming breaths. You clung to the memory of Asgore’s voice soothing you after a nightmare. You missed your parents fiercely suddenly.

You opened your eyes, but there wasn’t much difference from when your eyes had actually been shut. Your heart was still racing, but your head was no longer spinning. Should you just continue to stay where you were? Where was Gaster? What had he done with Sans? Why couldn’t you hear either of them?

Had you been left alone completely in this place? Did Gaster release Sans back into the real world? What did Gaster want to show Sans? It was all very ominous. You were worried for your friend.
You didn’t put away your shield just in case Gaster decided to appear again. Would Gaster hurt you while Sans was gone? The possibility was there, but would Sans be able to fend off Gaster before the monster could run? What if Sans killed Gaster without you there? You didn’t want Gaster to die. You wished that you could just talk with him. You wished that he would listen.

Your skin prickled with unease. You didn’t like just standing here. It reminded you of nights from your childhood when you would watch a scary movie and you felt like there was something coming after you. A panicked part of you urged you to start running, but where to? You should try to find Sans.

The world around you ripped open violently with colors and sounds. The sound of your gasp was stolen and muffled under the onslaught of images. The world was rapidly flipping around you, and your arm stung with the ghost of a memory. Static filled your ears. You were reminded of your particularly bad dreams where several timelines collided in your mind at once. You tried to cover your ears to block the noise, hearing the screams of the fallen and the laughter of your friends. You saw strange worlds you didn’t recognize. Was that you as a child? Why were Sans and Papyrus holding guns? Why were you in a crate? You saw horrible monstrosities where your friends appeared to be glitching much like Gaster did. You could hear Chara’s laughter as they ran with Asriel. You could see yourself smiling widely, your eyes dead. Or your neck being severed from a well-placed knife to your throat. You heard Alphys shrieking.

You fell to your knees and scrambled away from Mad Dummy. Freezing water splashed around your feet as you tried to dodge the missiles launched at you. You desperately swung at the dummy, but physical attacks did nothing on it. It laughed and laughed as burns stung your body. Your feet were going numb. Where was Napstablook? They were supposed to save you, weren’t they?

You turned on your heel and rushed back up the stairs, away from the coffins of the previous children who had come here. Some of them had been empty, and from others you could faintly smell rot. Where were the bodies of the missing children? You didn’t want to fight Asgore. You were scared. You wanted to go home. You didn’t want to have to fight him, though. Could you make a run for it? No, you needed a boss monster’s soul. That’s what you were told. You had to fight.

Sans grinned at you from across the table. The music in this restaurant was soft, making the entirety of your adventure seem so far away. You were starving, waiting for your food. You had eaten before, but you were glad to have a real meal again. This music, though calm, felt a bit somber too. Some part of you ached sadly listening to it. It reminded you of red scarfs and dust in the wind. It reminded you of Sans’s cry of horror at the sight of his brother’s dust. You blinked, wondering where that image came from. Sans passed you some water. You picked up the glass and looked at the heart locket in your hand. Examining it brings you to an inscription on the inside. It said: “Best Friends Forever”. You felt something fill within you, a melancholic memory that you couldn’t quite dredge up. You had a feeling about who owned this locket. You put it on.

Your body screamed at you with each movement you made. Only the fact that your Soul was out made the pain bearable. How many times had Flowey —No, Omega Flowey now— killed you? He kept using the powers of the other humans’ Souls. Your HP was low. No matter what you did, he killed you. Even with the help of the other Souls, you still couldn’t beat him. Was this it? Would you die again? Dying hurt so much. Flowey mocked you, calling you pathetic.

“Your worthless friends can’t save you now. Call for help. I dare you.” His smile was disdainful before it transformed into that terrible face. “Cry into the darkness! ‘Mommy! Daddy! Somebody help!’.” He pitched his voice upwards. He sounded like a child. You felt like you knew that voice from somewhere. “See what good it does you!”
You listened to him, desperation fueling you. You called for help.

Silence followed. Your hopes dropped. You remembered the hard bench by the road. You recalled how you had called for help then too.

Flowey smiled cheerfully. “But nobody—”

“Frisk!!”

You jolted at the sound of multiple voices and spun around. The image of Flowey disappeared, leaving you only in darkness again. You recognized the figures coming at you. Countless versions of your friends flashed in front of you. Some of them you didn’t even recognize because of how different they appeared from the friends you were used to. And then your mind settled properly as multiple arms wrapped you in an embrace. All of your friends and family’s voices blended together, confusing your already disoriented mind. They sounded relieved. Hands ruffled your hair and patted your down to check for injuries. You stared unable to believe they were here. You were still wondering where Flowey went. Had he run when your friends came to help you?

“You are safe. Thank you. Thank you!” Toriel breathed, pressing a kiss to your hair. Her hands trembled a bit on your cheeks. You realized you were dangling from Papyrus’s arms, your feet hovering just about the ground. His boney arms dug into your ribs uncomfortably, but the scent of bones and pie and fish in the air relaxed you.

You smiled at the sight of all of them. Undyne’s grin was wide as she ruffled your hair once again. You were certain you were a mess. Papyrus’ voice was overwhelming as he chattered happily. Alphys nervously wrung her hands, but looked unbelievably relieved to see you. Asgore wiped at his eyes again and again, his large paw of a hand touching your arm to reassure himself.

“You came.” You breathed, still unable to believe that someone had come.

“We heard you call us!” Undyne crossed her arms over chest.

“THEIR MAJESTIES WERE ABOUT TO DESTROY THE UNDERGROUND LOOKING FOR YOU!” Papyrus said sounding a little too cheerful about that.

“Oh no, not the entire Underground!” Toriel corrected.

“Yeah, just all of Waterfall!!” Undyne crowed with laughter.

“I will not deny that!” Asgore agreed, chuckling some as well.

“How did you . . . get here?” You asked.

“U-Um, me.” Alphys raised her hand slightly to draw attention to herself. “I saw Sans disappear going after you before the d-door shut . . . a-and I ran to grab others.”

“THEN WE JUST BUSTED DOWN THE DOOR AGAIN LIKE MY BROTHER AND I DID LAST TIME!” Papyrus finished. “IT WAS SIGNIFICANTLY HARDER THIS TIME. THE DOOR WAS THICKER. LIKE, A LOT THICKER.” He paused before he placed you back on your feet. Your legs were unsteady underneath of you. Where were you all right now? Why were they all at the Save screen with you? You almost toppled over, but multiple hands jumped out to keep you upright. You sent your friends a grateful look.

“FRISK, WHERE IS MY BROTHER?” Papyrus asked, glancing around you. Suddenly you remembered. Sans was still missing. You don’t know what had happened to you, but something
about the void had caused you to have your sudden flashbacks again. They had never been that quick or violent. You were lucky Gaster had not attacked you while you were like that. You recalled running. How far into the void were you?

No, you needed to find Sans. You felt the blood drain from your face. “S-Sans.” You realized. You grabbed your mother’s arm imploringly. “Gaster took Sans! I... I don’t know where...”

Undyne cursed, spinning around to look into the darkness. “How are we supposed to find them in here??” She cried.

“I’M CERTAIN HE CAN’T BE TOO FAR!” Papyrus said.

“How are you to know that?” Toriel asked, alarmed. “This could be endless!”

Papyrus shook his head, glancing around. “NO, I KNOW THIS MAGIC. THIS FEELS LIKE STORAGE MAGIC.”


“YOU KNOW! LIKE WHERE ME AND SANS KEEP OUR BONES FOR OUR ATTACKS!” Papyrus put his hand on his hip. “IT’S A PLACE CREATED BY GASTER, AND THEY’RE NEVER TOO BIG! I’M SURE SANS ISN’T FAR!”

“But how the heck are we supposed to find him?” Undyne demanded.

“I can maybe track his phone?” Alphys pulled out her own cell phone and began rapidly pressing buttons on it. You all waited, and within a few moments she gave a delighted sigh. “I have a lock on it! W-We can find him!”

“OKAY! ME AND DR. ALPHYS WILL GO RECOVER MY BROTHER WHILE YOU ALL WAIT HERE!” Papyrus decided.

“What the heck gave you THAT idea?!” Undyne growled.

“She is right, Papyrus. We should all go together.” Toriel agreed.

“We will be safer together.” Asgore said.


You were about to tell him how you didn’t mind at all going to save Sans when Alphys piped up again, “U-um, he’s right. We also don’t want to lose tr-track of where we came in.”

You glanced at your parents and saw reluctant agreement there. Toriel looked in the direction of where you assumed they had come from. Undyne looked like she wanted to protest some more, but Papyrus cut her off. “I’LL PROTECT ALPHYS, UNDYNE! SO YOU PROTECT FRISK LIKE YOU SAID YOU WOULD!” Undyne appeared to be caught a bit wrong-footed by Papyrus’s command before she huffed a laugh.

“Yeah, alright. But nothing better happen to her!! Get back here as soon as you can, GOT IT?!!” She grabbed Papyrus and noogied his skull. Papyrus yelped in pain and scrambled at her to stop.

“PLEASE DON’T NOOGIE THE SKELETON!!”

“You too!” Undyne punched Alphys’s shoulder. The woman winced some and rubbed the spot. “Be
quick!!"

“Y-Yes ma’am!!” Alphys and Papyrus saluted before the two ran off into the darkness. You were rather amazed at how well Alphys kept up with the skeleton. Her training must really be working out. You felt proud for her.

The group of you watched as the two of them disappeared into the darkness. Your hands instinctively clenched at the sight as you resisted the urge to follow after them. Your parents’ presences were enough to keep you where you were. You looked to Undyne and saw the stress on her face. Her jaw was tense and her eyes were steady in their gaze before she met your look. She didn’t bother to hide her frown.

“Maybe we should get this kid out of here?” She suggested.

“I would not want to leave the others here.” Asgore murmured, displeased but wavering in his decision.

“No, I believe Undyne is right. It will be safer.” Toriel ushered you to start moving. Your legs weren’t cooperating too well. Toriel’s eyes flickered worriedly at your stumbling, but you shook your head to reassure her. You weren’t quite recovered yet. You would rather get out of here first.

“I’m more surprised it’s still open.” Undyne muttered seemingly to herself.

**“It Will Not Be For Long.”** Your entire body froze at the hostile voice. Your Soul displayed itself as a battle initiated itself. Almost immediately blue magic wrapped around your Soul. You didn’t even have time to cry out as your body jerked backwards. Neither of your parents reacted fast enough, but Undyne had always had swift reflexes. Her arms wrapped around your waist, her pupils small and sharp with the grimace on her face, but it wasn’t enough to stop you from being thrown. Her feet dug into the ground to stop you, her eyes looking at something behind you when you were suddenly blinded by light and snow. The two of you hit the ground as the magic was released upon you. Undyne jumped to her feet faster, cursing, and summoned a spear to hurl at your enemy. You rolled onto your knees as quickly as your disoriented self could to see Gaster dodge Undyne’s attack.

He was the most solid you had even seen him. He had fully formed legs and all. He was taller than even Papyrus, but not quite as tall as your mother. The look on his face, despite the perma-smile, was dark. With the battle system activated, you could see the bright red glowing from the fragments of his Soul. True terror ripped through you. Where was Sans?

It was your turn. Undyne had forced herself into the battle, but you always could move first. You were scared. You chose not to Fight or Act. You Spared, refusing to fight.

Undyne didn’t waste her turn like you did. “There you are, you bastard!!” She screamed, arm outstretched as glowing circles appeared at Gaster’s feet. It was the only warning he received before the spears erupted from the ground. Gaster seemed uncaring as his soul fragments turned blue and he jumped. You gaped, not understanding how the monster suddenly knew color magic. You had been under the impression that only skeletons knew that type of magic.

Gaster didn’t attack right away like you had been expecting him to. You held your shield at ready, but he dismissed you without a care. The chill of what appeared to be Ebott in winter cut through your wetsuit and your bare skin. You resisted the urge to instinctively huddle in on yourself. Glitches began to peel off of Gaster’s body, floating upwards before disappearing.
It Is Surprising.” The monster said. His voice didn’t hold the least bit of static within it. He sounded much more “real” to you. Was it the effect of this world? His determination? How had you all even gotten here? “How Willing You All Seem To Be To Protect The One Who Has Murdered So Many.”

You flinched, but Undyne just grinned. It was more of a sneer than anything truly happy. Around you both appeared Gaster’s strange symbols. They were aligned in neat rows on both sides of you and Undyne. You were positive now they were words, but you were unable to read them. The letters trembled violently, some of them flashing with bright red determination while the others turned to static briefly before becoming solid again.

“Get ready, punk!” Undyne warned. “I can’t help you unless it’s my turn!” You nodded. Undyne summoned her spear, spinning it around in her hand. It was glowing with the magic placed upon it. You hoped she knew not to let the glitches touch her. You didn’t have time to warn her as the symbols began to tear apart violently, the pieces flinging wildly at you both. You blocked some of them, but the attacks were quick. You had to spin around back and forth to cover all of your sides. Undyne’s spear blocked and slashed at the magical attack. She managed to save you from one of the attacks, but you were caught in the leg by another one.

You gasped at the pain, your heart leaping into your throat as you ducked and rolled in the snow. Blood ran steadily down your leg. The attack hadn’t cut deep, but you weren’t worried about that. You searched desperately for signs of being erased . . . but you didn’t see any. Had that been from the red letters? Were they not dangerous? Either way you could feel an almost poison seep into your limbs, the magic sapping your strength. You recognized this feeling from Sans’s attacks. How much had he learned from Gaster?

“You alright?!” Undyne demanded as you struggled to your feet. You nodded, but the drop in your health was significant. You were panting, each breath feeling tight in your lungs. The poison magic had disappeared, but you knew you couldn’t take more than three hits like that. You didn’t have any healing food.

“Luck Has Always Seemed To Have Been On Your Side, Chara.” Gaster murmured, almost to himself. You could hear rage boiling in the undertones of his voice. You shook your head to clear it. The cold was burning your lungs and your sandals were not protecting you from the snow.

Undyne grabbed a large tree branch on the ground and snapped it in half over her leg just because she could. The scenery had altered slightly now, and you recognized this clearing. The ground was scorched and the trees destroyed. This was where you had first met Syrus and he had shown you his blasters. Had Gaster watched that, or was it a coincidence that you were here? At least it was warmer now.

“Who the heck are you even talking about?” Undyne demanded. “WHAT are you even talking about?!”

Gaster smirked. “Undyne. Has Chara Not Told You? How They Have Murdered You And So Many Others?”

“Clearly I’m not dead!!” Undyne laughed. “Wow!! Alphys said you were probably crazy, but you can’t even tell DEAD from ALIVE!!”

Gaster appeared irked at the mention of being insane. “Proof, Then. You All Need P R Oo F.” The scenery changed again to one you recognized. It made your heart drop seeing yourself standing on the precarious stone ledge. Undyne’s disintegrating form was barely holding itself together as she
trembled. You could barely tear your eyes away from the expressionless façade on your face. Your stomach lurched.

“The hell . . .?” Your Undyne whispered, baffled, while the past Undyne struggled to speak.

“My body . . . it feels like it’s splitting apart. Like any instant . . . I’ll scatter into a million pieces.”

The words echoed over and over in your head. The sorrow in her voice, the dreadful epiphany dawning upon her . . . it made tears come to your eyes. This was torture. Had you anything in your stomach, you were sure you would vomit.

“What is this?!” Undyne demanded. Gaster didn’t respond. You couldn’t look away.

“If you get past me . . . you’ll destroy them all, won’t you?” She was slowly turning to dust before your eyes. “Monsters . . . Humans . . . Everyone . . . Everyone’s hopes. Everyone’s dreams. Vanquished in an instant. But I WON’T let you do that. Right now everyone in the world . . . I can feel their hearts beating as one. And we all have one goal.”

“To defeat YOU.” Undyne breathed in tandem with her other self. You jerked away from her in horror. Her skin was pale, staring at herself. The scene seemed to freeze, caught in the moment. “I know this.” She said slowly. “I’ve seen this before.”

You couldn’t respond. Your mouth was dry with your terror.

Gaster didn’t seem to have that problem. “Indeed. You Have Experienced It Numerous Times. Memories Such As These Are Not Easily Forgotten.”

Your turn was still going. The battle continued. You turned to Gaster and shakily signed at him, unsure if he even could understand you: “Why are you doing this?”

Gaster scoffed as multiple hands appeared around him. They signed rapidly to you, but you couldn’t understand them. You were certain he was saying something to you, but it was gibberish. The symbols popping in and out of existence did nothing to help.

Your turn was over, switching instead to Undyne. The woman didn’t move to attack, appearing lost. You couldn’t bring yourself to call out to her. Undyne’s mouth twitched then before a slow grin broke out onto her face. She turned on Gaster, her sharp teeth reflecting the light of her magic sinisterly. “So you can see a few of my nightmares? HA! NICE TRY!!” She summoned spears, surrounding Gaster in a way that you knew was impossible of escape. “Your cheap tricks don’t fool me!!”

The spears launched at separate timings, like a wave flowing through the circle of them. Gaster made an enraged, desperate noise as the world around you turned black and he disappeared. Undyne cursed loudly as each of her spears slammed into the ground, their target lost. Your Soul was released once again, but you had a feeling Gaster wasn’t gone.

Gaster appeared again suddenly, this time almost right beside you. His entire hand was static, making you cringe as the sound invaded your ears. Your hands instinctively moved to cover your ears, leaving you wide open, you realized too late. You tried to jump away from him, but he was far too close and your Soul was not summoned right now.

Before he could grab you, however, fire ruptured from the ground directly in between you two. It forced Gaster to leap backwards, gravity appearing not to affect his body, as a spear and a trident, followed by their wielders, surged through the fire at him. Undyne and Asgore swung together, their
movements in sync as their long-ranged weapons forced Gaster further away. The monster disappeared a second time, furious static left in his wake. The fire surrounded you briefly as a shield, before it disappeared to expose your mother at your side, fireballs in her readied hands.

“Summon your Soul, my child!” She commanded of you. “Do not allow yourself to be more vulnerable than necessary!” You stared at her for only a moment longer before you nodded. Your friends’ colors faded, allowing yourself again to only see the bright red of your Soul. This time you were in control of it. It was a familiar feeling to you now.

“You Are All In My W A Y!”

You only had a moment to see the blue magic wrap around the souls of your friends. “No!” Your cry slipped from your mouth as Undyne was flung backwards, but your parents held their ground. Their souls, though blue, were wrapped in a layer of green magic. It didn’t allow for them to move from their spots. You gaped, shocked. Only when Gaster’s blue magic was released did the green magic fade too. Asgore noticed your shock and gave a quick smile.

“Who do you think taught Undyne the green magic?” He answered your unasked question.

“Show yourself, coward!” Toriel commanded. A wall of symbols wrapped around you all, pushing Undyne back even farther from your group. She couldn’t get past the fence. However your parents stuck close to you, not allowing Gaster to split you up.

The monster himself appeared again. His body was no longer holding itself together as well anymore. His face was partially melting, like an ice cream cone on a hot day. His legs were turning to goop as he walked. His coat was no longer defined. Each step he took left a gash of static that hissed like a swarm of wasps before it faded. He stalked closer to you all, but he did not attack.

He was exhausted, you realized. He couldn’t maintain this form for long. Even filled with determination, you knew what it felt like to be disheartened. Determination was useful in small bursts that kept you going, but Gaster was a monster who wasn’t used to determination. He wouldn’t be able to hold out forever.

“You Have F Or Got Ten Me So You Do Not Know About My Research.”

“Stay away from the human.” Asgore responded instead, his voice booming with authority. The world around you rapidly altered. Your parents only looked temporarily thrown off, but they did not remove their eyes from Gaster’s form. You recognized this laboratory.


“Chara?” Toriel asked, startled.

“Yes. The Child.”

Toriel understood then, and her anger returned to her. “This is NOT Chara!” She cried and swiped her arm. A wave of fire rushed at Gaster. The monster dodged, but he couldn’t quite avoid the sudden swipe of Asgore’s trident. The large weapon was wrapped in light blue magic, his eyes flashing with magic of the same color. Gaster froze, allowing the weapon to pass through him without damage, before he moved away.

“Stop!” You called even as fire continued to fly around you. Gaster had not initiated a true battle,
and so none of you needed to take turns. He had yet to actually attack the old king and queen. You weren’t sure he had the energy quite left over for it. “Stop fighting!”

“Frisk,” Asgore joined you by your side as your mother pushed Gaster further back, “this is for the best.” Seeing them both like this made you understand just how powerful your parents truly were. Everywhere Gaster turned he was trapped by one or the other’s magic. Though out of practice they were truly the strongest monsters in the world, you thought.

“No.” You shook your head and called out to Gaster, “Stop fighting! Please!”

Gaster dissolved, avoiding another attack as the fire hissed. You could smell that the fire had burnt something. He wasn’t completely unharmed, although you didn’t see him actually get hit. His form seemed smaller as it reshaped itself, more gelatinous than whole. It was the first time you were seeing him terrified. He was outmatched, and he knew it.

“Can we not . . . find another way?” You asked.

“I Am Not Doing This For The Sake Of Cruelty. I Am Doing This For The Good Of All Monsters.”

The world faded and appeared again in darkness, but you all were not alone this time. You saw yourself once again, and the form of Asriel in front of your other self. You could hear the intake of your father’s breath and the sound of Asriel’s name catching in your mother’s throat. The figures from the past could not seem to see you all.

“Frisk . . .” Asriel said softly, his smile sad. “I have to go now. Without the power of everyone’s souls . . . I can’t keep maintaining this form.”

You knew this speech by heart. You had seen it countless times in your dreams, in your memories. You could quote Asriel’s last words forwards and backwards. You weren’t sure if you could bear to see it again.


“Enough! Do not show us this!” Asgore yelled, his voice breaking somewhere along the way.


Hearing those words made your heart freeze at the possibility. Could Gaster really do what you had not? If he has your soul, could he go back further than you could? Could he somehow save Asriel? Could he stop the deaths of all of the other children? Would it be worth it?

At the cost of your life, were you willing to spare your parents such tragedy?

“Asriel . . .” Toriel whispered before her voice caught. She swallowed and straightened, fighting her grief as something painful but sturdy settled on her face. “Asriel is gone. And you will not be able to save him.”

“I Am More Likely To Save Him. Would You Leave Your Son To Suffer As He Does?”

“Do not give us false hope! Not now, not ever!”

“It Is Very Plausible—”
“Be quiet!!” Asgore bellowed. The figure of yourself and Asriel disappeared, and the four of you were back in the void. “Why should we trust you? You, who has tried to destroy our child? Who has sought to harm our child at every turn? Who are you to try to have us believe your lies? That you would want for anything but your own selfish gain?”

Gaster glared, his body flickering.

“We would rather trust Frisk over a creature such as you any day!” Toriel agreed, her head held high. Together your parents stood, a barrier between you and the one who sought to kill you. Every part of them radiated the majestic power of a Boss Monster. You were in awe.

“After All That I Have Done For My Kind?” Gaster demanded, fury filling his features. His body once again began to solidify. His determination was strengthening. “After I Have Given My All For You? My King? My Kingdom? My Research? No. I Will Not Allow You To Stop ME!!”

The ground around Toriel and Asgore split open, creating a gorge filled with static between you and them. The void was cracking violently. You could see timelines and scenes through some of the gaps, but others were only static. You jumped back to avoid them as your parents cried out to you. You could hear Undyne’s yell of fury as she too tried to get to your side but was held back. You were practically on an island, a moat of static separating you from them. It was too far to jump for any of you. You were alone with Gaster.

Gaster’s body widened and extended upwards, an unavoidable wall of destruction. He was going to absorb you, you realized with horror. You stumbled backwards, but you could not move past the moat. Sweat coated your body as white noise filled your ears.

“N O M O R E I N T E R F E R E N C E!” Gaster hissed. You could barely hear your friends over the incoming sound of your death.

“WHOA!” There was a thump and a scream as a form landed in front of you, causing the island you were on to shudder some. You could only stare as the figure released his load, placing an unsettled Alphys on her feet as she gaped in horror at Gaster. The figure stood up then, tall and broad. His clothing was different this time, a loose tank top over a tee shirt and shorts. What looked to be Sans’s jacket was being worn almost like a cape, giving the appearance of your hero a truly heroic look.

“Sorry to drop in like that!” Syrus said with a bright grin on his face. “I know you’re ecstatic to see me!”

Chapter End Notes

Why is Syrus there? What will happen with Gaster? How many times will Frisk refuse to Fight? Find out in the next episode of Dragonball Z! Through Hollow Eyes! :D

(Any mistakes are mine. I'm exhausted and my reading of the chapter may have and probably has missed some things. I'll look again in the morning)
It was a surreal feeling when all of you finally exited the Underground again. It reminded you of the hundreds of thousands of times you had escaped before in the sense that you had changed once again. All of you had gone down today under different expectations, but you all exited altered by your experiences in the void. Exhaustion coated the air around you and your friends like a mist. Your ears were still ringing with the static and the whispers of other timelines. Even now, sometimes your vision would go sideways, as if the void was still there to disconnect bits and pieces of your body only to reattach them. You held onto your mom and dad’s hands as you trudged along.

There wasn’t much to be said about the next hour. When Ebott came into view the first destination you all went to was Toriel’s house. Outside of the door all of you loitered for a few moments, uncertain about splitting up. You looked at your friends to see a darkness in their eyes. Guilt tried weakly to claw at your conscience, but you were far too tired to feel anything. The entire experience had left you numb. You glanced at Sans, but he kept his neutral smile on his face. He wasn’t looking at anyone, though, as he idly watched people pass by. Papyrus’s hands kept straying to his brother to touch him, but never lingered. You wondered if that was more to comfort himself or Sans. You suspected Sans.

Alphys gave a small hiccup, calling attention to herself. She was fighting against her tears, pulling her glasses off to rub at her eyes. You felt your throat close with sympathy, your eyes also beginning to burn a little. Undyne grabbed Alphys’s hand then and the two women looked at each other. You couldn’t read the emotion on Undyne’s face. You fully expected her to smile to reassure Alphys, but the woman did not do that. Instead she gave a solemn nod to you all before turning to walk away with her girlfriend.

“we’d better get goin’ too.” Sans said, the first words any of you had spoken in a little over an hour. He winked at you. “got dinner to make, right bro?”
“RIGHT!” Papyrus agreed. You could still see the worry in Papyrus’s face as he glanced at his brother, but you could also tell the taller skeleton was quickly regaining his momentum. “WE’RE GOING TO HAVE HOT DOGS AND SPAGHETTI! AND GARLIC BREAD! HOMEMADE! THIS TIME I WON’T ADD PEPPER. AS MUCH.”

“none at all.” Sans countered.

“RIGHT! NONE AT ALL!”

Toriel cleared her throat. “Rest up.” She said. You reached for Sans’s hand, but then aborted the movement when his hand twitched away from you in response. You pulled back and closer to your parents. Sans’s smile was still unreadable as he gave a short nod as well and started walking back with Papyrus. You watched them until you felt a large paw on your shoulder gently urge you to the door. You looked up at your parents, who were watching you instead. You could see the questions in their eyes, so you wondered if they could see the questions running through your own mind. You looked down and followed after them into the house.

It felt like you were in a dream to be back home finally. A part of you continued to question if any of this was truly real. At any moment you were sure you would be back in the void. You wondered what would happen when you closed your eyes. Would you fall asleep and dream? Or would you be with Gaster again? You shivered recalling just how close you had come to your permanent death again today. You clutched your arm, the static sounding louder and your scar tingling unpleasantly. You drifted about in a haze unsure of if your parents even talked. You took a long bath, soaking in the too-hot water and reacquainting yourself with each part of your body. The image of pieces of you severing from your body still haunted you. Even checking multiple times that all of you was still there, you still weren’t completely satisfied. You were sure that it would be a good time to cry, but you couldn’t work up the emotion to do so. Crying wasn’t something that was too natural for you anyway, but you worried that maybe you were repressing it. Trauma to your mind was a very real thing.

Instead of thinking about it, you held your nose and ducked backwards into the water. You opened your eyes and ignored the sting to allow yourself to be swept away in the sound of the water sloshing against the edges. You slowly moved your arms and legs and wiggled your toes. The white noise of the water helped to block out anything else. You wished you could stay there for a while, but you couldn’t breathe underwater. You gave a tiny gasp as you breached the surface. The static returned. Your eyes watered some. Would you always hear the static? You took a deep breath and ducked back under the water.

Your dad didn’t seem to ask permission to stay over at your house. It seemed to be a silent agreement that nobody particularly wanted to be away from each other. It seemed your parents had a truce, at least for the night. You ate a quick but hearty dinner before you all retreated to the living room. The fire from the fireplace was warm to fend off the slight chill of the summer evening in the air. The lights were kept on as your mother began to knit and your father found a book to read. You watched the flames idly for a few minutes just sitting on the couch.

Eventually you climbed off of the couch. Your parents looked up to watch you as you turned on every light along the way to your bedroom. Once there you grabbed your computer and speakers before hurrying back to the living room. You tried to ignore the feeling of something lurking right behind you. You knew there was nothing there anymore.

You placed your computer on the coffee table and opened up an application. You plugged in your speakers before pressing play and climbing up onto the couch with your mother. You laid with your head on her thigh and stared once again into the fire as music began to play. It was a little loud, but it
drowned out the static. You focused on the words and how the music flowed. You tried to pinpoint each instrument and imagined your heart matched the beat of the drums. You pictured yourself back at Mettaton’s concert as he sang and danced with Napstablook and Shyren. At some point, you fell asleep.

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It took a couple of days for you to recover. You weren’t even sure what you had done during those days. You recalled eventually your father going back to his own house after one phone call or another called him away. You had drifted back and forth wanting to follow him and wanting to stick close to Toriel. In the end you stayed with your mother after your father had given you a reassuring pat on the head. The image of his fierce face as he charged at Gaster still tended to overwhelm you. You weren’t sure you could compare the kindly hunched figure in front of you with that fierce warrior. He hadn’t even been that serious when he had fought you. You doubted you would’ve ever won against him if Asgore had truly wished to finish you off right away.

You went to school no matter what. You couldn’t stand the thought of staying home and your mother agreed that reestablishing a steady schedule again would be best for all of you. You found it easier than you expected to fall back into the familiar groove of your friendship with your classmates. You were sure they noticed something was a little off about you, but you had always been a little off. It was nice to be around people who didn’t know what you had gone through. It was better like this. School and homework were a relief. It took the pressure of having to think about all you had gone through from your mind.

You spent your days at school and your nights with your mom. Sometimes you slept in her bed, but eventually you returned to your own bed. It was embarrassing to realize it, but you needed a night light to sleep. The darkness felt like it would consume you. You couldn’t bring yourself to ask Toriel and worry her more, so you began to practice your magic every night. You grew better at summoning small harmless fires. They weren’t big or bright, but it was enough so you could place it next to you. Soon enough you were able to keep it lit almost subconsciously, but it was always gone by the time you woke up.

You didn’t see Sans or Alphys or Undyne. You wanted to visit, but you were unsure of if you would be welcome. You would dither near the skeletons’ house before you would give up and decide to go home. You did see Papyrus at school where he was his usual cheerful self, though. You wanted to ask him about Sans, but never could find the words. Luckily Papyrus was never one to hold back his words.

“HUMAN! I HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR YOU!” He declared as he charged out onto the playground after lunch for your recess. He waved off a few of the other younger students who clearly wanted to play until the two of you were alone. “HAVE YOU BEEN . . . ALRIGHT? MENTALLY I MEAN.”

You tilted your head a bit, unsure of what he meant.

“WHEN WE WERE SYRUS, I COULD TELL SANS WAS HAVING TROUBLE. IT SOUNDED LIKE . . . STATIC?” Papyrus rubbed his jaw. “I DON’T THINK SANS HAS FULLY RECOVERED FROM IT. I STILL SEE HIM HOLDING HIS HEAD SOMETIMES. UNDYNE AND ALPHYS HAVE COMPLAINED SIMILARLY.” He gave you a worried smile. “IS IT THE SAME FOR YOU?”

You nodded, frowning lightly. Now that you thought about it, you could recall that your parents were being a little strange too. There were times where you could see Toriel startle at the reflection of herself in the kitchen window, almost as if she didn’t recognize the person there. Your father had
sometimes done a double-take as well when he looked at either you or Toriel. Maybe they had seen the void as well. With all of the cracks that had broken open towards the end, you wouldn’t be surprised. The static in your own head was fading each day, but sometimes you still didn’t see your friends as you knew they should look. You wondered if it had anything to do with the “forces” Gaster had talked about.

“I SEE. IS IT GOING AWAY FOR YOU?” He asked.

You nodded and signed to him, “Music help me.”

“MUSIC! GOOD IDEA!! I HAVE SOME GOOD METTATON SONGS SANS WILL SURELY LOVE!” Papyrus nodded, enthusiastic. He turned to run off, clearly done with the conversation, but you caught his arm. He paused for you.

“How is . . .?” You asked.

Papyrus rubbed your hair, grinning. Why did people always rub your head? “DO NOT WORRY, FRISK! I AM TAKING EXCELLENT CARE OF HIM, AND SANS SHALL BE BACK TO BREAKING THE LAW BEFORE WE KNOW IT!” You weren’t satisfied with that answer, but Papyrus didn’t tell you anymore. You were left to wonder about your friends.

You found that you didn’t have too much time to worry about it, though. The same day your father had come back over to your mother’s house to talk to you both rather seriously. He gave a smile and placed down some freshly cut flowers in a vase onto the kitchen table before motioning for you two to join him. He had that mature air about him that you had come to recognize, though you had not seen it in a little while.

“Frisk, this may be slightly sudden but do you know what is coming up soon?” He asked you. You thought back for a bit to what your school friends and what the community had been chatting about recently. Was there a holiday coming up soon? You could kind of recall one, you thought.

“Adult Day?” You asked.

Asgore chuckled. “Well, yes. But there is a new holiday. We had just sent out the flyers today.”

“Oh, that is right!” Toriel understood, smiling a little as well. “With . . . everything . . . I had forgotten all of our planning.”

You looked between your parents curiously.

“Soon it will be the anniversary of our freedom.” Asgore informed you. Your mouth popped open in surprise. Had it really almost been a year since your trek through the Underground? It hardly seemed possible. The monsters had been free for so long! You felt proud of yourself and all of the things your friends and family had accomplished then.

“On that day we will be hosting a celebration.” Toriel said. “Every monster will celebrate no matter where they are, remembering the day we not only escaped but were saved by you, Frisk.”

_The Savior_, Gaster had said. You were uncomfortable.

“Oh.” You murmured.

“The only difficulty is, well,” Asgore gave you a rueful smile, “unfortunately due to our positions we cannot just celebrate it like it is a normal day. We will all have to work.”
You asked him what he meant.

“We will use this celebration as a way to create better relations with the humans. Already the town is preparing for quite the influx of visitors. The Underground shall also be open up until Hotland. Or, rather, the hotel will be. Hotland itself is not safe for any types of visitors, but New Home will be accessible.” Asgore’s face darkened somewhat with thought. “There are still a number of things we need to settle before humans can start entering the Underground, though. I will be handling those myself.”

“Which means we will be entertaining many important figures, Frisk.” Toriel covered your hand with hers. “Will you be prepared for that?”

Your knee-jerk reaction was to say no. How was it that you, a thirteen year old child, could ever be prepared to move among adults and expect it to go well? The only reason up until now you hadn’t needed to worry about it too much was because schooling was certainly more important. That, and Asgore and Toriel had become known well enough that most people expected them not to be cruel and trusted them.

There was also the trouble that you had faced recently. Somehow you were recovering quickly, but would you be able to handle a crowd? You already didn’t like the idea. But you needed to be there. Not only because it was your job, but because everyone expected you to be there. You didn’t know what all you would have to do. It was scary.

But . . . you nodded to your mother. You were sure you could handle it even if you weren’t happy to do so. You would try your best. You weren’t alone in this. You weren’t being sent into battle alone. Your family would be there to help you. Your friends would never be too far away. You had an entire community that would be willing to help you if you only asked for it. And that was enough to reassure you for now.

Both of your parents gave you proud smiles, and your back straightened in response to their pride. You could do this. In fact, you were kind of looking forward to it! You couldn’t wait to talk about it with your friends. Was there anything you could help with in the meantime? Your days would be busy very soon.

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You carried your computer in your backpack along with your homework as you travelled to Asgore’s house. Today you would need to finish your homework, and then you would be working in the community gardens with him. You could already smell the fresh scent from his house as the smell of blooming flowers reached your nose. You breathed in, and then opened the door to his house.

Voices, which had been speaking, quieted suddenly at your entrance. You placed your bag on the chair in the dining room before you sought out your father cautiously. You had recognized those voices. You found them on the veranda with iced tea and some sweets. Undyne’s eyes met yours as she munched angrily on one of the cookies. Alphys smiled nervously at you and gave a little wave. You waved back and looked to your father. He had a sympathetic look on him. You wondered what Undyne was upset about.

You didn’t have to wonder about it long. Undyne stood up quickly then, her chair flying to ground behind her as she pointed at you. “Just the kid I was talking about!! Get over here, punk!!” You hoped you hadn’t done anything bad. This was the first time you were seeing either Alphys or Undyne since that day. You approached only somewhat hesitantly. Undyne grabbed you by the front of your shirt and hoisted you up, sending Asgore and Alphys to their feet. Undyne scowled at you.
“We’re gonna have a little TALK, you and me!”

You swallowed, wide-eyed. She threw you into the chair beside her and began to pace. Asgore and Alphys slowly returned to their own seats. You looked between them, but neither of them seemed too worried. Rather there was an anxiousness about them. Alphys’s eyes kept darting between you and Undyne.

Undyne finally pulled herself to a stop and put her hands on her hips, expanding her shoulders and chest so she appeared even more intimidating than usual. You remembered the fierceness with which Undyne had fought Gaster for you. “Look, I’m gonna jump straight to the point. You remembered what happened with Gaster? That stuff he showed us? How much of it was real, huh?”

You didn’t respond. You didn’t want to.

“ANSWER ME!” She shouted, agitated. You flinched. Guilt flashed across her face briefly before it was washed away by her anger again.

“All of it.” You finally told her, your voice meager compared to hers.

She crossed her arms over her chest and looked at Alphys. “At least you’re not gonna freaking lie to my face.” Somehow you believed you had won some points with her because of that. She turned back to you. “So. You killed me.” You nodded. “When?”

You knew that Undyne preferred people who were upfront and direct with her, so you began to explain to her about your power and what you could do. However she cut you off with a swipe of her hand.

“I already know all of that crap!! Everyone’s already explained it to me considering EVERYONE BUT ME KNEW ABOUT IT!!” You winced again. “But that’s not the point. Actually no, that IS a point! What the hell?! Why didn’t you freaking tell me about any of this?! We’re BEST FRIENDS!! HUH? Tell me!!”

It wasn’t like you were hiding it from Undyne. You hadn’t even known that Alphys was aware of your powers. You didn’t have any idea how she had found out, either. It was something you needed to ask her about. You didn’t want to really tell anybody about your powers, but now your secrets had finally caught up to you.

“. . . I’m sorry.” You said shamefacedly. “I didn’t . . . I was scared.”

“Scared?” Undyne demanded.

“I did . . . a lot of bad things. And I . . . made you hate me in most of the . . . timelines. I.” You swallowed. “I don’t want to make you . . . hate me again.” You ducked your head. “A-And I didn’t . . . want to die again.”

That seemed to throw everyone in the room. “Why would you die?” Undyne asked, baffled.

You didn’t want to answer. You did anyway in a quiet voice. “You killed me. A lot.” You could still recall what it felt like to be skewered by her spears. You shivered delicately.

The silence was tense after that.

Undyne took a breath and shook her head. You could see the impact of your words on her face even as she said, “I’m really freaking pissed off about all of this! BUT!” She paused for just a moment, visibly reeling herself in somewhat. “I don’t hate you, punk.” She kicked your chair some, making
your arms pinwheel before you caught the table. A grin broke out on her face. “You made me like you too much to hate you! Besides,” she scratched at the side of her head. The hair there was getting long again. She would probably buzz it soon, “most of that . . . stuff feels like a dream anyway. Most of it I DID dream.”

You were surprised you were getting off so easily. You didn’t like it. Undyne must have noticed because she pointed at you again, “Don’t get me wrong! I GET what happened, but don’t think I’ve fully forgiven you! But I’m not about to take it out on you.” She laughed a bit. “Papyrus and me sparred a lot these past few days. Took most of my anger out on him. But it’s gonna come out once in a while.” Her eyes darkened some. It was a familiar hatred you knew from Sans. “Especially some of the things I’ve heard from Alph.”

You looked at the woman. Alphys seemed a little reluctant to meet your gaze, but she held her head high. Alphys clearly knew much more than you had expected. Had Sans told her? You couldn’t imagine Sans telling Alphys anything like that. Sans didn’t even want himself to know, let alone share the burden of knowledge with the others. How had she found out?

“Hey wait! You didn’t answer my question!” Undyne added. “When did you kill me?”

You were confused, unsure of how to answer that.

“Undyne, perhaps you should rephrase the question?” Asgore suggested carefully, speaking up for the first time since you got there.

“Frisk has killed many of us multiple times.” Alphys added. You looked at the sweets guiltily.

“When was the LAST time you killed us?” Undyne rephrased, crossing her arms over her chest.

You tried to remember, but your memories were a blur. You had so many memories of different timelines that you couldn’t possibly remember the order of them. You shook your head.

“How do you not know?” Alphys asked a little frantically. “Y-You do all of that and don’t . . .?”

“I.” You wrung your hands some. “I don’t usually . . . remember past timelines . . . after I RESET. I’ve never, um, never gone this long before without a RESET. I’ve remembered too many timelines.” You shrugged helplessly.

Alphys chewed her lip. “You don’t remember anything when you RESET either . . . do you?” She asked quietly. You shook your head and held up your thumb and forefinger close together to show you remembered very little. Especially if it was a True Reset.


You shook your head. So she had read Sans’s notes to find out. Of course she would actually be able to. Her acting strangely around you made sense now. You were sad that you hadn’t been able to talk with her about it before and that Gaster had been the one to drag it out from the closet.

“So now we all know.” Asgore spoke up then. “A heavy burden for all of us.”

“At least your nightmares make more sense.” Undyne admitted. “But you’re not alone in that sense.”

“Frisk. Can I . . . ask you more? About your powers. And.” Alphys asked hesitantly.
“Yeah! I want to know about this too!” Her girlfriend agreed. You looked to your dad.

“Do not tell your mother how late you will be doing your homework.” He joked. You smiled a little. You thought this talk with Alphys was long overdue. She deserved to know more, just like Sans. You reached for the tea and nodded to them.
Liberation

Chapter Summary

It's the one year anniversary of the day the monsters were freed from the Underground.

Chapter Notes

Wow, this has been quite a trip huh? This is technically the last chapter of this story (and, coincidentally, the series), but that doesn't mean this is the END! I have one more chapter which will be an epilogue. And coming soon after that will be an Alternate Ending (which will be a separate story and not part of either TMFF or THE).

Anyway, this chapter is chock-full of the fluff you guys have been desperately craving after all of that intense fighting. So prepare for fun and games! This chapter is a fucking monster too, so I hope you appreciate it. It's the longest chapter yet. Jfc. It's a grand total of 8621 words.

Here's the reference for Frisk’s first outfit It was done by the lovely friskyhoot!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You were up early for a child about to celebrate a holiday. You had to be sure to dress leisurely, but still maintain a fairly mature look considering you were representing both monsters and humans simultaneously. You had already been preparing for the last couple of weeks going over what needed to be done and how you were supposed to act among all of the adults. You felt that as an ambassador you were going to do well. As a kid, though, you were very much nervous.

“No need to worry, Frisk.” Your mother assured you as she tucked down your collar. You adjusted the straps of your overalls before you began to fiddle with the cloth strawberry on the front pocket. You wished that you had Sans’s jacket for comfort, but you would get heat stroke if you wore it. It was very much a sunny day without a hint of clouds in the sky. Already you had put on sunscreen on your arms, face, and legs. You started to wonder if maybe the overalls made you look too much like a kid. Admittedly maybe it was too much to wear these overalls with this strawberry cap, but it had been too cute to resist in the store. Now though . . . the very thought of getting up in front of all of those judgmental people (not to mention the paparazzi!!) was starting to make you panic. You grabbed your mother’s hand, tugging at your overalls pointedly.

“You look fine.” She promised, and knelt into a crouch in front of you. She groaned a bit as her joints popped. The sound made you giggle helplessly. Toriel smiled. “If you want, you can come back home and change before the picnic. How about that?”

That calmed you down some. You weren’t sure if you would have time to run home, but you definitely felt better knowing the option was there. You nodded in agreement.

“Excellent!” Toriel stood again and motioned you to the door. Already you could hear the strains of music begin to filter through the air. You opened the door and looked out to see the townsfolk
hurrying to finish the last-minute touches to their various stands. There were balloons tied to trees and monsters flying through the air. Children, released from the grips of their houses, were rushing headlong along the main street of Ebott: the one you lived on.

Outside of your door were small stacks of presents. You stared at them, surprised. You had already received a number of gifts on Children’s Day (although you had tried to explain that most humans didn’t celebrate their birthdays on Children’s Day), so you hadn’t expected to receive even more presents only a few days later! You pointed them out to your mom. She shook her head and began to gather them up. You helped her. When the presents (which you were curious to open) were placed inside, you both exited together. You considered telling Toriel that maybe it would be better to lock the door considering all of the people, but decided against it.

People greeted you from all around. Monsters flitted close and away from you as if your very presence invigorated them. You grinned at the sight of familiar townspeople singing tunes you only vaguely recognized from music class. You looked up at Toriel as the excitement of the day seeped into you. You could feel your anxiety about what would come later fading away. You wanted to run ahead like all of the other children were doing, but you weren’t quite ready to leave Toriel’s side. You would contain your enthusiasm for later. It would be a long day, you knew. You hadn’t even had time to eat breakfast!

Actually, that was a good idea. You could smell all kinds of cooked foods on the breeze. Your stomach—which had previously been rebelling at the very thought of food—now decided it would voice its opinion on its lack of sustenance. You looked around for a good place to snack when your eyes fell onto the bakery. A Spider Donut actually sounded pretty good right now! You grabbed Toriel’s hand and steered her into the shop. Toriel ducked through the entrance and glanced around before she spotted the spiders hanging from the ceiling.

“Oh!” She understood. “The spider bake sale. Hello.” She greeted the spider sitting near the cash register. The spider didn’t respond, but a couple of its companions skittered around nearby. They seemed anxious. Some of them went into the back room. There were a couple of humans and monsters in the corner having breakfast together. You didn’t often see humans come in here.

You pointed out one of the Spider Donuts. It was unfrosted, but you had learned the hard way that the unfrosted ones were certainly the better ones. You shuddered remembering how the frosting had had legs in it. You had grown used to a lot of interesting cuisine after you had come to live with the monsters, but you had to draw the line somewhere. At least there wasn’t really a crunch in the donut. If you didn’t think about what you were eating, you found that you enjoyed the treat quite a bit!

The spiders pulled out the donut and deposited it on the counter. You reached for your money, but the spider said, “No, don’t.”

You frowned in confusion and attempted to give them money again.

“No.” The spider said again. You looked to your mom.

“Is something the matter?” Toriel asked, concerned.

“Nothing’s the matter.” The spiders chittered together from around the room. You couldn’t help the shiver that ran up your back. Sometimes you wondered why you weren’t more scared of spiders considering all of the times you had to fight Muffet and her “pet”. You could still feel the webs wrapped around you. The scent of freshly baked spiderwebs could barely be noticed over the scent of other baked goods and tea.

The door to the back room opened then and Muffet emerged. She was dressed similarly to how she
had dressed a year ago when you had met her, only now she had a little spider web shaw. You perked up happily when you noticed that she was wearing the bow you had stitched together out of the leftover spiderweb-printed fabric you had used for Mr. Harrington. You waved cheerfully at her.

“There you are, dearie! The spiders told me you were here! We had been hoping you would visit!” Muffet flourished a pair of her hands as she placed down the tray of hot cookies onto the counter with another pair of hands. She dusted her hands off then and approached you. “Don’t bother to pay. We’re giving you a free one just for today.”

Your mouth popped open in understanding and you smiled at her.

“You can pay again starting tomorrow, ahuhuhu!” She giggled. “It’s thanks for all of the help you’ve been. Thanks to you, we spiders have made so much money! And the spider clans have reunited!” You took the compliments with grace, although you still felt kind of strange knowing you helped so many spiders. “Also,” Muffet passed you the donut you paid for, “we made you something for the lovely bow you made me! But that person took it before we could give it to you.”

“Person?” Toriel asked.

Muffet waved her hand. “That guy. I cannot seem to remember his name.” She shrugged two pairs of shoulders. “No matter. If we see him again, we’ll just feed him to my pet! And then we’ll give you the dress! It’s not easy making a spider silk dress. Very time-consuming!”

“Waste of money! We worked so hard!” The spiders all chorused, annoyed.

Oh, so it was a dress. You felt bad for the guy who had stolen your dress. You wonder who it was, though. Maybe you would be able to find him before Muffet decided to capture him.

“Do you have a description? Should we call the police?” Toriel asked.

Muffet only sighed, dismissing the motion. “No. I am certain we’ll see him again.” She smiled then, her fangs gleaming in the sunlight as another customer came in. “Would you stay for a cup of tea? I have just the spiders!”

You were alarmed. You certainly didn’t want any spiders. You swallowed the last of your donut with a dry mouth. You shook your head as politely as you could. “We need to go.” You told her apologetically. “Busy.”

“Yes, there is much that still needs to be done,” Toriel agreed. “But thank you.”

“Well then, be sure to stop by again very soon.” Muffet tapped your nose playfully. “My pet misses playing with you, Frisk.” She teased. You swallowed and gave a smile, but decided a hasty retreat would be best. You and Toriel left the shop together and got about a block away before Toriel spoke again.

“Miss Muffet is as quirky as ever, it seems.”

You made a face but didn’t say anything in response. You liked Muffet, but honestly you preferred her in small doses. You didn’t want her to catch wind that you didn’t hold a particularly love of spiders themselves (although you didn’t really mind hers).

The streets were becoming more and more crowded as the people really began to flood in. There were colorful stalls set up everywhere that extended towards and along the main square. You knew that the park would also be busy because of all of the events there. The picnic as well as the puzzles were going to be there. The monsters, in very much typical monster fashion, had designed many
types of puzzles for people and monsters of all ages to try out. Papyrus would no doubt be down there.

It seemed that everyone was in good humor. Children darted in and out of the crowd without a care. The monsters and humans appeared to be conversing effortlessly. You did manage to spy a couple of humans who seemed rather wary of some of the monsters. You could understand considering monsters came in all shapes and sizes. You had become so used to all of their strange forms that you couldn’t find any type of fear in you. You were sure people would get used to them. There were also camera people and what appeared to be all sorts of newscasters scattered around as well. You grabbed your hat and pulled it down a little further over your face. You didn’t want to be spotted yet.

“There he is.” Toriel caught your attention and pointed above the crowd. Your father towered over almost everyone. People gaped at him as they passed by him, clearly not having expected the monster to be so huge. It was one thing to see your dad on TV and another to see him in person. Your mother easily cleared a route for the both of you to Asgore, who beamed to see you both.

“Good morning.” He said, giving a slightly shy glance to Toriel before ducking down to give you a big furry kiss to your forehead. You smiled at him as well. “It appears Liberation Day is already starting off well.”

“Yes, and already reporters have arrived.” Toriel agreed, eyeing the reporters you had spotted earlier. Asgore adjusted your hat so it sat a little better on your head.

“It will be a matter of time before they will come to harass us.” Your dad added ruefully. “Frisk,” he turned to you, “would you like to go off alone and explore? You can meet up with us later.”

You opened your mouth, surprised. You had wanted to spend time with your parents, though. All three of you had actually been planning to walk around together. It felt very much like you were a whole family that way (not that you would ever tell that to Asgore or Toriel. You were perfectly happy even if you didn’t all live in the same house together). But you also knew that it would be much slower going with your parents, not to mention more difficult. You and your parents were bound to be accosted by numerous people and monsters along the way. They may not be king and queen anymore in title, but they were still very much the leaders of the monsters. And you were their child, which made you practically royalty.

You signed to them, “Meet later? Where?”

“How about we all meet at the picnic? It is at noon, if you recall.” Toriel suggested. You nodded. You had remembered the time.

You signed, “Change clothes.”

“Be sure to stop by either your father’s house or mine.” Your mom agreed. You nodded again.

“Be safe and have fun.” Asgore told you before he reached into his pocket. “Have you any need of gold or money?” You shook your head. You’ve never been one to frivolously spend your money, so you actually had quite a bit saved up. Plus you had been given a lot of money for Children’s Day. “Oh, I forgot to tell you! You have gifts awaiting you at my house.” He chuckled. “You are quite popular, young one.”

You only gave a helpless shrug. Toriel nudged you forward and nodded towards the crowd. “Go, my child. I do believe I see your friends!”

You couldn’t see any of your friends, but you were quite short in comparison to your parents. You
waved goodbye to the two of them before you rushed off into the crowd in search of children your age. It wasn’t difficult to find them. As you approached them, you heard Lansot shouting their glee. You broke through the crowd and lifted the brim of your hat so you could better see. Your friends let out a joyful cry.

“We thought we wouldn’t find you!” Eddie said, blinking his large eye in excitement. “There are so many humans here that look like you!”

“Oh please!” Tamara huffed. “Frisk stands out like a sore thumb in that get up!” That gave you pause as you looked down at yourself.

“That’s because they’re trying to look all grown up because they’re an ambassador.” Chass groaned. The Ice Cap looked unhappy to be out in the sun, giving people glares if they so much as looked twice at his amazing hat.

“What does that even mean?” Tamara complained. “They look like a little kid! As always!”

“I think Frisk looks nice and mature!” Lansot disagreed. They nudged your shoulder, clearly noticing how self-conscious you were getting.

“They didn’t even wear stripes!” Lansot’s sister, Sandra, added. She danced around you two in her excitement. You were surprised that Lansot was putting up with having to take care of their little sister.

You tugged some of your shirt to show that you were, indeed, wearing stripes. It was just two thin stripes though. The monsters relaxed a bit at the sight of that. You didn’t really understand the cultural custom of wearing stripes to show you’re a child, but it always made all of the kids uncomfortable if you didn’t wear stripes. It was almost like a declaration that you were better and older than them. Even Tamara, despite her complaining about it, had some thin stripes on her tank top.

“Can we move?” Chass complained again. “It’s hot and my hat is melting!!”

“Then just remake it!” Lansot suggested.

“Hey!” A new voice joined in as Snowy hopped through the crowd to land beside you all. “Chill out everyone!” You laughed. Nobody else did. Snowy grinned broadly at you. You weren’t sure if others were supposed to join, but Tamara wasn’t willing to wait around anymore. She walked off with Sandra scurrying after her, forcing your group to follow.

“Yo, are you gonna be giving a speech?” Lansot asked you. “Mom said you were, dude! It’s gonna be all over TV and stuff!!”

You’d rather not be reminded of that. You had been writing and rewriting your speech during most of your free time these past couple weeks. You weren’t looking forward to presenting it. Mostly because it was going to be the longest you had talked in a very long time. Perhaps ever. You swallowed thickly and gave a shaky nod.

“Don’t freeze up out there!” Snowy told you. “You’ll do just fine!”

“Yeah, I agree! Only without the stupid pun.” Eddie agreed.

“It’s not stupid! You just can’t see how great my jokes are!”

“Was that a fucking pun about my eye?” Eddie cursed, glaring. “Don’t you pick on me!”
“GUYYYYS!!” Lansot nudged between them, making sure they didn’t start fighting. “My sister is right there, dudes!”

“I don’t mind.” Sandra sniffed, clearly trying to make herself appear older.

“kids like you shouldn’t be sayin’ such words, you hear?” You spun quickly around as you heard Sans speak up. He was sitting at a stand with the scent of Hot Cats and Hot Dogs in the air, apparently very hard at work doing absolutely nothing. He gave a lazy wave to you. You and your friends hurried over to his stand.

“Hiya Sans!” They all greeted as you greeted him silently.

“What are you doing?” Chass asked.

“sellin’ dogs. wanna buy some? just 30 G.” You folded your arms on the table of the stand and rested your chin on it. So Sans was offering to take gold from monsters? You supposed the exchange rate is better that way, although most monsters sold off their gold for a large profit before the price of gold went down from it flooding the market.

“Pfft, nobody uses gold anymore!” Lansot laughed. “Only the old monsters do!”

“guess i’m an old monster then.” Sans winked. “alright then. just give me two and it’ll be even.” He held out his hand. You slapped his hand twice, grinning. Sans laughed at your joke. “gotta hand it to ya, frisk. that was a good one. just for that you get a freebie.” He handed you a Hot Cat, placing it on your head. You took it off to gaze at the cute little cat face on the end of it before you stuffed it into your pocket. You didn’t have much room for food, you reminded yourself. One of these days you would have to ask the brothers to teach you how to store things in subspace like they did with all of their stuff. It would probably be super useful.

“Me too!!” Tamara held out her hand. Sans held up his as well, but Tamara only got one hit in before Sans’s hand popped off. Tamara screeched with surprise. You and your friends broke into giggles at that.

“only half off for you, kiddo.” He winked at her too.

“I’m not a kid.” Tamara grumbled a little, but she did pay. Eddie also bought one, adding many condiments to it.

“Dunno how you make these so good!” He said, munching happily on the ‘dog.

Sans didn’t respond, but he didn’t get the chance to as you watched the crowd part around the approaching dogs. Undyne stomped forward wearing a bright orange shirt that said SECURITY on it. Behind her was Doggo (with his seeing eye dog) as well as Dogaressa and Dogamy dressed similarly, although they carried their weapons (well covered so they couldn’t accidentally hurt someone) too.

Undyne crossed her arms and scowled at Sans. “Seriously?!” She demanded.

“sup?” Sans responded instead. You could see Dogamy and Dogaressa’s tails wagging excitedly at the sight of him. Dogamy inched closer to Sans. “what seems to be the prob’?”

“We heard you don’t have a permit!” Dogaressa stated.

“(Is he going to pet us?)” Dogamy added at the same time. Sans reached forward and pet Dogamy. Dogaressa barked and whined, pushing her way over for pets as well. Sans began to scratch both
behind the ears. Your hands itched to join in.

“No, this is serious!” Doggo complained. “Where are you, Sans? We can’t have illegal stands today!”

“That’s right!! Or ever!!” Undyne growled. “You need a freaking permit, skeleton!!” You waved at Undyne to catch her attention. She was temporarily diverted from the rant she was about to give Sans by the sight of you. Her eyes lit up and she scooped you up into her arms, noogieing your head. You winced and accepted your fate. “Heya PUNK!! I was wondering if I would see your face today! Man, you look SO FREAKING ADORABLE!!” She squeezed you in a hug. Air whooshed out of you and you struggled some, gazing pleadingly at your friends. They all pretended they couldn’t see your plight. Traitors.

She dropped you and you landed easily on your feet despite the complaints your chest and head were making. Sans was distracting all of the dog, sneaking them bits of the food and seeming to chat his way out of a fine. He was taking advantage of you “distracting” Undyne. You felt like an accessory to a crime. It wasn’t an unfamiliar feeling.

You signed to Undyne, “Where Papyrus and Alphys?”

“YEAH!” Lansot butt in quickly. “Where is my man Papyrus??” They looked back and forth between Sans and Undyne. Tamara opened her mouth, probably to complain about Papyrus, but she closed it seeming to know better than to complain about Papyrus in front of Sans.

“Jeez, kid!” Undyne gave a playful shove of Lansot’s head, causing them to stumble back a bit. They caught themselves just fine though. “Pap’s down in the park in charge of the puzzles! Or,” she laughed, “at least helping out with them. Mettaton’s down there getting in the way.” She turned on Sans then. “Now YOU--!” But he was gone, and so were the dogs. You could faintly hear excited yipping. Undyne grumbled what sounded like a curse before she summoned her spears and started to destroy the stand. Some people nearby gasped in horror, clearly thinking there was a rampage.

“Nothing to see here!” Your friends jumped in, waving their arms (for those who had them). “Routine security work!”

“Oh!” Undyne paused and laughed bashfully, realizing how this must look for humans not used to monsters. “Yeah! All part of the job!”

Tamara put a hand on your back and steered you away. “We’d better go.” She muttered under her breath. She was eyeing some reporters whose attention Undyne had caught. You ducked your head and hurried away with the rest of your friends following behind. Sandra broke into giggles as soon as you were far enough away, and you couldn’t help your own smile. If that was the most eventful part of the day, then today would be fun.

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You spent much of the morning with your school friends, and you were glad to have done so. These past few months had been so exhausting that you hadn’t managed to have much of a social life outside your direct circle of monster friends. You sometimes wondered if Sans and Undyne and the others forgot that you weren’t an adult like they were. It could be exhausting. At least you were around peers here. It was always a little bit surreal, though, to see how immature they sometimes acted when you were used to a . . . “higher” level of maturity, but it was soothing at the same time. Especially because you were starting to give some of your classmates some second looks. Attraction for other people was starting to set in, you had noticed. You had been so caught up in your troubles that you had forgotten what it was like to just be your age for once. You were both excited and nervous to see who you developed proper feelings for.
Scattered in various parts of Ebott were puzzles for all ages to try. Some of them were complicated things that even some of the more daring adults wouldn’t try (but you had tried your hand at them and found them pretty fun), while a lot of them were simple maze traps. Nothing with lasers this time. Alphys and Papyrus had worked hard in the planning of the community puzzles in the park, you remembered. Undyne had not been allowed to help due to the fact she hates puzzles, but also because she still firmly believed projectile vomiting would be a great puzzle solution tool.

There were prizes to be won, but you always passed on your tickets and stuff to your friends. You hadn’t needed them considering all of the gifts you had received and were waiting for you back at both of your parents’ houses. You had ended up soaked when Chass and Snowy started throwing snowballs. When other monsters joined in, it became more of a water fight than anything. It was refreshing in the heat of the day. While you watched some humans skip their way across some puzzles, you were given a balloon by Papyrus. You hadn’t been wanting to carry it around, so you carefully popped a hole in it and sucked in some of the helium. The monsters all freaked out when they heard how high your voice was, making you laugh in your squeaky voice. You all ended up wasting five balloons on your shenanigans.

Besides the food and games stalls and puzzles, there were also rides to be played upon as well. You’d never been to any kind of fair or amusement park before, so this was an exciting experience for you. Tamara dragged everyone onto some familiar rides (that had been altered to fit most monsters), but there were also strange monster rides as well. The rides would defy gravity as monsters instead used their magic to drive the mechanical cars. A few large flying monsters that you had never met before also gave rides around Ebott, which thrilled everyone involved even though it was a tame ride. You found yourself more drawn to the thrill rides, personally.

You had to resist eating all of the food from the various stalls despite how tempting it all was. Some monster food was particularly strange, but you wanted to try all of it. Apparently some was specialty food that was only allowed on holidays, or it was food that was made specifically for this new holiday. It hurt you dearly not to try all of it. You needed to save room for the picnic. You also needed to remember that you were possibly going to vomit on stage from sheer nerves, so you would rather have very little in your stomach.

The very thought caused you to freeze up. Your friends were all nearby at some of the game stalls, but your good will and fun had drained somewhat. You swallowed thickly. How were you supposed to give a speech in front of the entire town? In front of all of those cameras? On national television?? You might faint.

“‘You’re Frisk, right?’ You looked up, jolted out of your worries to find the lovely green flames of Grillbz’s daughter Flareez. She appeared to be working a mini bar Grillbz had opened for the occasion. The line was long and Grillbz was working hard to get everybody’s drink orders. You supposed that monster alcohol would definitely be interesting to try for adults. Judging by the fire drink in her hand, she was taking a break. It was hard to stand near her in the heat, but you didn’t want to appear rude so you stood an appropriate distance away.

You nodded to her. Flareez smiled lightly (literally lightly. Her smile was a brighter flame on her face) at you. “Did we all ever say thank you to you? I know you drop by my papa’s place a lot with Sans.” You looked down and shuffled your feet shyly. Somehow being in Flareez’s presence made you feel strangely shy. She was so pretty. You kept looking at her, but you felt like you were staring. Was that weird? Were you staring for too long? You wished you knew how long you normally looked at people.

“It’s . . . alright . . .” You murmured.
“Still.” She insisted and grabbed a bottle of water. “You should probably take this. You look a little red in the face.” Her voice had a slightly teasing lilt that made you unsure of if she knew you were blushing or if she was being nice. You hurried to take the bottle and nodded a thank you to her before absconding, flustered.

It was unfortunate, but you had to separate from your friends not long after that. Your clothes and hair were a mess from the impromptu water fight, so you needed to rush back to one of your houses as soon as possible so you could be ready for the picnic. You ran dodging around people in the street until you came to your father’s house. You entered the house and kicked off your shoes, fully prepared to switch into all around nicer clothing, when you were swooped up by a pair of cold arms. You yelped at the frozen sensation against your heated skin before you were brought to a solid chest.

“Frisk darling!” Mettaton crooned in your ears. Your tense body went slack in his grip, relaxing as you recognized who had picked you up. “It’s about time you showed up! I’ve been waiting here for so long!”

You wiggled until Mettaton released you. “Why . . . are you here?” You asked, confused. Mettaton crossed his arms. He was in his model body now ever since Alphys finished his design.

“Don’t think I didn’t see that show you and your friends put on! Look at you, you’re a mess! You can’t go on stage like that! Especially, child, since you will be on national TV.” You really wished that he hadn’t reminded you. He tsked gently and pat your face. “Don’t you worry, Frisk. I will work my magic on you once again. Besides,” Mettaton swooped over to the couch and flipped open an outfit. You stared at the shimmering fabric of the dress he held up, marveling, “Muffet was kind enough to provide me with the perfect outfit for you!”

You opened your mouth to warn him that it probably wasn’t the best idea to have stolen from Muffet (especially since the dress was supposed to be yours anyway), but you didn’t get the chance as you were swept along with Mettaton’s ministrations. You were dragged into another room where you were surprised to find Burgerpants. You could see the disgust on his face as he regarded all of the beauty items, but he quickly sat up and gave that pained faux-cheerful grin at the sight of his boss. His grin turned a little more real, but rueful, as he noticed you.

“Hey there, little buddy.” You held out your hand, which he granted you a low-five. You smiled back at him, though you couldn’t help the bit of pity in your chest. He looked as tired as ever.

Mettaton really wasn’t letting up on the guy.

Mettaton clapped sharply. “Get the iron ready! We need to work fast if we’re going to have this child presentable!!” Burgerpants rolled his eyes and flicked Mettaton off when the robot wasn’t looking, but he did as he was told.

The picnic was in half an hour, but somehow Mettaton and Burgerpants got you all dressed up within twenty minutes. You had expected some kind of fancy makeup to be placed on your face, but you didn’t get the chance as you were swept along with Mettaton’s ministrations. You were dragged into another room where you were surprised to find Burgerpants. You could see the disgust on his face as he regarded all of the beauty items, but he quickly sat up and gave that pained faux-cheerful grin at the sight of his boss. His grin turned a little more real, but rueful, as he noticed you.

“The dress itself was unbelievably light. You felt as if you were dressed in the smoothest silk you’d ever felt. The dress didn’t extend too far past your knees so it was easy to walk, but you were half afraid it would tear with a single step. You weren’t used to wearing a one-shoulder dress, but you found it kind of nice if a bit revealing. Spinning around revealed the risk of exposing your
underwear. It may’ve been a little tacky, but you wore a pair of small shorts under the dress just in case.

When you were completely dressed, Mettaton grabbed your shoulders. His eyes gleamed seriously in the sunlight coming in through the windows. “Straighten up!” He commanded. “Shoulders back. Head held high. You’re going to be fabulous, Frisk, and you will make everyone proud!” You stared at him, wide-eyed. “You are the face of harmony between humans and monsters! Don’t be scared; be proud! You’ve done great things, darling, and you’ll do many more yet! Let yourself bask in the limelight!”

You opened your mouth but found you couldn’t find the words. Mettaton only smiled brightly at you, an honest smile that you hadn’t seen in a long time. You smiled back instead and hugged his waist. He chuckled but then scooted you out the door, snapping for Burgerpants to follow along. The robot’s long strides were difficult for you to match, but you did so. “Come on, Frisk! You have to be ready to face the cameras!”

The picnic was laid out in a large field where a stage had once again been set up for the attendance of so many. There were tables and blankets alike scattered around for any and all who wanted to join in on the picnic. You already knew that there was to be a magic show (literal magic, not stage magic) as well as various acts to be done while everyone was eating. Monsters and humans alike would be showing off. And sometime near the middle of everyone eating, you were to go up onto the stage and give your speech. Cameras were already set up all over the place for the news crews to film. You could see some of them were looking around. The news reporters’ faces lit up like it was Christmas to see you arriving with Mettaton.

You almost ducked your head to hide from all of the attention you and Mettaton garnered, but then you recalled Mettaton’s words. Right now you were not a kid; you were the ambassador of monsters. You could return to being a kid when your duties were done. Right now you had a point to prove. You lifted your head, squared your shoulders, and smiled brightly as your picture was snapped and reporters called questions to you. You didn’t respond to any and just waved. You had to break away from Mettaton because you needed to sit at the large table with many other important people. You were relieved to see your parents and hurried to join them.

Toriel gave a delighted gasp as she saw you. “Frisk! I had not even recognized you!” She grinned as she looked at you. “Where did you get that dress?”

“Muffet.” You explained to her quickly about what had happened with Mettaton, which caused some of the other ambassadors and politicians near you to titter.

“Are you good friends with that robot?” The leader of a monster charity organization asked. He seemed pleased.

You nodded as you took your seat. People were still filing in for the actual picnic, grabbing their free food from the stalls set up. Food was brought to your table making you feel strange that you were one of the first ones to be served. The press hovered, clearly wanting to get interviews, but the security that all of the major political figures had brought with them kept them back. You smiled and waved to see Papyrus now wearing a security shirt among the force. It was better that he was security and not one of the chefs. You didn’t see Sans anywhere yet, but you did see Alphys sitting among some other young adults. Judging by the gestures she was making, they were talking about anime.

You ate slowly and chatted little, but you did interact with the adults. It was hard for you to stay part of the conversation when many of the things they talked about went over your head both metaphorically and literally. It was uncomfortable to say the least, but your parents’ presences were a
balm to your slightly-frayed nerves. You preferred to pay attention to the shows that were occurring on the stage knowing that you would soon be up there. It didn’t matter if you lived around monsters and that magic was a common thing to you, it really astounded you to see the shows the monsters actually put on.

“What’s the matter, Frisk?” One senator asked as she came to stand near you. You tilted your head at her, silently confused. “You’ve barely eaten. Are you well?” You knew this woman. She was iffy at best about the monsters. You made sure to keep track of those who appeared to have some kind of hidden agenda. Your father had practiced with you what kinds of clues to look for. The slightly-condescending and sneaky look on her face seemed so obvious to you after the year of training you had received. This woman probably thought that you were being used by the monsters. You weren’t sure how even after a year people thought you were anything but happy here.

“Yes, I’m well.” You told her. You weren’t allowed to stutter or pause when talking to adults. They liked to take advantage of that, seeing it as a sign of weakness. They could and have used anything and everything against you in the past. It felt like a stiff suit you had to wear whenever you were at meetings like this. There was an exhaustion already seeping into your bones, however an indignant strength kept your head high. “I’m afraid I’m a little nervous.”

“Nervous?” The senator asked. You wracked your brain for her name. You were terrible at names, but you were good at faces.

“Didn’t you hear, Ms. Alexandre?” The pro-monster senator Dr. Berrios joked, leaning forward past her plate. She was an elderly woman that you had come to like. Mostly because she kind of reminded you of Sans sometimes. She had that same sly twinkle in her own eyes. “Our little Frisk here is going to give a speech to celebrate the anniversary. Isn’t that right?”

You nodded, smiling. Toriel was trying to hide a smile behind her plastic cup, somehow managing to maintain that queenly air about her despite the amusement.

“Did you prepare it yourself? Or did your parents write it?” Ms. Alexandre asked. You understood what she was really asking. Did your parents write the speech for you to read leaving you no choice?

“I worked very hard on it.” You told her. “It is my thanks to everyone, and my feelings towards the monsters.”

You caught your dad’s approving smile from the corner of your eye before he turned back to his friend as if he hadn’t been listening in.

“Is that so.” Ms. Alexandre stated, bored.

“It’s almost time for you to present isn’t it, Frisk?” Dr. Berrios cut in again quickly, her voice practically dismissing Ms. Alexandre. The woman in question glared at the doctor. Dr. Berrios ignored her.

Your stomach twisted and you nodded hesitantly. You drank some more water and tried not to fidget in your seat. You could do this. You had your friends to back you up just in case. Your parents and your friends had all already offered to rescue you from the stage if you couldn’t handle it. But the thought of making everyone proud filled you with determination, and you felt a Save form because of it. You thought that was an appropriate place to Save. You had a feeling that people would look back on this day, possibly in history books, and talk about it. The first successful year that the monsters were free.

The MC of the festival called your name and, with your determination fueling you, you stood up.
You went alone onto the stage as the crowd quieted. You had been so used to all of the noise that the sudden hushed murmuring was startling. Your heart pounded loudly in your ears as you came up to the microphone. You lowered the microphone yourself, signing a thank you to a couple of the people who tried to help you. You took a breath and looked out at the crowd.

Everybody was staring at you. A few of the camera lenses reflected the sunlight into your eyes. You squinted a little and looked away from those. You could hear many cameras clicking in the crowd as people snapped pictures of you. You met the gazes of all of the people you knew. You gained courage from the thumbs up both Papyrus and Undyne gave you. Sans stood with them, his hands shoved into his jacket like usual. Alphys had even moved over to them. Sans winked at you and whistled, triggering a chain reaction of cheering from all of the monsters. An anxiety-induced grin sent you giggling, ducking your head before waving. It helped to relieve some of the tension.

You took a deep steadying breath and began, reading from the speech you’d had on hand.

“Friends, thank you for coming to our first official celebration of Liberation Day. As all of you know, one year ago today the monsters were all released from the Underground to once again live here on the surface.” Another cheer went up, but this one was swiftly calmed down by everyone else. You gave another nervous smile, acknowledging their joy. Your arms and legs felt jittery. “A year ago I discovered the world underground by accident. And by the hard work of many, the monsters were freed. I . . .” You stuttered for a moment, and then rallied again. You could do this. “I was afraid. I was afraid of the monsters because they were strange to me. I was afraid of the Underground. I was afraid of being hurt by the dangers of the Underground. But I discovered that the monsters are kind and caring and helpful. They’re . . . much like us humans: flawed, but full of potential to be good. So when I had the chance to help them . . . to free them from the Underground . . . I did my best. And I succeeded.

I was afraid then for a different reason. I was afraid that, much like me, other humans would be scared of these strange beings we call monsters. Because like me, everyone grew up on stories of make-believe monsters. I was afraid for them. And it has been . . . tough. Very tough. It is hard for us humans to accept new things, but looking out now I can see that it is possible.” You smiled shakily. “Look at all of us, eating and playing and-and laughing together! This is possible! And I’m proud.” You took another breath as the people looked at each other, taking in the scene you’re describing. “It is only our first year. And we still have a long way to go. But we’re here now. And we have nowhere to go but forward. And I hope . . . I hope you all will continue with me!”

The crowd cheered again, much louder than before. They climbed to their feet, overwhelming you with the calls of your name and the whistling. Your smile became more confident even though you felt like you would fall apart at the seams. But everyone was happy and it seemed that your speech had gone over well. You wanted to finish up and thank everyone once again for coming, but your voice wasn’t loud enough to cut through the cheering even with the microphone. You decided to wait.

You didn’t get to finish your thanks, though. Out of nowhere, something slammed into your back and knocked you off of the stage. Your parents, nearby, were quick to catch you luckily. You only had time to see something white fly past you before a black blur went after it. A yowl from a cat rang through the air as Papyrus shouted, “SOMEONE CATCH THAT MUTT!! AND THAT CAT!!” People screamed as Cat and the Annoying Dog tore through tables and over food. The poor dog was trying to run away from an infuriated Cat. You couldn’t help the laughter that burst from your chest as you fell into fits. Over the sounds of chaos you could only think about how it was so much fun to be living amongst monsters.
It was late, and the celebrations had long since ended. You were back home with your mother, laying in bed pretending to be asleep. You could hear your mother moving around in the kitchen and could smell cinnamon on the air. Your stomach growled at the scent despite the fact you weren’t particularly hungry. You weren’t thinking about anything in particular, but you certainly weren’t falling asleep any time soon.

The door to your room opened part way, letting in the light of the hallway. You watched the shadow of your mother on the wall as she silently entered the bedroom. You heard the muffled tap of something on the ground before Toriel retreated. She paused in the door briefly, possibly to watch you, before she closed the door and left. The scent of pie was stronger now. Your mouth watered, but you didn’t dare move until you heard Toriel finish washing up and go to her bedroom. Even then you waited a few more minutes before you threw your covers off and climbed out of bed.

On the ground was a plate of cinnamon butterscotch pie. The very sight of it brought back memories of living in Toriel’s old house. You understood what your mother was trying to do by making this for you today. You supposed that she just hadn’t had time to do so earlier, and you had gone to bed early that night. You would thank her in the morning. For now, though, you put the pie in your inventory before you opened your window and climbed out. Nobody would be around to check on you for a while and you had a long walk before you.

You listened to music to drown out the silence of the summer night. You couldn’t stand the thought of any static invading your mind while you climbed a familiar path up to the entrance to the Underground. Even seeing it again gave you anxiety. You had to remind yourself that Gaster would not hurt you anymore. You didn’t totally succeed in calming yourself down.

Your dad and all of the other monsters had done a wonderful job in making this part of the Underground safe for humans. There were safety rails in places where there hadn’t been before, and heat-resistant glass (magically protected) kept the heat of the lava out of the Core. You hurried to the elevator that would take you to the hotel so you wouldn’t have to go through the Core. Your feet already were complaining.

The Underground was mostly empty for the walk from Hotland, through Waterfall (you shivered), and through Snowdin. You only stopped briefly to take out the large jar you had put in your inventory earlier that night so that you could collect some of the glowing water from Waterfall to take with you. The Ruins greeted you like a blanket despite how old and kind of creepy it was. It felt like home. How long had you spent there over the multiple timelines? You didn’t know. You allowed your feet to take you along the familiar path until the soft scent of golden flowers found you. There, among the gold, stood Flowey. He glared almost as if he was expecting you.

“Seriously?” He snapped. “What are you doing back here?”

You sat down on the patch of flowers that had saved your life. Flowey looked put out by your presence as you set down the glowing water jar. You reached out and gently touched Flowey’s petals. He allowed the touch only briefly before he jerked away.

“Hi.” You greeted.

“What do you want? Here to celebrate a year of not RESETing?” He demanded.

“Yes.” You admitted, pulling the pie from your inventory and placing it among the flowers. Flowey stared at the pie, shocked. You gently nudged it towards him. You didn’t know if he needed to eat, but you thought he would appreciate the gift more right now.

Flowey looked away, calming down somewhat although he still seemed a bit miserable. “Why are
you giving me this? I don’t want your stupid pie.” You didn’t respond. He glowered at you. “Just eat it!” You shook your head. He scoffed.

You had a reason for being down here, other than to make sure Flowey could celebrate a bit too. It felt pathetic in comparison to all that you had experienced today, but you hoped that Flowey liked the little bit of joy you tried to bring him. You understood he couldn’t feel love, but you knew that he could feel some kind of happiness, even if it wasn’t nearly as satisfying as it should be.

It felt like so long ago that you had last been here. You had met Chara for the first time here, as well as dealt with Gaster again. You decided to tell Flowey what had happened since you had last seen him. You decided to tell him everything that had happened in the last year that you could remember. Flowey listened to you and commented much throughout the story. He seemed unsympathetic of your troubles, but interested in how your family had treated you. There was a look in his eye that you could tell he was relating your story to Chara’s. You didn’t allow it to stop you.

You admitted to Loading a Save, which made him laugh at how pathetic you were. You also told him about all of your adventures with your friends. He was more interested, however, in your fight with Gaster. Apparently the idea of seeing all times and places fascinated the flower, but when you explained the side effects of going mad, Flowey mocked Gaster.

By the time you had finished, your mouth was dry and the pie was now long cold, but still untouched. Flowey, despite all of his complaining, had seemed enthralled by your words. However as soon as you were done, the spell was broken. Flowey hunched himself a bit. “Did you really come here just to tell me all of this?” He asked, his voice uncharacteristically small like it sometimes got when he was unable to understand the reasons behind your actions.

You nodded and gave him a tiny smile. “I’ve been . . . taking care of your parents for you, Asriel.” You murmured. Flowey flinched a little at his name and glared weakly. You took a breath. Your hands dug into the cloth of your shorts, worrying the material.

“But I’ve also . . . come to make you a deal.”

“A deal?” He asked, baffled.

You looked at him seriously. “Chara said that you deserve to live . . . and I agree. So . . . I have a plan.”

Chapter End Notes

Before I leave you screaming about what the fuck I'm doing with this ending...

A LOT of you have been wondering if I'm going to A. Write more Undertale stuff, B. Continue RT AU/ToTV, and C. Gonna write more for DotPP.

The short answer to all is yes.

The long answer is:
I have many projects already in mind for the future that I wish to write for Undertale. In fact, I already have my next major story in mind. That being said my priorities are:
1. Updating RT AU (which has been on HIATUS because I wanted to finish DotPP).
2. Finally fucking finishing the second chapter of ToTV (I've already gotten a portion of it written. I've been working on it when I wasn't writing for DotPP)
3. Writing a oneshot for the UTMob!AU by nyublackneko (I've already received permission and I can't wait to start on it! It's gonna have a premise similar to ToTV, because AU hopping is fun for the entire multiverse)

4. Writing my Fallen Children story. (this is the next major Undertale story I have in mind! If you want a quick summary of it, contact my tumblr or I'll just post it in the end notes of the epilogue of this next chapter).

I also have plans to make a kind of art masterpost for this series to show my appreciation to all of you! So I'll work on that at a later date. Send me links on Tumblr or whichever if you would like to show me anything!

Also follow me on tumblr for any updates or random bullshit talk <3

And thank you all again!!!
The day that the Savior of the monsters died, the prince returned.

It was done without fanfare. Years had passed since the monsters were released from Mt. Ebott and the Underground, and during that time the Dreemurr family had worked hard to settle the monsters among the humans. It was difficult, and sometimes even tense, but the monsters were persistent and kind and Frisk became better and better at being the ambassador they were meant to be. Through those years, everyone grew. Generations were born not knowing that there was a world that hadn’t known monsters existed. The older generation began to age. And the generation of monsters that were there to take their first steps under the bright blue sky also began to age.

Frisk had been old for a human when they passed, but they were still young at the same time. Old age had a way of catching up to people at the wrong times, and Frisk grew sick. Their mind had been fading faster than their body had. Too many timelines and damage had taken its toll. Doctors were baffled, but Frisk wasn’t surprised. During the days they could focus on one timeline and one timeline only, they were well aware that everyone would catch up to them one way or another. Throughout their weakening, they didn’t appear sad. Instead they continued to do what they could with their friends and family knowing that soon they would pass. The monsters didn’t understand.

“How are you not ANGRY?!” Undyne screamed when Frisk was finally bedridden. She spun on every person in the room. Some of them refused to meet her eyes. “You’re still YOUNG for an old person! Get mad! Can’t you use your damn determination or-or SOMETHING??” There were furious tears in her eyes, her sharp teeth digging into her cheek.

Frisk just smiled. “I . . . don’t need to be sad. Because I will see you all again.”

“What are you talking about?” Toriel asked, brushing back her child’s hair as if Frisk wasn’t much older than the twelve year old she had met in the Ruins. Frisk’s parents hadn’t aged a single day. Frisk found that sadder than their own approaching death.
“I have . . . a plan.”

Frisk’s friends protested, of course. Some were angry that Frisk had kept the secret for so long. Others were furious that only Sans was privy to such a deal. They screamed and pleaded with Frisk not to go through with it, to fight rather than accept their fate. It even slipped out for them to Load a Save. Frisk refused. They understood their friends’ worries and fears. They all knew who Flowey was and what the creature could do with that kind of power. It was nothing Frisk hadn’t heard before. They couldn’t be convinced otherwise, though. Frisk knew they were going to die either way. They would rather give everyone a happy ending, even if it cost them their own.

Frisk passed away in late autumn as the snow began to fall. Monsters wept for the loss of the human who had given them so much while in the night a small group of Frisk’s friends reentered the Underground. It had taken some searching, but eventually they found Flowey in a cavern with wilting golden flowers. Flowey had scowled at their entrance ready to shout, but paused when he saw the bright red soul in the container Alphys held.

“They’re . . .” Flowey didn’t finish his question. He seemed torn and confused before some fear crept into his face. He glanced at the group of monsters in front of him before looking back at the soul. “Did they actually tell you their stupid idea? Isn’t it h-hilarious?” He asked.

Undyne wiped at her eyes. Alphys looked down. Sans stood at the entrance to the hidden garden, his glowing eyes the only things visible in the darkness. Papyrus’s eyes were sparkling with his own tears, but he was smiling as he waited for the next step. Toriel and Asgore took Frisk from Alphys and went over to kneel before Flowey, opening the container.

Flowey watched them warily as the Soul approached him. He scowled at it, his face twisting into a familiar look of incomprehension. “Frisk, you idiot.” He told the Soul before he absorbed it.

The return of the prince of monsters was a shock for everyone. All monsters knew the tale of Asriel’s death and so were suitably suspicious and baffled by his return. When the ex-king and queen explained to the humans that they had thought they’d lost Asriel a long time ago, the monsters understood not to voice their opinions in front of humans. Amongst themselves, however, questions sprang up all around. It was just another secret monsters kept from humans, just like how the barrier was supposed to be destroyed.

There were plenty of rumors around Asriel, especially as he began to take up the role Frisk had left behind. There were rumors that humans could turn into monsters if they stayed with monsters long enough. It was said that Asriel had killed and replaced Frisk. Most tried to just accept that stranger things have happened with the monsters. The humans didn’t know the story, so they couldn’t come up with worse scenarios. And the monsters loved their prince and the human far too much to cause trouble. Luck, it seemed, was with them. The steady peace was not to be broken by the replacement.

The first night Asriel was back, he cried. Now that he could feel again, he knew there was a rift between him and all of the others. His parents were unsure how to act around him. Frisk’s friends were not necessarily his friends no matter how much he could feel Frisk’s love for them. He clutched his chest and curled up into the corner of Frisk’s old bedroom in Toriel’s house and wept. He could feel Frisk inside of him still, trying to soothe him, but Asriel refused to let them. He had decades of pain he had to sift through. He had to adjust to a world he was unfamiliar with now. It looked like there was so much ahead of him. He had crimes he had to pay for. He didn’t know where to start.

We’ll help. Frisk had told him, warmth and kindness radiating in Asriel’s chest. He could feel their soul substituting his own.

“How?” He whimpered. “This isn’t . . . Frisk, this isn’t the same. I don’t know if I want this.”
Together, Frisk had responded. It wasn’t like Asriel had much of a choice. He was truly alive again. In a way it was sink or swim. And with Frisk’s help, hopefully swimming wouldn’t be too difficult.

The most difficult part of being alive was not taking over Frisk’s role as an ambassador. It wasn’t even adjusting to how much the world had changed or what it was like to be in the outside world. It was the bitter chasm between the feelings Asriel felt for all of the people that barely knew him. His soul would leap happily at the sight of old friends of Frisk, but those people would pass him by with only a curious look or without a second glance at all. It was horrible rediscovering rejection and disappointment.

It was worse with those closest to Frisk. Mom and Dad made an effort to help Asriel, but all of them were awkward around each other. Asriel didn’t recognize these parents anymore, and Toriel and Asgore didn’t know how to act around their son. Frisk suggested they talk about everything, but the wounds were sealed and old and Asriel was reluctant to open them up again. He knew Frisk understood which is why they didn’t push, but Asriel also knew that one day soon he would talk about it with them. When he did, there would no doubt be tears, but Asriel hoped that one day he could recover his relationship with his parents.

Undyne and Alphys were worse. Alphys avoided Asriel while Undyne could be outright intimidating. Asriel didn’t want to push Alphys and he had been too scared to get too close to Undyne. Frisk had been insistent on that part, though.

You have to face Undyne. Frisk told him.

“I-I don’t think that’s a great idea!” Asriel responded, wincing some when Undyne turned her fierce glare on him. They all were aware that Asriel could hear and talk to Frisk, but that didn’t make things any easier on anyone.

It’s the only way. Frisk had stubbornly insisted.

So Asriel challenged Undyne. And lost. He wasn’t surprised. He hadn’t practiced his magic in years and he wasn’t sure of the extent of his abilities with Frisk’s Soul. He could feel the potential to do great things hovering there. The temptation to Load was also there. It was a feeling that Asriel was familiar with, but he rejected the idea outright. His Soul protested the thought of ever using that power again, and Asriel found that he agreed.

No matter how badly Asriel’s defeat was, Frisk had been right. Undyne wasn’t completely happy to have Asriel there, but she warmed up to him much more after he proved himself able to face her. It was slow going and Asriel wasn’t sure how to interact with older monsters like her, but it was good to have successfully made a friend.

Once Undyne was on her way to being friendly with Asriel, Asriel knew he had to talk to Alphys. He didn’t need to ask Frisk why she was acting the way she was; he had a pretty good idea. He was reluctant to confront her, but there were old wounds that needed to be healed. Frisk had told him all about the lack of communication between Frisk and Alphys that had degraded their friendship before. The woman preferred to avoid confrontation. Asriel would have to confront her instead.

Asriel approached Alphys with a plate of baked goods and some tea. He set the teapot down on the table and motioned Alphys over. She reluctantly joined him. Asriel poured them both cups and made the tea just how Alphys liked it, just as his dad had told him. The silence was palpable as Asriel waited to see if Alphys would start. She refused to look at him, instead fiddling with the tablecloth, her lab coat, her tea, everything. Asriel had to start, he understood.

He took a breath and let it out slowly. “I forgive you.”
Alphys’s head shot up. “Wh-What?” She asked.

Asriel smiled, although the smile was tainted with old sorrow. Asriel could feel the years that his body didn’t physically show. “For making me a flower. I don’t blame you. You didn’t . . . really know, right? Golly, I can just imagine how you felt when you realized.” Alphys continued to stare at him with wide eyes. “I don’t want to think about that stuff anymore. Can we be friends?”

Alphys’s jaw clenched and unclenched while she swallowed. “A-Ah . . .”

Asriel grinned, feeling a prod from Frisk. “Frisk says there are a lot of good anime that I haven’t seen. Can you show me?”

Papyrus and Sans were like summer and winter, Asriel decided. Papyrus, out of all of Frisk’s friends, was the first to warm up to Asriel. The moment Papyrus had understood Frisk was still there, he had gone back to his usual self. Asriel found his days brightened by the skeleton and remembered that, as a flower, Papyrus was the only one he couldn’t loathe. (It made the guilt of killing him all of the worse. Frisk empathized.) The skeleton was usually there when Asriel just needed a person to talk to, and he often gave good advice too. The prince couldn’t understand how Papyrus stayed so upbeat all of the time. He also didn’t understand why he didn’t dislike Asriel for all that happened.

“WHY WOULD I BE MAD AT YOU?” Papyrus asked him, honestly confused. “YOU’RE A NEW FRIEND AND AN OLD FRIEND IN ONE!”

Asriel didn’t know how to take that, so he just smiled. “But you know all of the stuff I did, don’t you?”

“OF COURSE I DO!” Papyrus nodded once, hands on his hips. “BUT THIS ISN’T THEN. THIS IS NOW! AND AS FAR AS I’M CONCERNED, YOU DIDN’T HURT ANYONE BUT YOURSELF!” Asriel stared at him. Papyrus turned back to the waffles he was trying to mix up. He had added a bunch of different sweets to it to make it better, but Asriel wasn’t sure that was going to end up well. “BESIDES,” he continued, “I CAN’T BLAME YOU FOR SOMETHING FRISK DECIDED. YOU’RE ALREADY HAVING A TOUGHER TIME ADJUSTING, RIGHT? SO I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, SHALL TAKE ON THE ROLE OF YOUR BEST FRIEND AND GREATEST SUPPORTER!!”

Asriel smiled for real then. “Gosh, thanks Papyrus!” He placed his head down on the table, but accidentally knocked over his cup with one of his horns. He groaned a little. He wasn’t used to this older body. He didn’t realize he would be a grown-up when Frisk gave him their soul. He fully expected to be a kid. He picked up his cup and cleaned up his mess. “I’ll need your help if I’m to get Sans to talk to me.”

Papyrus hadn’t responded to that, just giving Asriel a slightly pitying look. Asriel huffed in understanding.

Sans refused to see Asriel. Frisk kept urging Asriel to go talk to him, though. They missed Sans with a passion that filled Asriel with almost the right amount of determination to send him after the skeleton, but Asriel didn’t quite have the backbone. In truth, Sans terrified Asriel. He had plenty of memories from both his own memories and Frisk’s about how scary Sans could be. They had been killed far too many times by an infuriated skeleton. However, Asriel also had plenty of warm memories from Frisk of how caring Sans could be and how much they both loved each other. Asriel felt very much like an outsider experiencing the emotions Frisk held for Sans.

It took almost an embarrassingly long time for Asriel to work up the nerve to go see Sans. The skeleton gave him a lazy greeting at the sight of him, smiling. Asriel almost perked up, but Frisk’s
memories taught him that Sans was not happy to see him at all. He was receiving conflicting signals. It didn’t help his nerves.

“Howdy Sans!” He greeted the skeleton, sitting down on the stool of Grillby’s bar. Flareez came over to take his order, so he got some fries. She nodded and left.

“haven’t seen you in a while, kid.” Sans said, watching him. The lights of his eyes were small, his jaw tense. Asriel wanted to flee. Frisk kept him sitting. “how’s life treatin’ you?”

“It’s . . . different.” Asriel admitted. “Busier.”

“’m sure it is.” Sans agreed, drinking from his bright red drink. Asriel would think it was just tomato juice (ketchup?), but he could smell the alcohol from where he sat, “must be tough replacing someone’s life like that.”

Frisk instantly reacted to that, alerting Asriel. Don’t let him intimidate you. They warned him. He’s angry, though, so be careful.

Asriel really wanted to flee. He bolstered his courage. “It’s certainly hard to be amongst Frisk’s old friends.” His smile felt tentative at best. “It’s hard to live up to them.”

“sure is.” Sans side-eyed Asriel, assessing him. Asriel knew that with Frisk’s soul that he was possibly one of the most powerful monsters in the world, but sitting here in front of Sans he felt like a child who could easily be killed.

Flareez placed the fries in front of Asriel. The prince nodded a thanks to her. “I don’t expect you to forgive me, Sans.” Asriel said quietly. “I don’t really want you to either. I’m not . . . I’m not Frisk, but I can feel what they felt. And I know how much they loved you—still love you.” He placed a hand on his chest. He could feel the warmth of Frisk’s soul flowing through him. “And I would at least like to be your friend.”

Sans glared down at his drink. It was almost empty. He signaled Flareez for another before he looked at Asriel. His eyes were hard. Asriel could feel the eyes of many patrons on them, watching. The monsters could probably sense Sans’s increase in magical power just as well as Asriel could.

“listen. kid. i get you. frisk explained to me a long time ago about you bein’ able to feel souls when they’re inside of you. their emotions and everything. so you probably think you have to befriend all of frisk’s old friends because they feel like your old friends, right?” Asriel didn’t respond. He didn’t have to. “well you ’n i know that ain’t true. frisk’s history is not your history. you’re probably not a bad kid if you managed to gain frisk’s bleedin’ heart, but i’m not so sure i want to go through this cycle again.”

He paused. Asriel tried to resist the tears that were coming to his eyes. For once they weren’t his own. He blinked a little quickly. Sans continued, “that kid,” he scoffed as Flareez gave him his next drink. Sans took a swig of it, “that kid is there with you, right? i’m probably hurtin’ them again. sorry frisk.” Asriel ate a couple of his fries while Sans drank. Only when he finished his drink and placed the glass down did he get up. He shoved his hands into his pockets, head down.

“... asriel,” Asriel looked at the skeleton, “i’m not against... bein’ friendly with you. but you can’t expect to have with me what i had with frisk. you won’t get it.”

That hurt. Asriel tried to separate his own emotions from Frisk’s for a little while. It was difficult. Frisk could feel so much. It was overwhelming. “I know.” He responded, wiping at the tears on his face. Crap, he was crying again. “But, uh, it may take me a few tries.” He laughed wetly. “I’m not
used to all of this. It’s hard to tell what’re my feelings and what’re theirs. And Frisk still—”

“i know.” Sans cut him off swiftly. Asriel didn’t continue. Sans walked off then calling back, “see you around, princeling.”

Asriel never expected to have the same relationship with Frisk’s friends as Frisk had, and he never did. The years passed quickly and slowly at the same time. The world changed. The monsters regarded Asriel as their new king despite there no longer being royalty. It seemed that Frisk’s plan was working. As Asriel aged, Asgore and Toriel did too. The realization that one day his parents would finally die of old age caused them all to shed some tears. Frisk teased them all for being a family of crybabies, which Asriel relayed to Toriel and Asgore. It sent them all into teary giggles.

One thing Asriel was sure that Frisk didn’t expect was what came next. He could feel it viscerally the day that Alphys passed away. The shock of it was almost crippling as realization settled in on Frisk. By them giving their soul to a Boss Monster, they would outlive everyone until Asriel had a child or was killed. It was Asriel’s turn to comfort Frisk. It didn’t help much.

The years passed, and so too did the generation of monsters that knew what it was like to live in the Underground. Undyne fell next, never settling for a calm life after her wife’s death. Undyne left to train armies, and eventually died from it. Her dust was sent back to Ebott where she was scattered with Alphys. She had specifically asked for them to wait.

Sans was the next to go. Asriel hadn’t been expecting it. The only way to tell age on a skeleton was by how brittle they began to look as well as how their bones creaked and groaned. Sans called Asriel out to the top of the mountain along with Papyrus, Toriel, and Asgore. Sans motioned for Asriel to follow him a bit away. Night had fallen long ago, but Asriel kept up some fireballs to provide a bit of light.

“can i talk to frisk?” Sans asked.

Asriel swallowed. He didn’t know how to just “switch” with Frisk. When he had been with Chara, Chara forced their control. Frisk was kind enough to gently take over. Asriel didn’t feel necessarily gone, but he could tell Frisk was much more in control. Sans’s face softened, as if able to tell that Frisk was there now.

“hey kid.” He said softly. Asriel pretended not to be there as he allowed them to talk. When they were done, Sans sighed. There was a contentedness about him as they walked back to join their friends. Sans sat down next to his brother and old friends with Asriel. They talked while Sans faded, his dust blown away into the night. Asriel held out long enough until they got home before he retreated to his bedroom and cried for two.

Papyrus didn’t wait. He chose not to as he hugged Asriel tightly. “I’M GOING TOO.”

Asriel only stared at him with shock. “What?” He asked with quiet disbelief.

Papyrus put his hands on his hips and grinned. His back had long since hunched with age, but seeing him now reminded Asriel and Frisk both of the young skeleton they had met a long time ago. “I CAN’T TRUST SANS BY HIMSELF! HE’S PROBABLY WAITING FOR ME BEFORE HE GETS REBORN OR SOMETHING, THE LAZY BONES! SO, I’M GOING TO GO ON AHEAD.” He grabbed Asriel’s shoulders. Asriel hadn’t realized how much taller he was compared to Papyrus until that moment. “ASRIEL, YOU’RE GOING TO BE GREAT! JUST REMEMBER TO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF LIKE I BELIEVE IN YOU, MY FRIEND! AND FRISK, NEXT TIME WE SEE EACH OTHER I HOPE WE’LL BE FRIENDS AGAIN!”
Asriel pressed his hands to his eyes and nodded. “We will!” He said, speaking for both of them.

Papyrus laughed. “GOOD! NOW THEN.” He released the prince and turned towards the sky, his eyes sparkling with excitement. “SANS, YOU’D BETTER NOT BE SLACKING WHEN I GET THERE!” Asriel couldn’t bring himself to watch his best friend also fade away.

Asriel and Frisk had more time to prepare with their parents. Despite their parents aging normally finally, they still had a number of years on them. They prepared Asriel for the life he planned to have. Asriel held his mom close to him when his dad passed away. Asriel had nobody but Frisk left as Toriel said her goodbyes to her children.


“I love you.” Asriel whispered for both himself and Frisk. His mom’s smile always warmed Asriel’s chest. Asriel scattered his parents across their gardens outside. It seemed that most monsters had loved the outside. The tradition had long since switched from scattering the monster’s dust over their favorite things to the human equivalent of spreading the dust in the place outside the monster’s loved most.

That day Asriel climbed up one of the large hills and sat down on it. He curled up and hugged his knees, dropping his head onto them. His body trembled. The weight of his loneliness was doubled with Frisk’s own sorrow. Asriel took some heart in knowing he still had them.

“What do we do, Frisk?” He asked, his voice thick.

Frisk didn’t respond.

He laughed bitterly. “It hurts, right? I at least got one thing right as a flower. The more you care about someone, the more it hurts.”

Frisk didn’t respond again, although Asriel did feel their minor annoyance at bringing that up.

“Sorry.” He whispered. “I’m just . . . I’m so scared Frisk. We’re . . . we’re alone. What do we do?”

. . . We move forward. Frisk finally responded. We keep going. And we’ll see them again, right?

Asriel laughed again with a little more feeling in it. “When did you become religious?” He teased, referring to monsters adopting the idea of reincarnation from the humans.

When it allowed me to hope that we would see everyone again.

Asriel fell silent at that. He closed his eyes and allowed the last few drops of his tears to fall before he wiped them and stood up. He felt like he had cried so much these past couple of decades. He took a breath and straightened before he released it in a whoosh. The pain was still there and he knew he would still be grieving later, but right now he had things to do. “Okay.” He told both himself and Frisk. “Let’s keep going then.”

Chapter End Notes

Alright a couple of things to talk about first:
1. I know a lot of you were expecting more closure between Sans and Frisk. You were
expecting it, actually. And I'm sorry to say this isn't what you wanted. It's not to leave any loose ends hanging or anything, it's just that Sans will not talk about Gaster with anybody for a long while yet. He's dealing with things on his own, and I was trying to show that through the ending of Hollow Eyes. So if you wanted a talk between the two of them I'm afraid you're not going to get it.

2. Some of you may be disappointed by the "cliche'd" Frisk-Gives-Flowey-A-Soul. I wrote this story entirely based on what I think would happen after Undertale. There's very little self-indulgence in it. I honestly believe Frisk would give Flowey their soul. Now if you want a different ending, that will be in the Alternate Ending. That one has a, I believe, creative ending that I don't think anyone else has considered before. So if this ending doesn't do it for you, hopefully the next one will!

3. For those of you who read the RT AU, you can consider this epilogue taking place after that universe too (meaning Sans was romantic with Frisk) or not. Either way, Frisk does give their soul to Asriel whether it's RT AU or DotPP.

Finally: That being said, thank you all for staying with me this entire trip! I've been overwhelmed by the feedback I've received. Honestly this entire story was basically an accident. I only meant to write Night Terrors (as that was my first Undertale fanfiction), but idea after idea sprang up and this occurred. I hope you guys will agree with me when I say this was a wonderful roller coaster of a trip. I'm a little sad to see it end, but I'm already onto the next ideas in my head! Join me for another final heartbreaking alternate ending coming out hopefully by Monday. With that, the series will be complete.

I will see any and all of you who wish to join me in my next Undertale projects! Please leave a review (I don't care how long because all reviews are great) about what you thought about, well, everything if you want! You can follow me on tumblr for any updates or random shit!

Thank you again!!
The playground was filled with screaming children all around Frisk’s age. Frisk hung back and off to the side as they watched the kids climb across the various floating and colorful playground equipment. This school was strange to them seeing as they had just moved here with their family. They missed their momma and papa. Their twin Chara had already run off to search for their elder brother Asriel amongst the many children. Chara had told Frisk to stay put so they would be able to find them again.

Frisk shuffled their feet, staring down at the band-aid across their knee. It could’ve easily been healed with the salve that their momma had, but Frisk had liked the little cartoon monster designs that were on it so they could deal with the little sting of pain each time they shifted their weight. They looked back up to dodge backwards as a monster and human rushed by, the human swinging from the flying monster’s arms. Frisk watched them wanting to try too. They wondered if they would make many friends.

There was a longing in their chest that they couldn’t explain. Some of the children they had seen today reminded them of dreams that Frisk sometimes had, but they couldn’t remember what the dreams were about. It was probably because of all of the monsters. They missed people that they couldn’t even recall. Chara thought it was silly for Frisk to miss friends they never had, but Asriel had always been sympathetic even if he didn’t understand. Frisk wondered if they were just being weird.

“hey kid.” Frisk tensed up at the sudden voice behind them. It sounded scary, but . . . familiar? “don’t you know how to greet an old friend? turn around and give me a hug.”

The words echoed through Frisk’s head. They knew those words from somewhere. They didn’t hesitate to turn around, only to come face-to-face with a dark-skinned boy who looked to be a couple years older than then. His hair was the color of snow, but his bright blue eyes sparkled with a humor Frisk somehow knew from the very core of their soul. Beside him was a boy from Frisk’s class who was clearly his brother. His name started with a P, Frisk believed. He pointed at Frisk.

“SEE?” He shouted. “THAT’S FRISK! THE ONE YOU’VE BEEN DREAMING ‘BOUT, RIGHT?”

The older boy chuckled, his eyes softening. “yeah, sure looks like it.” He opened his arms with a shrug as an offering that Frisk could take or leave. “whadd’ya say, kiddo? hug for old times’ sake?”
Frisk didn’t know this boy’s name, but they knew him somehow. They didn’t hesitate to throw themselves into his arms, burying their face into his jacket-covered chest. “Sans!” They whispered, the name springing to their lips.

Another laugh rumbled in the boy’s chest. “heya, frisk.” As another pair of arms wrapped around Frisk from behind, a warmth replaced the longing in Frisk’s chest. They’d found them.

Chapter End Notes

That's the final chapter of this story! I wanted to give a special thanks to my beta joviamod for all her hard work and to my friends Otter and Nurse Joy who have helped to give me ideas and feedback! Without them this story would've been a lot worse, probably! And it would've taken a lot longer to finish! THANK YOU GUYS!

If you enjoyed this series, please consider checking out my next series "The Fallen Children"!

Works inspired by this one. Missed Call by SmashQ, SAVE Usurped by SmashQ

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!