CharaTale
by agentaace

Summary

Chara wakes up to being dead. They don't know how long they've been dead, or why they woke up. All they do know is that this blind kid next to them needs their help. And that help will be given, whether Chara likes it or not, because their Souls are connected somehow.

Featuring a narrator!Chara, and blind!Frisk, with the rest of the cast also. Basically, a re-write of the Undertale Pacifist route, but with embellishments from Chara and Frisk.
I'm supposed to be dead?

Chapter Notes

DISCLAIMER: I don't own anything! I don't even own like half of this fic, since half of it's dialogue from the actual game! This is more of a theory fic than anything else, so don't think that I really own anything!

Chapter 1
Part 1- The Ruins

Long ago, two races ruled over Earth: Humans and Monsters. One day, war broke out between the two races. After a long battle, the humans were victorious. They sealed the monsters underground with a magic spell. Many years later…

Mt. Ebott, 201X: Legends say that those who climb the mountain never return…

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A loud thud disturbs me from my sleep. I blink open my eyes to see a kid, lying face down not far from me. They aren’t moving. I rub my eyes, and think that I must have been sleeping a very long time. Wait, not asleep. Dead. I’m dead. The kid shifts a little, and looks up. They must see me, they’re looking straight at me. I wonder if I’m invisible. Neither of us speak. I walk over to them, and offer a hand.

“Need some help?” I ask. They don’t say anything, or make any motion to accept my help. “Hey, I’m trying to help you. It’s kind of rude to ignore me,” I say, snapping my fingers. They finally take my hand, after missing it a couple times. At least I am corporeal. I pull them to their feet. They’re kind of wobbly, and they haven’t let go of my hand. They look around, eyes barely open, if at all.

“It’s dark,” They whisper.

“That’s because your eyes are closed, stupid,” I say. They don’t respond. Or open their eyes. I begin to tug their hand, and they follow easily.

“Where are we going?” They ask. I shrug.

“We can’t stay here forever, I guess,” I answer.

“Could you describe where we are?” They ask, after we’ve walked a couple steps. I stop, and they run into me a little bit.

“Um, sure? You’re in a dark cavern, with a really tall ceiling. You landed in a bed of flowers. Oh, and there’s a couple of pillars to the sides,” I say.

“Thank you.” They nod.

“Yeah, but why?” I ask.

“I’m blind,” They answer simply. I blink for a couple seconds.
“Oh,” We walk a little bit in silence, down a dark stone hall. I feel like I remember it from somewhere, but I can’t place it. “Then would you like for me to continue to narrate?” I ask. They nod. “Yes, please.”

“You’re approaching some pillars, an entrance into a new room. It’s still very dark.” As we step into the next room, a small flower is sitting in a patch of grass.

“Howdy!” The flower says. It has a face. Are flowers supposed to have faces? I think not. “I’m FLOWEY. FLOWEY the FLOWER!” It says.

The kid looks at me in slight alarm, and I tell them, “It’s a flower, sitting in a patch of grass. It has a face, and it’s smiling.” The flower doesn’t acknowledge that I spoke, which I think is also odd.

“Hmmm. You’re new to the underground, aren’cha? Golly, you must be so confused. Someone ought to teach you how things work around here!” I stare at the flower in curiosity. “I guess little old me will have to do.” I have a bad feeling about this. “Ready? Here we go!”

“The room got darker, and there’s a heart floating in front of you,” I tell the kid. They just nod. I wonder if I should explain to them the rules of combat?

“See that heart?” The flower asks the kid. I laugh a little at its choice of words. “That is your SOUL. The very culmination of your being!” The kid uses an outstretched hand to move the heart around a little. It looks like they know where the heart is without me having to tell them. Which is lucky, or else I’d have to basically fight for them. And where’s the fun in that?

“Your SOUL starts off weak, but can grow strong if you gain lots of LV.” My attention drifts off a little, since I already know all this. But the flower continues. “What’s LV stand for? Why, LOVE, of course! You want some LOVE, don’t you?”

“You really don’t want any LOVE,” I tell the kid. “It’s a misleading name.” They look at me in confusion.

“Don’t worry, I’ll share some with you!” The flower winks, and a pellet appears.

“Those are bad,” I warn. “You don’t want them, they’ll hurt you.”

“Down here, LOVE is shared through little white ‘friendliness pellets’! Are you ready? Move around, get as many as you can!” Of course, the kid doesn’t take my helpful advice, and runs straight into the pellets.

The flower’s face turns borderline demonic. “The flower’s face turned very scary-looking. Lots of teeth,” I say nervously. The kid looks scared, and grips my hand tighter as they feel the tension in the room grow. A cut appears on their hand.

“You idiot,” The flower says, its voice changed from before. “In this world, it’s kill or BE killed.” I nod in agreement.

“It’s right, you know. That’s the only way to live here.” They just shake their head. The flower continues to ignore me.

“Why would ANYONE pass up an opportunity like this?!” A ring of pellets surrounds the kid’s heart. They can evidently feel that, must be some kind of soul-seeing, or sensing thing. I don’t really care. “DIE,” The flower says, chuckling demonically.

As the circle closes in, and the kid grows more and more panicked, it stops. “The flower looks
shocked. Some fire magic appeared! The flower is gone!” I smile. The kid shakely smiles back. A woman steps out, and my smile drops. I duck behind the kid’s back, and crouch down so that she won’t see me. I remember her. The kid turns around in confusion, and taps my head. “Um, yeah. A lady in a purple dress is here. She has long goat-ears, and is covered in white fur;” I say, my eyes closed. I don’t want to look at her. I still hate her too much. They turn their attention back to Toriel.

“What a terrible creature, torturing such a poor, innocent youth...” She says. “Ah, do not be afraid, my child. I am TORIEL, caretaker of the RUINS. I pass through this place every day to see if anyone has fallen down.” I guess that I’m the cause of that. I hadn’t realized before that the place me and the kid woke up was the very same place I fell. “Are you looking for something?” She asks, as the kid turns to look down at me. They turn back to her and shake their head. “Well, you are the first human to come here in a long time. Come! I will guide you through the catacombs.” She holds out her hand to the kid, and they take it hesitantly. “This way,” She says, leading them down another black corridor.

I trail behind, wondering why Toriel hasn’t acknowledged me yet. I mean, it’s not like she wouldn’t remember me, right? How long had I been dead? Can she just not see me? The kid could. Wait, actually they can’t. I wonder if there’s a reason they can hear me. Ah well, I’ll just keep them around out of curiosity.

“You go through more pillars into a new room,” I say. Toriel still doesn’t do anything. “The walls are purple, and the floor is also purple. There’s some dead leaves on the ground, and ahead is the entrance to the ruins.” We all walk to the entrance, and the kid looks around. Even though they can’t see. “Um, the shadow of the ruins looms above.” I glance at the kid while Toriel waits at the top of the stairs. “Filling you with determination. And you’re fully healed.” They smile at me as the cut on their hand disappears. We move forwards. “That was a SAVE point,” I say. We go up the stairs. “It’s where you’ll start again if you die.” They look at me worriedly. “Don’t worry, you probably won’t die.” We continue into the ruins.

“Welcome to your new home, innocent one. Allow me to educate you in the operation of the RUINS.” Toriel says. She walks in a careful path over a series of tiles. The kid pokes me. “Not important,” I say. They stick their tongue out at me. “It’s not,” I whine. “She just walked over some tiles and flipped a lever. Everything’s still purple, there’s a sign on the wall.”

“The ruins are full of puzzles,” Toriel explains. “Ancient fusions between diversions and doorkeys. One must solve them to move from room to room. Please adjust yourself to the sight of them.” I snicker again.

“Toriel left the room,” I say. The kid walks up to the sign I mentioned, and pokes me. I roll my eyes. “It says: ‘Only the fearless may proceed. Brave ones, foolish ones. Both walk not the middle road.’ It’s the key to the puzzle. You can’t step on the middle tiles,” I explain. They nod, and follow Toriel out of the room. “You’re in a new room. There’s vines on the walls, there’s a couple of signs, and there’s a bridge over a river. Toriel is a couple steps in front of you.”

“To make progress here, you will need to trigger several switches. Do not worry, I have labeled the ones you need to flip.” Toriel walks down the room some. The kid walks up to the sign.

“It reads: ‘Press [Z] to read signs!’ Um… I guess… I don’t know what that means,” I admit. They walk to the other sign, on the wall. “Stay on the path.” I read. “There’s a path. I don’t think it actually matters, to be honest,” I shrug. Never mattered for me. They look at me weird. We walk over the bridge, and I point out a switch to their left. The walk over to it, while I read Toriel’s note. “Please press this switch. -Toriel.” We flip the switch. Toriel nods and walks a little farther down the room. We walk over another bridge, and to the next switch. “Please press this switch too. -Toriel,” I
“Splendid!” Toriel says. “I am proud of you, little one! Let us move to the next room.” The kid beams at the praise, while I roll my eyes. They’re not four, you know! They’re like… I don’t know, ten? We walk to the next room. “As a human living in the UNDERGROUND, monsters may attack you. You will need to be prepared for this situation. However, worry not! The process is simple. When you encounter a monster, you will enter a FIGHT. While you are in a FIGHT, strike up a friendly conversation. Stall for time. I will come to resolve the conflict. Practice talking to the dummy,” She says.

We walk up to the dummy. “You encountered the dummy,” I say. “You have four options, FIGHT, ACT, ITEM, and MERCY. Pretty self-explanatory.”

“ACT,” They say, and select the dummy.

“Check or talk?” I ask. I hate having to spell everything out for them. But without me, they’d get absolutely nowhere, and there wouldn’t be anything interesting in this world.

“Check,” They say.

“The Dummy has 0 Attack, and 0 Defense. A cotton heart and a button eye. You are the apple of my eye,” I sigh. “…Dummy looks like it’s going to fall over. Your turn again.”

“Talk,” They say.

“You talk to dummy… It doesn’t seem much for conversation. Toriel seems happy with you.” I look sideways at a grinning Toriel. “You won! You earned 0 XP and 0 gold.”

“Ah, very good! You are very good,” Toriel says. We continue into the next room. “There is another puzzle in this room… I wonder if you can solve it?”

“There’s a path on the floor.” I, of course, already know the solutions to all the puzzles. They haven’t changed since I died. I won’t give up the answers, though. “More through here, there’s a sign on the wall. It says- wait, Froggit attacks you!” I’m cut off as we enter a FIGHT.

“Act,” The kid says without hesitation.

“You can check, compliment, or threaten,” I say.

“Compliment,” They answer with a smile.

“The Froggit didn’t understand what you said, but was flattered anyway,” I say boredly. “Toriel appeared and scared the Froggit away.” I feel like that’s cheating. “You won! You earned 0 XP and 0 gold… Again.” I continue where we were earlier. “Anyways, the sign says: ‘The western room is the eastern room’s blueprint.’ There’s a floor made of spikes in front of Toriel, be careful,” I warn. We all approach the puzzle when Toriel stops us.

“This is the puzzle, but… Here, take my hand for a moment,” She says. Oh, this is so cheating. Unfair. She guides the kid through the spike maze perfectly, as I walk behind them. “Puzzles seem a little too dangerous for now,” She says. I scoff. We enter the next room. “You have done excellently thus far, my child. However… I have a difficult request to ask of you… I would like you to walk to the end of the room by yourself. Forgive me for this.” With that, Toriel runs away from us. The atmosphere grows surprisingly very tense, very fast.

“Don’t be scared, you baby. Just walk forwards,” I say. They hold out their hand. I take it and pull
them quickly through the room. This is ridiculous. We stay on the path, though. It’s a long room. Finally we reach the end, where a pillar suspiciously lurks. “Toriel came out from behind the pillar,” I explain. The tense atmosphere dissolves instantly.

“Greetings, my child. Do not worry, I did not leave you. I was merely behind this pillar the whole time. Thank you for trusting me. However, there was an important reason for this exercise… To test your independence. I must attend to some business, and you must stay alone for a while. Please remain here. It’s dangerous to explore by yourself. I have an idea.” Toriel rustles in her pockets for a second. “I will give you a cell phone. If you have a need for anything, just call. Be good, alright?”

“She’s gone,” I say. The kid looks down, disappointed. They move to sit down. “What are you doing?” I ask.

“Sitting.”

“I mean why.”

“She said to stay here,” They say.

“And yet, we’re obviously not doing that,” I say, rolling my eyes again.

“Why not?”

“Because no. I’m leaving you if you don’t follow.” I turn and walk out of the room. “I’m going!” I call. “I’m gone…” I whisper.

“Wait!” I smile. The kid runs up to me, and I hold their hand again. “You’re a bad person.” They frown.

“I’ve been called worse,” I shrug.

“That’s-” They’re cut off when the phone rings.

“Hello? This is Toriel. You have not left the room, have you?” She asks. The kid shoots a glare in my general direction as I frantically shake my head. But they can’t see that, can they?

“Just say no!” I say out loud.

“…No,” They answer.

“Good. There are a few puzzles ahead that I have yet to explain. It would be dangerous to try to solve them yourself. Be good, alright?” She hangs up.

We look at each other and laugh.
These Ruins will never end, will they?

Chapter 2

The kid holds the cell phone curiously. “You want to check out the cell phone?” I ask. They nod. I come closer to look at it over their shoulder. “You can check your LV, HP, gold, items, stats, or you can call Toriel.”

“What would I say to Toriel?”

“Well, you could say hello, ask her about herself, call her ‘mom’... Or, you could flirt.” I wiggle my eyebrows. It isn’t appreciated by anyone, though, so I stop. The kid decides to call.

“This is Toriel.”

“Hi, Toriel!”

“You only wanted to say hello…? Well then, ‘Hello!’ I hope that suffices. Hee hee.” The phone hangs up. The kid beams at me. I laugh a little.

And then they call again. “Hello, this is Toriel. You want to know more about me? Well, I am afraid there is not much to say. I am just a silly little lady who worries too much.” She hangs up. The kid seems satisfied with this.

“Describe the room?” They ask.

“There’s lots of leaf piles in here. A doorway leads up, and there’s also a doorway down and to the right. There’s a Froggit to your immediate left,” I explain. They begin to walk over to the leaf piles, but- “Froggit hopped up close!” We’ve entered another FIGHT.

“Act! Then check,” The kid says, remembering the Froggit options from before.

“The Froggit has 4 attack, and 5 defense. Life is difficult for this enemy,” I say. The frog ribbits, and actually attacks. Luckily, they sense the attack without me saying anything, and quickly move their soul out of the way of the magic attack. But not fast enough, and they are hit. HP drops to 15, and a cut appears on their cheek this time. It’s kind of deep. “Froggit doesn’t seem to know why it’s here,” I narrate.

“Act again. Compliment,” They say.

“It didn’t understand what you said, but was flattered anyway. It blushes deeply and ribbits,” I tell them. They are more prepared for the next attack, and skillfully dodge it without getting hit. “Froggit seems reluctant to fight you. This means you can MERCY it. But I, personally, think you should just kill it.”

The kid looks sharply at me, and says, “Mercy!”

“Spare or flee?” I ask with a sigh.

“Spare!” They smile.

“You won. You earned 0 XP and 2 gold. You’re rich,” I say dryly. The FIGHT ends, and the kid makes a beeline for the leaf pile before jumping in. I recognize a SAVE point. “Playfully crinkling through the leaves fills you with determination. HP fully restored. Your determination is what creates...
SAVE points,” I explain. We decide to go into the room to the north first. “There’s a bowl of candy sitting on a pedestal, and rivers to the sides of the room.” They point to the candy bowl. “It says, ‘Take one.’ Take a piece of candy?” I ask.

“Yes.” They reach in and grab a single candy.

“You take a piece of candy. You can look at your items on your cell phone. Take another piece of candy?” I ask.

“Yes?”

“You took another piece. Disgusting,” I smirk. They frown at me.

“You tricked me.”

“Yes.” We leave the room, entering the same room from before. We ignore the Froggit and leave through the other exit. “It’s a new room. There’s cracks in the floor all down the middle, though. And a slot on either side of the room.” They cautiously walk to the other side, but the floor cracks more and they fall down a hole. I sigh and jump down after them. “We’re in a room with lots of leaves down the middle.” I say as I land beside them. “There’s two exits, one to the left and one to the right. We should go through the one on the right,” I say, not wanting to waste time.

They nod and we leave through the right doorway, emerging in the upper room, on the other side of the cracked floor. As we leave that room and enter another, the cell phone rings again.

“Hello? This is Toriel. For no reason in particular… Which do you prefer? Cinnamon or butterscotch?” Toriel asks. I answer cinnamon at the same time as the kid answers butterscotch. But, Toriel can’t hear my voice, so she ignores me. I look at the kid in betrayal. “Oh, I see. Thank you very much.” She hangs up.

“Butterscotch?” I ask. I had always preferred cinnamon over butterscotch, ever since Toriel- ...Never mind.

They shrug. “It’s really yummy.”

“But over cinnamon?” I ask incredulously. Before they can answer, the phone rings again. I missed the peace and quiet.

“Hello, this is Toriel. You do not DISLIKE cinnamon, do you? I know what your preference is, but… Would you turn up your nose if you found it on your plate?” She asks. Wait a second, is she…? No, it can’t be. Before either of us can answer, she continues, “Right, right, I understand. Thank you for being patient, by the way.” She hangs up.

“She didn’t give us a chance to answer,” I say in confusion. The kid just shrugs, not bothered by it. We enter another room. “There’s a sign on the wall, and a rock sitting by an upraised tile. A wall of spikes is blocking the exit.” We walk to the sign and I read, “Three out of four grey rocks recommend you push them.” The kid frowns, and walks over to the rock. They push it onto the tile, and we hear a click.

“What happened?” They ask.

“The wall of spikes is gone,” I answer. The nod and we continue forward into the next room. But, not before being stopped by a monster. “Whimsun approached meekly!” I say as we enter the FIGHT.
“Act.”

“Check, console, or terrorize.”

“Check.”

“Whimsun has attack 5 and defense 0. This monster is too sensitive to fight…” I say.

“Forgive me…” Says the Whimsun as it attacks. The kid only gets hit once, losing 4 HP.

“Whimsun continues to mutter apologies,” I say.

“Act, then console.”

“Halfway through your first word, Whimsun bursts into tears and runs away. You won! You earned 0 XP and 0 gold,” I say as the kid looks at me sadly. “What?”

“I feel bad for the Whimsun,” They say.

“Don’t. You won, didn’t you? Though you didn’t get anything out of it,” I mutter.

“That’s not the point!” They say. “It wouldn’t even let me console it!”

“It’s a monster, who cares?”

“I do!”

“Then you’re a pansy,” I say. I grab their hand and begin to walk, forcing them to follow. We enter the next room. “It’s a puzzle. The floor is all cracked.” I let go of their hand to let them figure it out on their own. They walk forward, and fall down a hole predictably.

“I need to know what’s down here!” They call. I sigh and cross my arms, but jump down after them.

“There’s a path in the middle of a bunch of leaves. And a sign over here.” I guide them to the sign. “It says ‘Please don’t step on the leaves.’

“I can’t even see the leaves,” They pout.

“Fine,” I whine. “I’ll do it for you, but just this once.” We head back up to the upper room, and I take their hand again. “Stay close.” I guide them through the puzzle, picturing the placement of the leaves in my mind. And I don’t even mess up once. We go through the doorway. “Ok, now we’re in a room with three more grey rocks and tiles. There’s a river, and the bridge over that is covered in spikes.”

We push one of the rocks onto it’s tile. As we move to the second- “Moldsmal blocked the way!” We enter a FIGHT.

“Act.”

“Check, imitate… You can flirt with this one.” I wiggle my eyebrows, but they don’t see. It makes me a little angry. The kid giggles anyway, though.

“Flirt.” The kid, as it turns out, is the flirt-master. They wiggle their hips at the Moldsmal.

“Squorch,” Says the Moldsmal. The kid gets hit once, bringing their HP to 12.

“Moldsmal waits pensively,” I say. I debate telling them to heal, but decide not to. Not my problem if they die.

“Act, imitate.”

“You lie immobile with Moldsmal. You feel like you understand the world a little better.” I get an amused look. They dodge all the attacks this time, and Moldsmal continues to wait pensively.

“Act, check.”

“You know you can spare it now?” I get a nod. “Alright. Moldsmal has attack 6 and defense 0. Stereotypical: curvaceously attractive, but no brains…” This gets a laugh. They dodge, and finally MERCY and spare it. “You won! You earned 0 XP and 1 gold! This brings our total to 3 gold. Amazing.”

We push the second rock into place, but the third gives us trouble. “WHOA there, pardner!” The kid looks around frantically for the source of the voice.

“It’s the rock,” I whisper. Even though I know it can’t hear me.

“Who said you could push me around?” The rock says.

“Um, could you move, please?” The kid asks.

“HMM? So you’re ASKIN’ me to move over? Okay, just for you, pumpkin.” It moves forward only a couple inches. We nudge it a little. “HMM? You want me to move some more? Alrighty, how’s this?” It moves up a little.

“Wrong direction!” The kid says.

“HMM? That was the wrong direction?” It asks. “Okay, think I got it.” The rock finally moves onto the switch. We walk over to where the spikes were, but of course, they reappear as the rock moves off the switch.

“Nooooooo…” I groan. The kid laughs at my suffering. They think this is some kind of game, don’t they? We walk back to the rock and glare accusingly at it.

“HMM? You wanted me to STAY there?” We both nod. “You’re giving me a real workout,” It says, and moves onto the switch. I put up my middle finger at it. No one sees, but I am satisfied. We cautiously walk over the bridge, certain spikes will pop up at any moment.

We enter a new room. “There’s a mouse hole and a table with some cheese on it.” We hear a mouse squeak. We choose to investigate the cheese on the table. “This cheese has been here quite a long time. It’s stuck to the table…” I remark. “But knowing the mouse might one day leave its hole and get the cheese… It fills you with determination. HP fully restored, new SAVE point.”
Here Comes Napstablook

Chapter 3

We continue onwards. “There’s a ghost lying on the floor, blocking our way,” I say.

“ZZZZZZZZ...ZZZZZZZZ...ZZZZZZZZ... are they gone yet?...ZZZZZZZZ...” This ghost keeps saying ‘Z’ out loud repeatedly, pretending to sleep. It’s being a nuisance, and blocking our progress. I hate it already. Also, I hate the letter ‘Z’ now.

“Should we move it with force?” I ask. “The answer is yes. We should,” I say before the kid can answer. The shoot me a look. I’m not entirely sure what it means. “Here comes Napstablook,” I say as we enter a FIGHT. For some reason I recognize this ghost.

“Act.”

“Check, threat, flirt, or cheer.” I like to give out the flirt option. I like to see what they do with it.

“Check.”

“Napstablook has attack 10, defense 10. This monster doesn’t seem to have a sense of humour…” I explain.

“oh, i’m REAL funny…” It responds, and begins to cry. Can it hear me? It’s pellets are the tears, which the kid mostly dodges, but ends up losing 4 HP. The faint odor of ectoplasm permeates the vicinity.

“Act, cheer.” They give Napstablook a patient smile.

“heh…” The ghost says. “really not feelin up to it right now, sorry.” It doesn’t attack this turn. The kid looks at it sympathetically, but I just roll my eyes.

“Napstablook looks just a little bit better.”

“Act, cheer.” They tell Napstablook a little joke.

“heh heh…” It starts crying again, but it’s all dodged except one. HP is now at 13.

“Cheering seems to have improved Napstablook’s mood again,” I comment.

“Act, cheer again!”

“Napstablook… Wants to show you something?” I frown. “His tears are going up, to make…”

“i call it ‘dapper blook’,” He says. “do you like it…”

“Oh, it’s a hat!” I say. “Napstablook eagerly awaits your response.”

“Cheer!” The kid says. We exit the FIGHT, surprisingly.

“ohhh… i usually come to the RUINS because there’s nobody around… but today i met somebody nice…” The ghost says. “...oh, i’m rambling again. i’ll get out of your way”

“He’s gone,” I say. “Finally.”
“Be nice. His hat was neat,” The kid scolds me.

“You couldn’t even see his hat,” I retort.

“I could feel it. It was made of magic,” They say.

“Oh, is that how you work?” I ask. They nod. “So that’s how you’re able to fight on your own…” They nod again. “I think I get it. Your soul is very strong, for a human like you, so it can sense things you can’t see. No wonder you haven’t died once yet.” Another nod, with a smile. I understand the world a little better now. “Anyways, there’s a doorway to your right, and one straight ahead.” They move forward, into the room ahead. I follow them in. “There’s a sign, in front of some, uh, spider webs. One big one and one small one,” I say.

“The sign,” They say.

“It says: ‘Spider Bake Sale. All proceeds go to real spiders.’ Creepy. I hate spiders,” I tell them. They point at the smaller spider web. “It wants 7 gold. Which we don’t have. The bigger web? It wants 18 gold. Which we really don’t have,” I sigh.

“We need more gold,” They tell me.

“I know.”

“We should go get some,” They press

“Do you want to kill something? Because that’s the easiest-”

“No! Absolutely not! Killing is awful. I’m not going to kill anything,” They interrupt, crossing their arms.

“Good luck with that.” I mutter. "Fine, but it will take longer. Let’s go get some gold,” I relent.

We walk around the ruins that we’ve already explored for a bit, then come back into the spider bake sale room. By the time we’re done, the kid’s HP is at 9.

“Some spiders crawled down and gave you a donut. I wouldn’t eat it if I were you,” I say. I know the spiders can’t hear me, but I wouldn’t care if they could. The kid pulls out their cell phone to look at the new item. And the monster candy that we both forgot about.

“What is the Monster Candy?” They ask me,

“It heals 10 HP, and it has a distinct, non-licorice flavor,” I say.

“What?” They frown at me.


“If it’s not licorice, then what is it?”


“What’s spider cider?” They ask.
“No clue,” I answer. “That’s what it says on the tag. Do you want to give the other web 18 gold? We have the gold now,” I ask. They nod, and put the money in the web. “Some spiders crawled down and gave you a jug.”

“Info?” They ask, looking at the cell phone.

“It’s Spider Cider.” I laugh. “It heals 24 HP. Made with whole spiders, not just the juice.” I shudder.

“Gross.”

“Yes. Let’s continue.” We leave the room and go out the other door to where we haven’t explored yet. “There’s a sign and three Froggits in this room,” I say.

“Sign?”

“It says: ‘Did you miss it? Spider Bakesale down and to the right. Come eat food made by spiders, for spiders, of spiders!’” I shudder. “We got that, so no worries.” We walk to the first Froggit.

“Ribbit, ribbit,” It says. Then it sighs.

“I can translate Froggit, don’t worry. ‘My friend never listens to me. Whenever I talk, they skip through my words by pressing [X]. That’s right… Pressing [X]… Well, at least you listen to me,’” I translate. Even though those words had no meaning to me, and I wished that I could skip over them.

We walk to the next Froggit. “Ribbit, ribbit,” It says.

“I heard using ‘F4’ can make you have a ‘full screen.’ But what does F4 stand for? Four frogs? I have only ever seen a maximum of three frogs in this room… This is troubling, to say the least.” I don’t really care about any of this. We move on to the third Froggit. “It says, ‘I have heard that you are quite merciful, for a human… Surely you know by now a monster wears a YELLOW name when you can SPARE it. What do you think of that?’”

“Very helpful!” The kid smiles.

“It is rather helpful. Remember, sparing is just saying that you won’t fight. Maybe one day, you’ll have to do it even if their name isn’t yellow,” I translate. We begin to walk to the exit of the room, but are stopped by a FIGHT! “Migosp crawled up close!” I say as I hold out an arm to stop the kid from running into the monster.

“Act, check.”

“Migosp has attack 7, defense 5. It seems evil, but it’s just with the wrong crowd…” I say.

“FILTHY SINGLE MINDER…” Says the Migosp. The kid loses 4 HP, dropping them to 15.

“Mercy, spare.”

“But you can’t- oh alright. Even if it’s not yellow,” I sigh. We spare the Migosp.

“La la~ Just be yourself~” It says. It does a little dance instead of attacking. Sparing seems to have worked.

“Migosp doesn’t have a care in the world,” I say. We spare it again, and move on. “You won! You earned 0 XP and 2 gold.”

The phone rings again. I groan loudly. “Hello? I just realized that it has been a while since I have
cleaned up. I was not expecting to have company so soon. There are probably a lot of things lying about here and there. You can pick them up, but do not carry more than you need. Someday you might see something you really like. You will want to leave room in your pockets for that.” Toriel hangs up. We finally exit the frog room.

“New room. There looks like 6 different cracked spots, all spread out. A slot is to your right. Spikes block the exit. A switch must be down one of the holes.” We decide to fall down the first hole and are quickly greeted by a new enemy. “Vegetoid came out of the earth!” I say as we enter another FIGHT.

“Act.”

“Check, talk, devour, or dinner,” I say.

“Talk.”

“Plants Can’t Talk, Dummy,” The plant says. I frown. It attacks, and this one looks much harder to dodge. They only get hit once, but lose 5 HP, bringing them to 10. At this point, they have several bruises.

“Vegetoid gave a mysterious smile,” I say. I don’t like this one.

“Act, dinner,” They say, patting their stomach.

“Eat Your Greens,” It says, as vegetables rain down. The kid gets hit once, making me nervous. HP now at 5. A couple of cuts appear. But, they do manage to get the green vegetable, upping their health by 3. The Vegetoid cackles softly.

“You can spare it now,” I inform. They spare the Vegetoid.

We move on to the hole to our left. After looking down before jumping in, I decide it’s not really worth our time. “Just a faded ribbon down this one,” I say.

Of course, the kid immediately jumps down that hole, and picks up the ribbon after feeling around for it. They make it back up to the room themselves.

“Why’d you do that?” I ask. “That was a huge waste of time.”


“Plus 5 defense. I guess if you’re cuter, monsters won’t hit you as hard,” I say. They immediately put the ribbon on, tying it around their hair. We go to the hole next to that one, and I see that ghost from earlier.

“Anything?”

“Just Napstablook,” I say.

“Let’s go, then,” They say as they jump down. I groan. Again.

“i fell down a hole…” The ghost says. “now i cant get up… go on without me… wait, ghosts can fly, cant they… oh well…” It then fades away into nothingness, presumably going back to wherever it came from.

“Isn’t he a joy?” I ask sarcastically. We go up to the upper room, and go in the center-top hole. To my relief, there’s a switch. “Finally.” We press the switch, and leave the room without incident.
“New room. There’s three pillars, and a lever next to each one. A sign to the right.” I say. We walk to the sign first, predictably. “It says: ‘The far door is not an exit. It simply marks a rotation in perspective.’”

“What does that mean?”

“Not sure yet.” We decide to ignore everything for now, with myself leading the kid around the pillars and levers. Which I don’t see the point of, since the door’s wide open. We go through that, and I stop short.

“What is it?” They ask.

“We’re in another room with three pillars with three levers. It’s not the same room, though, the layout is different, and there’s spikes blocking the exit,” I say in confusion.

“Are you sure it’s the exact same room?”

“I don’t know. Here, you can figure this one out,” I say, crossing my arms.

“Ok. Is there anything else in the room?” They ask. My eyes narrow in on a sign across the room.

“Yeah, another sign. ‘If you can read this, press the blue switch.’”

“A color puzzle? You know I can’t solve this on my own,”

“Yeah, alright. There’s a blue switch right over there, you press it.” I say, turning them to face the right direction. We begin to walk, but, of course, “Loox drew near!”

“Act, check.”

“Loox has attack 6, and defense 6. Don’t pick on him. Also, family name is Eyewalker.” I get a blank look. “Come on, Loox Eyewalker. It’s funny, admit it.” They smile at me, but I’m not sure they really got the joke.

“Act?”

“Your other options are to pick on or to not pick on.”

“Don’t pick on!” They say. I was kind of hoping they would pick the other one. I mean realistically I knew they wouldn’t, but hey, dead kids can dream too. They manage not to get hit at all this time, which is lucky for them, being at 8 health. I feel like we should save the spider stuff for later, in case we really need it.

Also, I really wanted to know what would happen to them when they died, so I accidentally-on-purpose don’t remind them to heal.

The Loox is spared and we are on our way. The kid presses the blue switch, and we can hear a faint clicking noise. We go through the doorway that was previously blocked, and into another room that looked nearly identical to the first. I relay this information, and go to read the sign on the wall. “If you can read this, press the red switch.” It’s across the room from where we are now.” I say.

Surprisingly enough, we make it there without being attacked. The kid presses the switch, and we hear the spikes go back into the ground. We hurry into the next room, another of the same puzzle.

This time it’s the green switch. I see it hiding behind a pillar.

“A pair of Vegetoids emerge from the earth!” I wince. These were probably the most difficult
enemies we had encountered, even though their attack could heal you.

“Act, dinner,” The kid says.

“The Vegetoid offers a healthy meal.” The Vegetoids both attack at once, sending a nearly impossible to dodge volley of bullets. They get hit once bringing HP to 3, and lunge for the green vegetable. They don’t make it in time.

GAME OVER
It's like home, but not

Chapter Notes

Today is day 30 of writing this fic! (I’ve been keeping track of my daily word count) As of posting this chapter, I’ve finished writing the first seven chapters, and I’m a little ways in to chapter 8. It just feels really good!

Chapter 4

You cannot give up just yet… Chara! Stay determined…

A memory flashes through my mind, of the last time I died. I sit up abruptly, to find myself on the ground next to the table with cheese on it. The sparkle of the SAVE point glimmers at me. I groan seeing we’ve been set back so far.

“Need some help?” A voice asks. To my left is the kid, already standing and smiling. All of their injuries are gone, and they’re at full health. I pull myself up with their outstretched hand and turn my back to them.

“We’ve gone back so far. This is going to take forever,” I sigh.

“Next time, remind me to eat?” They ask.

“Yeah, sure.” We go through the door, and see Napstablook on the floor, pretending to sleep again. Ugh.

We cheer up the ghost and send him on his way. We ignore the spider bake sale this time, since we still have those items, and we hurry through the Froggit room, and Toriel calls again, saying the same thing we already heard. Blah blah blah.

Finally, after what feels like hours but was probably like 20 minutes (still a pretty long time), we make it back to the room where we died. The kid’s health is at 15, which could be better, but is a marked improvement from what it was. We were attacked a couple times, obviously, but we only used one monster candy.

“Alright, just press the green switch, and we’ll be back on track. Whew, that detour took forever,” I say. They just nod. We enter a new room, for the first time in forever. “There’s some vines growing along the ground, shouldn’t be a problem, and a lot of dead leaves leading to a room to the left. But, if we continue forward, there’s another exit.” I recognize exactly where we are, now, and I want to avoid it at all costs to be honest. “I’m making this choice, though. We’re going forward.”

“Oh?” Is all they say. We pass the perhaps more obvious path, and go into a smaller room containing a single froggit.

“It’s saying: ‘Just between you and me… I saw Toriel come out of here just a little while ago. She was carrying some groceries. I didn’t ask what they were for… We’re all too intimidated to talk to her,’ I translate.

“What does that mean? Is Toriel going to be like Flowey?” The kid asks me in concern.
I laugh. “No, definitely not. Valid question, but no. I guess Flowey is one of a kind.”

“How do you know? How do you know Toriel?”

“Oh, you know. Ways. Anyway,” I change the subject, “the next room is on a balcony. We’re overlooking a decent-sized city, but it looks abandoned. Oh, hey! There’s a toy knife on the ground.”

“Why would I want a toy knife?” They ask. I wasn’t going to tell them that it was mine, though how it got there I wasn’t sure. It was super dusty and looked like it had been there a while. How long was I dead?

“Because, why would it be here if you didn’t need it? Think about it,” I press. I impatiently guide their hand to the knife, and they grip it themselves, equipping it.

“I feel dirty.” We go back past the Froggit. Leaving one path to go down. I guide the kid to the next area. We pass through the doorway.

“There’s a huge black tree in front of-”

“Oh, dear, that took longer than I thought.” Toriel appears. She pulls out her cell phone, as if to call us. She then sees the kid, almost drops the phone, and runs over. “How did you get here, my child? Are you hurt? There, there, I will heal you. I should not have left you alone for so long. It was irresponsible to try to surprise you like this.”

“Surprise?” We ask in unison.

“Err… Well I suppose I cannot hide it any longer. Come, small one!” She begins walking up to a familiar house in the Ruins.

“What were you saying about the tree?” The kid smiles at me before we follow Toriel.

“Yeah, right. Every time this old tree grows any leaves, they fall right off. That’s all,” I say. We hurry after Toriel, who has disappeared inside the house.

“I can sense a house here. It seems really cute!” I look at them bewildered. Then I see the sparkle in the leaves next to the house.

“Oh, it’s a SAVE point. Sensing such a cute, tidy house in the Ruins gives you Determination,” I say. HP fully restored. We go into Toriel’s house.

“Do you smell that?” Toriel asks. I wrinkle my nose as years of memories speed through my mind. “Surprise! It is a butterscotch-cinnamon pie. I thought we should celebrate your arrival. I want you to have a nice time living here. So I will hold off on snail pie for tonight. Here, I have another surprise for you.” She walks away to the right.

“We’re in Toriel’s house. It’s really nice, and there’s a staircase in front of us. There’s also a bookcase, and a table with a flower vase on it.” I didn’t say so out loud, but it looked remarkably similar to my home in the castle. We follow Toriel down the hallway, and stop in front of a replica of my room.

“This is it… A room of your own. I hope you like it!” Toriel ruffles the kid’s hair, making me cringe a little. My mom. My room. She then sniffs, and says, “Is something burning…? Um, make yourself at home!” She runs back down the hallway.

“Isn’t this cool?” The kid asks.
“What?”

“We’ve got our own room, and I really like Toriel. I feel like I have a family,” They say. It’s probably the most I’ve ever heard them talk.

“Toriel seems to have that effect,” I say. “Let’s check out the room.” We enter the room, and it’s really not that different from Asriel and I’s room at the castle. I wonder why Toriel isn’t at the castle anymore, and where Asgore is, and why she’s built a house completely identical here. The only differences in this room are that there’s only one bed, and an extra lamp and box. The kid walks over to the toy chest and nudges it.

“Look at all these cool toys!” I only recognize only a couple, the rest of them are new. And what kid doesn’t get excited over new toys? That question is answered a moment later, as I glance at their face. “They don’t interest you at all,” I say flatly, not even a question. They only smile apologetically and shake their head. Next they go across to the bookshelf where a framed photo of my family normally sat.

“Why is this empty?” They muse.

“It’s super dusty,” I add. They move to the box next to the bookshelf. “It’s a box of kid’s shoes in a disparity of sizes.”

“What?” They ask in slight alarm.

“Disparity means-”

“Yeah I know, but why is it here? How many kids have been here? ...And where are they now?” They step back from the box. I put my hand on their shoulder.

“It’s admittedly creepy, but I still don’t think we’re in any real danger. There’s a large possibility of being smothered to death, though. Lots of coddling and being taken care of,” I say this only slightly bitterly, but I’m telling the truth. I’m not sure how I feel about Toriel, but I do know that coddling gets old after a while. “You should get some sleep. It’s been a long day,” I suggest. I try to turn off the lamp myself.

My hand passes through it. I draw back my hand, shocked, and grab the kid’s hand. It doesn’t go through, and I can feel the heat coming off of them.

“What’s wrong?” They ask.

“I don’t know. My hand went through the lamp,” I say. I squeeze their hand again, and I’m certain that I’m solid.

“You feel real to me.” They smile at me. “I’ll turn it off, if it’s bothering you.” Their other hand finds the switch, and the room is plunged into darkness. I could still see outlines of everything, but no details, and I wonder if this is what the world ‘looks’ like for the kid.

“The bed’s over there,” I say, using their hand to point. They climb in, and quickly fall asleep. I don’t feel the least bit tired, so I try to wander the house. But I can’t leave the room. My hand reaches for the door handle, but glides straight through it. I groan. I had thought that that would happen, but I didn’t want it to be true. I try to pick up some toys, but that doesn’t work either. I decide to lay facedown on the floor, as is always the appropriate response to frustration.

…I can hear voices through the floor. It sounds like Toriel, and another voice I can’t place. Toriel laughs loudly, but the kid sleeps soundly and doesn’t stir when I check them. I press my ear to the
I can’t hear what they’re saying. I mostly just hear Toriel laughing. They seem to talk for a long time, Toriel’s laughter becoming less and less frequent. Then I hear her footsteps growing louder, and then fading away again.

A moment or two later, she’s directly outside of the room, and I quickly stand up. She cracks open the door, and smiles at the kid sleeping in the bed. Which used to belong to Asriel. Whatever. Not like I care about that crybaby anymore.

Toriel walks in as quietly as she can, and leaves a slice of pie on the ground. She leaves. I cautiously sniff the pie, and sure enough, it’s butterscotch-cinnamon pie. I remembered her making that a lot, before I died. I expect to feel some sort of hunger looking at it, but I don’t. I don’t feel much of anything anymore.

I lie back down on the carpet, and try to sleep. I must lay there for hours, but I never do get any sleep.

Finally it’s morning. The kid wakes up, and I haven’t moved from my spot next to the pie in hours. I should be sore, but I’m not. They climb out of the bed, and find the slice of pie on the floor. I hand it to them.

“Here, it’s butterscotch-cinnamon pie,” I say.

“How did it get here?” They ask.

“Toriel left it there while you were asleep.”

“Did you get any sleep?”

“Nope. Apparently I don’t need it,” I shrug. They frown at me, then shrug as well and we leave the room. I stand in front of the door. “Hey, I want to try something,” I say. “Walk down the hallway, I’ll wait here.” They look at me, confused, but comply.

“How far?” They ask.

“I don’t know, just keep going until something happens,” I say. They walk, and when they get to the second door down the hallway, something does happen.

I raise a couple inches off the ground, and my feet glide through the air a couple paces behind them as they walk further down the hallway. “Alright, whoa, stop!” I say, waving my arms for balance. They stop walking, and I land gently on the ground. I’m still a little ways behind them, so I run over and touch their hand.

“What happened?” They ask.

“I floated. That’s not supposed to happen,” I say.

“You were standing still, and when I got further away, you floated?” They say. And they may be on to something.

“Are you saying that I was… Out of range? Like I have to stay by you?” I ask. This sucks. I don’t want to be tethered to a child for the rest of my afterlife, like some balloon on a string. They just shrug, while I sigh angrily.

We passed a couple of plants in the hallway. I feel like I should know the names of them, but I think that I forgot. The kid decides to snoop, like any child, and we go into the first door. I remember that
it had always been under renovations back at the castle, and I am curious as to what’s inside.

“What’s this place?” They ask.

“It looks like it’s Toriel’s room.” I frown. “There’s a desk, a bookshelf, a queen-sized bed, and a dresser. And a cactus. Truly the most tsundere of plants,” I add, mostly for fun. The kid pokes at Toriel’s desk, and looks at me. “It’s Toriel’s diary. Read the circled passage?” I ask.

“I shouldn’t…”

“You should. Here, I’ll do it anyway. It says, ‘Why did the skeleton want a friend?... Because she was feeling BONELY.’ Wow, that was terrible,” I say. They snort in laughter. I peer at the diary. “The rest of the page is filled with jokes of a similar caliber.” I wrinkle my nose. Since when was Toriel into puns?

We cross the room to the bookshelf, merely glancing at the queen-sized bed before moving on. “There’s a bookshelf. Look at one for me, would ya?” I say. They grab a random book off the shelf and open it in the middle. Since they can’t read, I read it out loud for them. “Typha- A group of wetland flowering plants with brown, oblong seedpods. Known more commonly as ‘water sausages.’ It’s a plant encyclopedia.” We put away the book.

“What’s over here?” They ask, moving in front of the dresser. They open a drawer, and I peek inside.

“Oh, scandalous!” They turn their head sharply. I laugh. “It’s Toriel’s sock drawer.” We’ve seen all there is to see in this room, so we go out into the hallway. As we pass by a plant that we saw earlier, I remember what it’s called. “Oh! It’s a water sausage,” I inform them. We continue down the hallway, and get to the last room there. This was Toriel and Asgore’s room back home, but it looks like it’s not here. “Room under renovations,” I read out loud.

“Can we go inside?”

“No, it’s locked.” We walk to the end of the hallway, where a mirror hangs. “It’s you!” I say as we pass it. They look at me in confusion. I guess they can sense where I am all the time with their soul?

“What?” They ask.

“It’s a mirror.” I frown at it, though. My reflection isn’t there.

We go back down the hallway, and into the room with the stairs. I see a calendar in the open drawer, one from the year 201X. That’s the year I fell, wasn’t it? But this information doesn’t seem important enough to share it. We go into the next room, and see Toriel reading a book by the fire. She nods at us when we come in, then goes back to reading. We skip looking at the bookshelf seeing as it’s too much of a hassle, and look instead at the fireplace.

“The fire isn’t burning hot... Just pleasantly warm. You could put you hand inside.” I nudge the kid as I say this. The look at me in amused disgust, but otherwise ignore me. We turn over to Toriel.

“Up already, I see? Um, I want you to know how glad I am to have someone here. There are so many old books I want to share. I want to show you my favorite bug-hunting spot. I’ve also prepared a curriculum for your education,” Toriel says with a smile. And there it is, the excessive coddling. “This may come as a surprise to you... But I have always wanted to be a teacher... Actually, perhaps that isn’t very surprising. STILL. I am glad to have you living here. Oh, did you want something? What is it?”
“You should ask her when we can get out of this place,” I suggest. They shrug and seem to agree.

“When can I go home?” They ask. Toriel looks uncomfortable.

“What? This… This IS your home now. Um, would you like to hear about this book I am reading? It is called ‘72 Uses for Snails.’ How about it?”

“How do you exit the Ruins?” They ask persistently.

“Um… How about an exciting snail fact? Did you know that snails… sometimes flip their digestive systems as they mature? Interesting.” Toriel is obviously dodging the questions, even if she’s doing a terrible job at it.

“How do you exit the Ruins?” The kid asks again.

“...I have to do something,” Toriel says. She puts the book away and rushes off. The kid looks after her sadly.

“I have a feeling I won’t like this.”
Well, this is certainly a new experience

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 5- Well, this is certainly a new experience

The kid moves as if to follow Toriel. I don’t know where she’s going, but they aren’t the only one with a bad feeling about it. I want to put it off, and pretend that everything’s fine for a little while longer.

“Wait. There’s something I want to see first,” I say, putting a hand on their shoulder.

“What is it?”

“We never checked the kitchen.” They only shrug, and we go into the kitchen. I make a beeline for the fridge, which is where I always kept my chocolate. Toriel’s the one who always bought it, of course, but it was still mine. Nobody else liked chocolate the way I did. “Yesssss!” I say as they open the fridge. “There is chocolate!” I reach for the chocolate. My hand passes through it. I want to scream. This is truly the worst after-death punishment imaginable.

“Should I grab the chocolate or-”

“No! If I can’t eat it, you can’t either.” I’m acting petty but I really don’t care. I haven’t had chocolate in so long.

“Alright?”

“We should just go after Toriel,” I grumble. We go back through the living room.

“Where do you think she went?” The kid asks. I look around.

“It’s obvious, isn’t it? She went downstairs,” I say solemnly.

“Why do you think that? She could be in her room!” They say. I wish I could be as optimistic as they are. I knew Toriel back from when she was queen (assuming she’s not anymore.) She was always the real one in charge, not Asgore. Everyone knew it. I know that she’s more than she seems, and she was definitely hiding something from us. And it seemed important.

“She’s not. We shouldn’t waste anymore time, though. She could be doing something… not in our best interest.”

“What? No! She’s the best person I’ve ever met!”

“We’ll see.” I push their shoulder towards the stairs, making sure that I don’t accidentally push them so they fall. “Be careful. The stairs are kind of steep,” I warn. They nod and step carefully, though it seems that they’ve had practice going down stairs. We make it to the bottom.

“It’s really cold down here,” They shiver.

“And it’s much darker. The walls are a completely different color than the rest of the house,” I say nervously. “Oh, there’s Toriel!” They reach out and grab my hand. We walk to her together.

“...You wish to know how to return ‘home’, do you not?” She says as we approach her. She doesn’t
look at us. “Ahead of us lies the end of the Ruins. A one-way exit to the rest of the underground. I am going to destroy it. No one will ever be able to leave again. Now be a good child and go upstairs.” She walks deeper into the basement.

We share a look, and follow her. “Every human that falls down here meets the same fate. I have seen it again and again. They come. They leave. They die,” She says ominously. “You naive child… If you leave the Ruins… They… Asgore… will kill you. I am only protecting you, do you understand? … Go to your room.” She moves further down the hallway.

“She’s not telling the truth,” I frown. “There’s only ever been one human in the underground before you, and that human is me. And I know that Asgore would never hurt anyone,” I tell the kid. They look at me doubtfully. “Oh, what, do you trust her more than me?” I ask, crossing my arms.

“She’s a lot nicer than you are, no offense,” They shrug. I huff and look away.

“Keep following her, I guess.” We continue into the basement, while it only grows darker.

“Do not try to stop me,” Toriel says. “This is your final warning.” Her ‘final warning’ is ignored, and we go after her to finally stop in front of a massive door.

“She stands in front of a big door. It’s very ornate, probably important.” Is all I say. Toriel stops and turns to look at us, finally. Her eyes are filled with sorrow, and she looks disappointed.

“You want to leave so badly? Hmph. You are just like the others. There is only one solution to this. Prove yourself… Prove to me you are strong enough to survive.” We enter a FIGHT.

“Act, talk,” They say, voice cracking slightly. “…” They can’t think of anything to say. Toriel’s attack is stronger than anything we’ve seen. They get hit once, HP is at 17. “Act, check.”

“ATK 80, DEF 80. She knows best for you,” I say hollowly. I think I know the only way to get past this. I won’t voice it though, not yet.

“Act, talk,” They repeat, beginning to cry. I wonder if I would be crying if I were alive. But they can’t think of any conversation topics. They get hit again, HP at 14. “Act, talk.” They try to say something, but…

“I think you should try something else,” I whisper.

“I won’t fight!” They yell. Toriel’s expression changes to pity, but she doesn’t respond. She wants to make them stronger. She won’t stop unless…

“Ironically enough, I don’t think talking is the solution to this. You have to get past her. You have to fight,” I prod. I’m on the verge of forcing them. They’re already holding the toy knife in their hand, which even though it’s a toy, it should work just fine.

“No,” The kid says, shaking their head. They try to talk to Toriel again, but it doesn’t work. HP is now at 10. It’s time for me to step in.

“Sorry, not sorry,” I say. I grab their knife hand in my own, and swing it. My hand seems to merge with theirs for one strange second, feeling less like I’m swinging their hand, and more like I’m swinging my own. Toriel loses 20 HP, but it barely makes a dent. That strike would’ve killed us. The kid turns to me in shock, and forgets to dodge for a second. HP at 5. “Eat the spider donut, now,” I order. They obey, tears running down their face. Do I feel bad? …Maybe. For a second.

I examine my hand. It feels normal. But it had seemed to merge with the kid’s, and that wasn’t
normal. They were the one thing so far that I didn’t phase through. I put my hand on their shoulder and feel the fabric of their sweater, and it seems solid enough.

It’s our turn again, and I know that we have to keep fighting. I take their hand again, and I try getting closer to them. The world shifts for a second, then snaps into place. But something is different. My eyes aren’t at the height they normally are, and when I look down I’m wearing a blue and pink sweater, instead of my green and yellow one.

“I can see!” I gasp. Except, it wasn’t me? It sounded like the kid’s voice, even though I felt my own mouth move. I ignore this for the time being, then swing the knife (in my own hand) again. 24 damage. Still a long ways to go, but it’s getting easier.

“What’s going on?” I ask. And it’s actually me, this time.

“Get out of my body!” The kid(?) yells. I look down again, and see that one of my hands is trying to take the knife from the other.

“No!” I say. “This is the only way.” I pull my knife hand away from the other hand.

“Are you alright, my child?” Toriel asks in concern, seeing that we appear to be ‘having trouble’.

“Y-no-es” We both try to talk at the same time, and Toriel only looks more confused.

“Hel-” They try to say. I quickly cover my own mouth before they can speak, which feels pretty weird.

“I’m fine,” I growl. I fight again, this time taking only 23 HP. I dodge fairly well, and don’t get hit this turn. I slash at her again, taking 22 HP. Not good enough.

A couple turns later, and she’s down to a little less than half her HP. I eat the cinnamon-butterscotch pie, gaining back the 16 HP that I’ve lost. The kid’s been pretty quiet, but they’ve made my movements slow and jerky. I suppose they’re doing the best they can to stop me. I am starting to get more and more frustrated. Why does she take to long to beat? I find that the longer I fight Toriel, the more I want her dead. My attacks start to do more damage.

Finally, I strike a blow with nearly 300 damage. Toriel kneels to the ground.

“Urgh… You are stronger than I thought… Listen to me, small one… If you go beyond this door, keep walking as far as you can. Eventually you will reach an exit…. … Asgore… do not let Asgore take your soul. His plan cannot be allowed to succeed…. … Be good, won’t you, m y c h i l d…” With that, Toriel dissolves into dust, her soul lingering only for a moment before shattering.

I let out a scream. It’s not mine, though.

“Get OUT!” The kid yells, and I am thrown out of their body. I fall on the ground next to them. “How could you do that?! How could you do that to Toriel!?”

“I’d apologize, but it was necessary to get out of here,” I shrug. I feel empty, numb. I just killed my mother. I feel like I should be reacting more to that. Wouldn’t that be a normal response?

“No, I can’t accept that! There’s got to be another way!” They say, turning away from me.

“It’s too late, kid, she’s gone.” I climb back onto my feet.

“But, we can… We can go back, can’t we? We did it before!” They look at me desperately, certain
that there’s a way to reverse this.

“You can try, but I doubt there is another way to get past her,” I say. I’m not sure how that power exactly works in the first place, but I’ve always been the only one able to do it. “Do you even know how to go back?” I ask.

“I think I have an idea?” They say, uncertain. They summon their heart in front of them, and squeeze it. The world spins for a second, and then we’re back in front of Toriel’s house. “Yes!” They cry.

“Wow, you actually did it.” I’m impressed, despite myself.

We go inside, and see Toriel waiting there.

“Do you smell that?” Toriel asks. I flinch a bit. “Surprise! It is a butterscotch-cinnamon pie. I thought we should celebrate your arrival. I want you to have a nice time living here. So I will hold off on snail pie for tonight. Here, I have another surprise for you.” She walks away to the right. We follow behind her silently.

“This is it… A room of your own. I hope you like it!” Toriel ruffles the kid’s hair, and they burst into tears, hugging her tightly. “Oh, my, is something the matter?” She asks in alarm.

“Thank you!” The kid says, voice muffled by her dress.

“Whatsoever for?” Toriel crouches down and hugs the kid close to her. I’m just standing there, off to the side. I feel like I’m intruding on something private, not meant for me.

“Everything!” They say, and then they stand there in silence for a little while.

“Oh, um, I think that I smell something burning! I am sorry, I have to go check on the pie.” Toriel unwraps her arms, and hurries off through the house.

The kid wipes their face on their sleeve, and goes into the room. I follow them in, and sit on the floor while they collapse on the bed.

“Well, what’s your plan?” I ask.

“Not killing Toriel,” They say into a pillow.

“Good start, but how? And what will you do in the meantime?” We still have to go to sleep and Toriel has to leave us the pie again. And since they just slept, like 20 minutes ago, they probably won’t be able to go back to sleep.

“I don’t know, lay here?” They groan.

“Hmm… I may have an idea. When you were asleep, the first time, I heard Toriel talking to someone. Would you be interested in checking it out?” I say. We won’t have much time, since she’ll bring in the pie right after talking to the mystery dude.

“What? Who was she talking to?” The kid asks, crawling out of the bed. They turn off the lamp as an afterthought.

“I don’t know. Let’s go find out.” I walk over to the door, and wait for them to open it. Which they do, quiet as a mouse. We creep down the hallway, and go to the bottom of the stairs. It’s as close as we dare get. And yet, we still can’t make out what the other voice is saying, even though I can hear it better than last time. It must be being muffled by something.
We hear Toriel’s uncontrolled laughter, and as it dies off she begins to speak.

“Here, I have one for you. When does a skeleton laugh?” She asks. She pauses a couple moments, as if waiting for a response. “When something tickles their funny bone!” She begins to laugh again, at her own joke. I groan, thinking that that must have been truly the worst pun I’ve ever heard.

“That was terrible,” I voice my thoughts to the kid. They don’t respond, since if they made any noise Toriel might hear.

“Can I ask you something?” Toriel says when she stops laughing. She sounds much more serious now. We hear a muffled response, but it’s impossible to tell what he’s saying. The voice is pretty deep, though. “If you ever see a human come through this door… Will you promise to watch over them, and keep them safe? I know you don’t know me very well, but can you please do this one thing for me?” She asks. The kid sniffs. I’m kind of touched by how much Toriel cares for them, to ask a stranger to look after them. There’s another response, and then Toriel sighs with relief. “Thank you. I would repay you if I could, but… Thank you for talking to me so much. I don’t know what I would have done if I’d had to go so long without voicing my thoughts to someone. I’ll remember you fondly,” She says. There’s a response, and then Toriel speaks again. “Um… about that, I… I won’t be able to talk to you again. You see, I’m going to destroy this door. No one will ever be able to leave again. I am truly sorry.” She says.

The voice on the other side seems to get angry, or is protesting, or something. His voice gets a lot louder, anyway. Toriel apologizes again, saying that it’s necessary, and waits for his response. Her shoulders relax, and she bids the mystery man farewell.

We scramble back up the stairs, and dash down the hallway back to our room. We close the door as quietly as we can, and they leap into the bed. Not a moment too soon. Toriel opens the door, and smiles at the sleeping child. ‘Sleeping.’ She then puts the pie down on the floor by the bed, and leaves the room.

The kid sits up, and takes the pie. “Who was she talking to?” They ask.

“Hell if I know,” I shrug. “They seem to have been exchanging jokes, though.”

“We’re going to get through that door, right? Maybe we’ll get meet him.” They say hopefully.

“It’s not like we have much to go on. We just know he’s a guy with a deep voice that likes jokes. That’s pretty general if you ask me,” I shrug again.

“Well, it’s ok if we don’t see him. In the meantime, what should we do for the next couple of hours?” They ask. I lay back on the floor.

“You could sleep, if you want.”

“Probably not happening. Do you have any stories?” They ask.

“Of my own? … No. But there’s an entire shelf of books over there. We could read those,” I suggest.

So, for next 3 hours or so, they hold a book and flip the pages while I read it aloud. Most of Toriel’s books are for kids even though they’re pretty long books, but they don’t seem to mind. It’s a good distraction, at least. Neither of us even think about our past or future fights with Toriel.

We finish the book finally, and I can tell that it’s morning. I’m not sure how. The kid puts the book on the shelf, and we go back out into Toriel’s living room. They ask her how to leave again, and she rushes off downstairs again. Instead of following her immediately, I recommend that we go outside
and SAVE first, so that we can go back there and skip all the waiting around in case we screw up again.

I’m not sure how I feel about re-loading. At the moment, this is the first time I’ve ever experienced a re-load without me myself causing it. I’m a little bit mad that I might have to step in and kill Toriel again, but I don’t think they’ll let me. I mean, if they can find a way past her without killing her, then that’s fine. I don’t think I care either way anymore. I know it’s probably petty, but I feel like she’s forgotten about me, and doesn’t even remember me, much less care about me. She probably wouldn’t care if the kid told her that I was here. She might even be mad. To be honest, I wasn’t the best kid a mom could have.

Um… Anyways, we follow Toriel down the stairs and hear her speech about why we shouldn’t leave again.

“...There is only one solution to this. Prove yourself… Prove to me you are strong enough to survive,” Toriel says.

“Act, talk.” They try again. Their expression is solemn this time around, compared to their heartbroken expression from before. Now, it almost matches Toriel’s. And yet, they still can’t think of anything to say. They’re pretty practiced at dodging her attacks now, at least.

This time they try sparing her, even though her name isn’t yellow, since they already know that acting won’t progress them any further. Toriel looks at them curiously. A couple spared turns later, she sighs deeply, but doesn’t say anything.

“What are you doing?” She finally asks, a couple turns later. We spare her again. “What are you proving this way?” Spare. “Fight me or leave!”

“No! I won’t fight you!” The kid says, and spares her again.

“Stop that,” Toriel commands. “Stop looking at me that way.” I had been focusing on Toriel, but when I look at the kid again, there’s a single tear running down their cheek. They look at her pleadingly. “Go away!” Toriel’s attacks become less difficult to dodge, and almost seem to avoid us entirely. Over the next couple turns, Toriel’s expression slowly grows more somber. What used to be a stone cold mask begins to break, little by little. It’s almost as if she’s already mourning the death of another child.

“Wow, kid, I didn’t think you could do it. She actually looks like she’ll let you leave now,” I remark, impressed. They tilt their head towards me to show that they heard, but they’ve maintained a careful arms-length distance from me for the duration of the fight.

“I know you want to go home, but…” She doesn’t attack at all on this turn. “But please… Go upstairs now. I promise I will take good care of you here. I know we do not have much, but… We can have a good life here.” She smiles, but it quickly turns back into a frown. “Why are you making this so difficult? Please, go upstairs,” She pleads. Then she starts to laugh. But it’s not the happy kind of laugh, it’s the laugh of someone with nothing left to laugh about. “Ha ha… Pathetic, is it not? I cannot save even a single child.” Suddenly her expression steels again. “No, I understand. You would just be unhappy trapped down here. The Ruins are very small once you get used to them. It would not be right for you to grow up in a place like this. My expectations… My loneliness… My fear… For you, my child, I will put them aside.”

We finally exit the fight. I put my hand on the kid’s shoulder. “Hey, good job,” I smile. Though I’m not sure if this outcome makes me feel better than the other one did. If anything, I feel worse. They cover my hand with theirs in comfort.
“If you truly wish to leave the Ruins… I will not stop you. However, when you leave… Please do not come back. I hope you understand.” With this Toriel kneels down and hugs the kid one last time. “Goodbye, my child,” Toriel says. She looks back at us one last time, and then leaves.

“Well… There’s nothing left to do but go through this door,” I say. They nod at me, face set, and we exit the Ruins for good.

**End of Part 1**

Chapter End Notes

Soooo this is my fav chapter so far... Stuff actually happens! Important plot stuff! Deviating from the game a little but! This won't happen again for a little while, sadly. Anyways, I've finally uploaded this story on FF.net! Yep. That's all. Thanks for reading and commenting and leaving kudos!!
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Chapter 6- A word of advice
Intermission

A cold gust of wind hits us as we pull the door open. There’s a short dark hallway, with a patch of grass in the center, and beyond that another door. As we approach the grass, the same golden flower from the first time we entered the Ruins pops up before us.

“That flower’s back,” I say. What was its name again? Flowery? No, Flowey.

“Clever. Verrrryyyy clever,” It says, looking smug. “You think you’re really smart, don’t you? In this world, it’s kill or be killed. So you were able to play by your own rules. You spared the life of a single person. Hee hee hee… But don’t act so cocky. I know what you did.” Here we both stiffen, wondering how it could possibly know that we re-loaded. “You murdered her.” Its face shifts into a startling version of Toriel’s. “And then you went back, because you regretted it. Ha ha ha ha…” Its face shifts, first melting Toriel’s, and then showing its more demonic side, with the huge teeth and wicked grin. “You naive idiot. Do you think you are the only one with that power? The power to reshape the world… Purely by your own determination. The ability to play God! The ability to ‘SAVE’. I thought I was the only one with that power.”

“So did I…” I mutter.

“But…” It continues. “I can’t SAVE anymore. Apparently YOUR desires for this world override MINE. Well, well. Enjoy that power while you can. I’ll be watching.” The flower laughs demonically, and then disappears into the ground.

“I hate that flower,” I say. The kid seems to reluctantly agree, but upon closer inspection they are shaking slightly.

“Why can it save?” They ask me. As if I have any clue.

“Who cares? It doesn’t matter, it can’t anymore. Let’s just keep going,” I say. They push open the second door, and we leave the Ruins for real this time.

Chapter End Notes

Just a little intermission between Parts 1 and 2. Next actual chapter on Monday! Also, fun fact: Flowey's dialog is 100% cannon, this is actually what he says if you kill Toriel and reload. :)
Chapter 7- Finally, Some Goddamn Introductions
Part 2- Snowdin

It’s really cold outside of the Ruins. A lot colder than I had expected. The kid starts shivering, but I don’t really feel any effects of the cold, I just feel enough to know it’s there.

I remember my narrating job, then. “There’s a bush over there- Hey, hold on, you said you could see when we were sharing a body, right?” An idea pops into my head.

“No.”

“You didn’t let me finish,” I complain.

“I know what you’re going to say, and the answer is no.” They sigh. “Just tell me what’s happening.”

“Hmph. Like I said, there’s a bush… Wait, there’s a camera hidden in the bushes,” I realize. They look startled.

Alright, that’s really weird… Continue?”

“There’s a dense, dark forest ahead, but there’s a pretty clear path through it. There’s lots of snow on the ground, too.” Honestly, this would be much easier if they would let me share their body again.

“Let’s start walking, then,” They say, as they begin to walk forward. They walk kind of slowly, since the snow could be slippery. The path is pretty packed down, though. I wonder how many people come through here this often.

The forest gives off an eerie feeling. Like we’re being watched. Like I’m being watched. I don’t like it. The kid seems to feel the same, and grabs my hand. I squeeze back, making a small attempt at comforting them.

Soon enough we come across a tree branch blocking the path. I put out a hand to stop the kid so that they won’t trip over it. “It’s a tough-looking branch. It’s too heavy to pick up,” I say. It’s more of a log than a branch, really. We walk around it, and continue down the path.

CRACK

I spin around, and the branch is completely broken. Smashed like it was nothing. I can feel the blood drain from my face. “It’s broken. The branch is broken. Let’s walk faster, shall we?” I pull their hand and begin to walk a little faster.

“What? What broke it?” They ask, a trace of fear on their face.

“Probably nothing. Let’s just keep walking, and it’ll be ok. We’ll be fine. It’s fine,” I say. I want to calm down, but I want more for the kid to calm down. I think back to what Toriel might say at a time like this.
“Are you sure?” They look at me doubtfully.

“Yeah. Say, I never asked. What’s your name, kid?” I ask. It’s not a very good attempt, but hey, I’m trying.

“Frisk,” They answer.

“Frisk? I like it. Well, Frisk, my name’s Chara. Nice to meet you again,” I speak in a rush. When I turn back to look at them, I see a silhouette following us. It’s gone in an instant. I make us walk even faster.

“Are we almost out of the woods?” They ask, struggling now to keep up.

“Yeah, there’s a bridge up ahead. It has some kind of structure blocking it, though,” I answer.

“Hey.” I hear a voice from behind us. The kid, Frisk, stops short.

“Frisk, come on.” I tug on their hand, but they seem to be frozen. The silhouette comes closer and closer, and I position myself near Frisk in case I need to fight for them. With or without their permission.

“Human. Don’t you know how to greet a new pal?” He speaks slowly, ominously. “Turn around and shake my hand.” Frisk turns around, very slowly, and shakily extends their left hand. They grasp the shadowed hand, and a weird sound echoes through the forest. I wrinkle my nose. What was that?

And Frisk giggles. The shadowed figure suddenly becomes less shadowed, and more… I don’t know how exactly to explain him. I attempt to describe him to Frisk. “He’s a skeleton, not much taller than you. He’s wearing a white shirt, blue hoodie, black basketball shorts, and pink slippers. He has this weird grin on his face,” I frown.

Frisk tilts their head towards me as they listen, but they won’t respond in front of the skeleton. But then as the skeleton studies the kid, his gaze follows the direction of their head, and he seems to look straight at me. I decide then and there that I do not like this guy.

“hehe. the old whoopee cushion in the hand trick. it’s ALWAYS funny.” His tone is far more jovial than before, and not nearly as threatening. Frisk looks like they’ve calmed down significantly.

“anyways, you’re a human, right? that’s hilarious. im sans. sans the skeleton.” I can’t help but feel like his voice is familiar. Like I’ve dreamt it or something, because I can’t figure out where I might have heard it. Maybe he came by the castle once? “im actually supposed to be on watch for humans right now. but… y’know… i dont really care about capturing anybody. now my brother, papyrus… he’s a human-hunting FANATIC. hey, actually, I think that’s him over there. i have an idea. go through this gate thingy. yeah, go right through. my bro made the bars too wide to stop anyone.”

Sans follows Frisk over the bridge, and we enter an area that looks like a guard post.

“There’s a guard booth, some rocks, more trees, and a weirdly shaped lamp,” I say.

“quick, behind that conveniently-shaped lamp,” Sans says. Frisk gives me a look.

“ Weirdly shaped, conveniently shaped, there’s no difference. Just go behind it I guess.” They go behind the lamp, which seems like it was made for the exclusive purpose of giving them something to hide behind.

Then, another skeleton comes running in. “The skeletons have multiplied,” I say. “This one is really tall and is wearing a scarf… Or is that a cape? It doesn’t matter, he looks angry.”
“sup, bro?” Sans greets the skeleton.

“You KNOW WHAT ‘SUP,’ BROTHER!” The skeleton says. He has a very loud, vaguely irritating voice. “IT’S BEEN EIGHT DAYS AND YOU STILL HAVEN’T… RECALIBRATED. YOUR. PUZZLES! YOU JUST HANG AROUND OUTSIDE YOUR STATION! WHAT ARE YOU EVEN DOING?!!” He yells.

“staring at this lamp. it’s really cool. do you wanna look?” Sans asks.

“Dude,” I say in disbelief. “He just blew our cover!”

“It’ll be fine, probably,” Frisk whispers doubtfully. But then the other skeleton speaks.

“NO! I DON’T HAVE TIME FOR THAT!! WHAT IF A HUMAN COMES THROUGH HERE?!?! I WANT TO BE READY!!!” I can’t believe this.

“I can’t believe this,” I tell Frisk. “And also, how can he not see us?! This lamp only hides you from a very specific angle, and he’s not there!” I complain as I circle the lamp. I can see Frisk from almost anywhere.

“I WILL BE THE ONE! I MUST BE THE ONE! I WILL CAPTURE A HUMAN!” The tall skeleton says.

“Boo! You’re terrible at your job!” I yell at him. He doesn’t respond, but Frisk shushes me, and glares a little.

“THEN I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS… WILL GET ALL THE THINGS I UTTERLY DESERVE! RESPECT… RECOGNITION! I WILL FINALLY BE ABLE TO JOIN THE ROYAL GUARD! PEOPLE WILL ASK TO, BE MY, FRIEND?” When he says that, I feel kind of sympathetic for him. “I WILL BATHE IN A SHOWER OF KISSES EVERY MORNING!” And the pity’s gone, just like that.

“hmm… maybe this lamp will help you,” Sans suggests.

“Sans I swear to god,” I warn. But if he can’t actually hear me, what’s the point?

“SANS!! YOU ARE NOT HELPING!! YOU LAZYBONES!!” Was that… a pun? “ALL YOU DO IS SIT AND BOONDOGGLE!” I’m not even sure if that’s a word. “YOU GET LAZIER AND LAZIER EVERY DAY !!!” Papyrus has started stomping his foot on the ground, showing he truly is angry. But I don’t think I could take him seriously if I tried.

“hey, take it easy. i’ve gotten a ton of work done today. a skeleton.” I swear I hear a drum set in the distance. Sans winks at some imaginary audience.

“SANS!”

“come on. you’re smiling.”

“I AM AND I HATE IT!”

I whisper to Frisk, “Get it? He’s a skeleton, he can’t not smile.”

“…Yeah, I got it,” They whisper back.

“SIGH… WHY DOES SOMEONE AS GREAT AS ME… HAVE TO DO SO MUCH JUST TO GET SOME RECOGNITION…” Papyrus says.
“wow, sounds like you’re really working yourself… down to the bone.” I groan, and hear the faraway drum again. Frisk giggles.

“UGH. I WILL ATTEND TO MY PUZZLES. AS FOR YOUR WORK? PUT A LITTLE MORE, BACKBONE INTO IT!!!! NYEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEHEH!!” Papyrus laughs, and exits.

“...Well, that was-” I start.

“HEH!” Papyrus appears again only for a brief moment, and then leaves again.

“ok, you can come out now,” Sans says. Frisk leaves the safety of the weird lamp, and walks over to Sans. They look at him questioningly.

“...What should I do now?” They ask when Sans doesn’t respond.

“you oughta get going. he might come back. and if he does… you’ll have to sit through more of my hilarious jokes,” He winks.

We walk over to the little hut thing, first. They point at it, careful not to talk to me in front of other people. “It’s some sort of checkpoint or sentry-station.” I peer over the counter. “But there are bottles of ketchup, mustard, and relish sitting inside…” I shrug. Maybe he likes hot dogs.

Frisk shrugs back and we start to walk in the direction Papyrus went in, since it's the only way forward. When I glance back at Sans, he’s looking… thoughtful?

“actually, hey… hate to bother ya, but can you do me a favor?” Sans asks.

“If you ‘hate to bother’, then why ask at all?” I mutter.

“i was thinking… my brother’s been kind of down lately… he’s never seen a human before. and seeing you might just make his day.” Frisk looks at him doubtfully. “don’t worry, he’s not dangerous. even if he tries to be. thanks a million. i’ll be up ahead.” Sans then proceeds to go back the way we came, the opposite of ‘up ahead.’

“Well, I think that’s a recipe for disaster. Let’s avoid the brother,” I say.

“Aww, I liked him. He seemed cool.” Frisk complains. “Sans said he wasn’t dangerous. I think we should try to cheer him up.”

“Nah. Not worth the time,” I say. We move along the path. “We’re in a pine forest. There’s a path straight ahead, and one going north. And there’s a box with a sign next to it.”

As we walk, I see a sparkle on the ground. “Hey, SAVE point. The convenience of that lamp still fills you with determination.”

“Nice,” They smile. “What does the sign say?”

“It explains the box. To summarize, you can put whatever you want in it. Open the box?” I ask.

“Yeah. What’s in it?”

“Just one ‘Tough Glove’,,” I say. They pick up the glove, and ask me what it does. “The tough glove: Weapon ATK 5. A worn pink leather glove. For five-fingered folk.”

“Should I use that instead of the toy knife?” They ask.
“Well, it has better stats. But I personally like the knife,” I say. They look me weird, and equip the glove.

“It’s not like we’ll use it anyway.” Just then, an enemy appears and we enter a FIGHT.

“Snowdrake flutters forth!” I say.

“Act. Check.”

“Snowdrake has 6 ATK and 2 DEF. This teen comedian fights to keep a captive audience.”

“Ice to meet you.” Snowdrake says. I groan. My pun quota for the day has been filled, thanks. Frisk dodges the attacks, and then laughs at its pun. “See, laughs! Dad was wrong!” Frisk dodges the attacks again, and then they can spare the Snowdrake.

We continue north. “It’s a fishing rod attached to the ground. Reel it in?” I ask. They nod. “All that’s attached to the end is a photo of a weird-looking monster… ‘Call me! Here’s my number!’ You decide not to call,” I add.

“What if I want to call?” They ask.

“You decide not to call,” I repeat, stressing the words. “Let’s go back.” We go back down the path, and are interrupted by Icecap. “Icecap struts into view.”

“Act, check.”

“Icecap has ATK 7, DEF 2. This teen wonders why it isn’t named ‘Ice Hat.'” I say.

“Where’s YOUR hat?” It asks. Frisk gets hit once, bringing them to 17 HP. A bruise appears on their cheek.

“Act,” They say. They look at me, wondering what to do.

“You should ignore him,” I suggest. “But you could also compliment him. Or steal his hat.”

They shrug. “Ignore.” They manage to tear their eyes away from Icecaps’ hat. It looks annoyed…

“HELLO!!!? My hat’s up here,” It says. Frisk doesn’t get hit this turn.

“Icecap is secretly checking if you’re looking at its hat,” I laugh. The kid smiles. They ignore it again, causing it to seem defeated.

“Fine!!! I don’t care!!!” It says. Frisk doesn’t get hit at all. Icecap seems desperate for attention, but we spare it and move on.

As we move forward, we see the skeletons again. “Great,” I groan. They’re both standing together a little ways down the path.

“SO, AS I WAS SAYING ABOUT UNDYNE,” Papyrus sees us then, looking alarmed, and turns to Sans. They both look between us and each other for a few moments, and then turn their backs to us to talk privately. But we can still hear them, of course. “SANS!! OH MY GOD!! IS THAT… A HUMAN!?!?!?!?!?!” They turn back to look at Frisk.

“uuhhh… actually, I think that’s a rock,” Sans says. Helpful as always. Frisk looks at him, uncertain what he’s trying to do. I turn around and notice that there actually is a rock behind us.
“OH,” says Papyrus, shoulders sagging.

“hey, what’s that in front of the rock?” Sans says. I can tell by the grin on his face that he’s just messing with him. And he’s really enjoying himself.

Papyrus straightens, and his grin appears back on his face. “OH MY GOD!!” He yells. Then he turns to Sans and tries to whisper. It doesn’t work, and it’s more of a stage whisper, really. “IS… IS THAT A HUMAN?”

Sans whispers back, “yes.” They both turn back to us.

“OH MY GOD!!” He yells, twice as loud as before. “SANS! I FINALLY DID IT!! UNDYNE WILL… I’M GONNA… I’LL BE SO… POPULAR!!! POPULAR!!! POPULAR!!!” Papyrus clears his throat. “...AHEM. HUMAN! YOU SHALL NOT PASS THIS AREA! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, WILL STOP YOU!!! I WILL THEN CAPTURE YOU! YOU WILL BE DELIVERED TO THE CAPITAL! THEN… THEN!!! ...I’M NOT SURE WHAT’S NEXT. IN ANY CASE! CONTINUE… ONLY IF YOU DARE!!! NYEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH!!!”

“Good luck doing any of that when you’re dead!” I yell after him. Frisk turns to me in shock, but can’t talk to me in front of Sans. The only bit that concerned me was the part about being ‘delivered’ to the capital. I feel like in this context it’s not a good thing for us, but… The capital’s my home, so why? And isn’t that where we’re trying to go, anyways? Whatever.

“well, that went well. don’t sweat it, kid. i’ll keep an eye socket out for ya.” Sans winks, then goes to follow his brother.

“You know that we aren’t gonna kill Papyrus, right?” Frisk asks me when Sans is far enough away.

“But why not? So far all he’s done is threaten us and be annoying,” I say. “While we’re at it, we might want to get Sans, too. I don’t know what it is, but I really don’t like him.”

“No. We aren’t killing anyone. Remember Toriel? There’s always a way to get past people without fighting them.” They say.

“Yeah, I remember. But that was Toriel. She’s my- she’s practically your mom!” I catch myself before I can let anything slip.

“Killing is wrong. I won’t do it, and I won’t let you do it, either.” They cross their arms and continue walking down the path.

“Oh, yeah? And how would you stop me?” I taunt. They ignore me, and keep walking. We walk past a seemingly broken sentry station, and stop at a sign. They point at it, and I read it out loud: “Absolutely no moving!” We aren’t sure what this means, so we keep walking. Past another sentry station when- “A dog’s slowly rising from inside the sentry booth,” I say. Frisk stops short.

“Did something move?” The shifty-eyed dog says. “Was it my imagination? I can only see moving things. If something WAS moving… For example, a human… I’ll make sure it NEVER moves again!” We enter a FIGHT.

“Doggo blocks the way!” I say. This dog has TWO daggers. Lucky him.

“Check!” Frisk says.

“Doggo has 6 ATK 1 DEF. Easily excited by movement. Hobbies include: squirrels.”
“Don’t move an inch!” Doggo warns. Frisk stays stock still, and the dog’s attacks pass harmlessly through them. He can’t seem to find anything.

“Those ones were blue,” I say, knowing that they can’t tell the color, but thinking it was important that they knew.

“I can sense something different about them. They feel… colder.” Frisk nods. “Act, pet.”

“Pet?” I ask.

“Yes. I want to pet the dog.”

“Frisk, it’s trying to kill you.”

Frisk glares. “I will pet the dog!” There’s just no shaking their determination. They pet the dog.

“What!!! I’ve been pet!!!” Doggo proceeds to have a mental breakdown of sorts, but still attacks with only blue attacks. Which Frisk easily gets by. We proceed to spare Doggo. “S-S-S-Something pet me… Something that isn’t m-m-moving… I’m gonna need some dog treats for this!!!” He then sinks back below the counter.

We continue forward, passing by some smoked dog treats. I decide not to point them out to Frisk. When we reach the next part of the path, Sans is there, without his brother. …Pretty sure he’s his brother?

“hey, here’s something important to remember,” Sans says. “my brother has a very special attack. if you see a blue attack, don’t move and it won’t hurt you. here’s an easy way to keep it in mind. imagine a stop sign. when you see a stop sign, you stop, right? stop signs are red. so imagine a blue stop sign instead. simple, right? when fighting, think about blue stop signs.”

“…None of that made any sense and you know it,” I glare at the skeleton. He doesn’t answer, of course, but his smile seems to grow wider. It’s probably not because he heard me, though, right?

So we keep walking. And I feel like his eyes are on my back the entire way.

Chapter End Notes

Comments literally fuel me. They fill me with… you guessed it, determination. The more people comment, the more motivated I am. Just sayin. Anyway, thanks so much for reading!
Chapter 8 - Puzzles, puzzles, and dogs

"Careful, it's icy," I warn too late. Frisk takes a step onto the ice and proceeds to glide gracefully across. I'm impressed. "There's a sign in the middle of the ice, if you would like read it."


"Hmmm…" Frisk says thoughtfully. "I'll go north first," They nod. We slide up, and I see a snowman waiting there.

"There's a snowman," I say. Frisk gives me a double thumbs up and approaches the snowman.

"Hello. I am a snowman. I want to see the world… But I cannot move. If you would be so kind, traveller, please… Take a piece of me and bring it very far away."

"Of course!" Frisk says.

"Thank you… Good luck!"

"You got the snowman piece. It heals full health. Better hang onto that," I comment. We go down and slide to the east. "There's a patch of stomped down snow, and-"

"YOU'RE SO LAZY!" Papyrus interrupts me. Well, Frisk probably guessed what I was going to say anyway. "YOU WERE NAPPING ALL NIGHT!"

"i think that's called… sleeping," Sans responds. Hey, how did he get here? He was just a little ways down the trail behind us! I look down the path, and he's definitely not there anymore. I should keep a closer eye on him.

"EXCUSES, EXCUSES!" Papyrus finally notices us. "OH-HO! THE HUMAN ARRIVES! IN ORDER TO STOP YOU… MY BROTHER AND I HAVE CREATED SOME PUZZLES! I THINK YOU WILL FIND THIS ONE… QUITE SHOCKING!" I groan loudly. "FOR YOU SEE, THIS IS THE INVISIBLE… ELECTRICITY MAZE! WHEN YOU TOUCH THE WALLS OF THIS MAZE, THIS ORB WILL ADMINISTER A HEARTY ZAP! SOUND LIKE FUN?"

"Not at all," I say.

"BECAUSE! THE AMOUNT OF FUN YOU WILL PROBABLY HAVE, IS ACTUALLY RATHER SMALL, I THINK. OK, YOU CAN GO AHEAD NOW," Papyrus explains. Frisk takes a few uncertain steps forward, and seems to have touched one of the walls. But instead of them getting zapped, Papyrus gets electrocuted, and steam rises off his bones. "SANS!" He yells. "WHAT DID YOU DO?!"

"i think the human has to hold the orb," Sans says, with his perpetual grin.

"OH, OK." Papyrus goes through the maze, leaving behind huge footprints as he does.
"He left footprints through the maze, I'll lead you through them," I tell Frisk. They nod.

"HOLD THIS, PLEASE!" Papyrus tosses the orb in the air, which lands neatly on Frisk's head. He goes back through the maze, deepening his footprints. "OK, TRY NOW."

"Stay close." I take Frisk's hand, and lead them through the maze, making sure they stay very close behind me.

"INCREDIBLE! YOU SLIPPERY SNAIL! YOU SOLVED IT SO EASILY… TOO EASILY! HOWEVER! THE NEXT PUZZLE WILL NOT BE SO EASY! IT IS DESIGNED BY MY BROTHER, SANS! YOU WILL SURELY BE CONFOUNDED! I KNOW I AM! NYEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH!" Papyrus races off, down the path.

Frisk walks over to Sans, to see what he has to say. "hey, thanks… my brother seems like he's having fun. by the way, did you see that weird outfit he's wearing? we made that a few weeks ago for a costume party. he hasn't worn anything else since… keeps calling it his 'battle body.' man. isn't my brother cool?"

"Not really," I say. Though Papyrus does have some kind of strange… charm? We continue down the path. "Hey, there's a weird rabbit-looking guy selling stuff. Do you want to buy something?" I ask Frisk. They nod, and walk over to the guy. He doesn't notice at first.

"I don't understand why these aren't selling… It's the perfect weather for something cold…" He sees Frisk. "OH! A CUSTOMER! Hello, would you like some Nice Cream? It's the frozen treat that warms your heart! Now just 15G!"

"Sure!" Frisk says.

"Here you go! Have a super-duper day!" The rabbit man says.

"There's a small wooden bridge going over a huge cliff, just so you know." I tell Frisk.

"Are you serious?!" They say in a hushed whisper. "Is it safe?"

"Probably. I don't know," I respond. "There's no railings? I'll just lead you across." I take their hand, and walk slowly across the bridge. It's like two feet long. "Okay, there's a big snowball on a huge patch of ice. Down there, there's a hole. I would assume you have to get the snowball into the hole. Have you ever played soccer?" I ask.

"No, I don't do sports," Frisk answers. They give the ball an experimental kick. It goes down, and bounces off a wall, shooting to the right. They chase after it, and send it into a wall, sending it bouncing back to the left. They groan.

"Alright, just push it down, gently-" I try to direct. "That wasn't gently! Now it's over there, and is it getting smaller? Frisk, cooperate! Go around, push it down, that's right, and go after it! It's melting! Down a little more- and it's over there. Great. Careful, that part's especially slippery… And it went up." I sigh. "Go back up, push it down, there you go, and just… Nope, it's melted." I cover my face with the sleeves of my sweater, and scream.

Frisk puts a hand on my shoulder. They quickly withdraw it, though. I turn around, and what do you know, Sans has been there for a while. Probably. "Thanks for the help, buddy!" I yell at him. "We have to do this, right? There's spikes or something?" Frisk nods. I take a deep breath. "Alright, go back to where you started. Kick it down, not too hard, good, and a little to the left, good, and down some more… Yeah, that's it. Now just go around the side of it and push it to the right. There we go!"
"Yes!" Frisk exclaims. They point at the hole, and look back at me.

"A blue flag popped up. There's a message. 'Hopping and twirling, your original style pulled you through.' It must be timed or something. Hey, you were awarded 2G," I say.

"Should we talk to Sans?" Frisk whispers.

"No. Let's not. Let's keep moving instead."

Frisk shrugs. "This?" They point at something on the ground.

"It looks like a snowball. Actually, it's a snowdecahedron," I say upon closer inspection. Frisk laughs. I look around. "There's no spikes or anything. I'm not sure we actually needed to do that," I grumble. What a waste of time. We keep walking.

"HUMAN!" Great, it's Papyrus. And Sans? Wasn't he just behind us? This is the second time. "I HOPE YOU'RE READY FOR… SANS! WHERE'S THE PUZZLE!"

"it's right there. on the ground. trust me, there's no way they can get past this one." Sans says.

"It's a piece of paper. Pretend to read it, I'll tell you what it says." I say. I think it would be a bad idea for Sans and Papyrus to know Frisk is blind, because then they'll start asking too many questions. "Oh… it's a 'Monster kidz word search.' Just… put it down?"

They put down the word search, and look back at Sans and Papyrus. "SANS! THAT DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!" Papyrus yells.

"whoops. i knew i should have used today's crossword instead."

"WHAT!? CROSSWORD!? I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU SAID THAT! IN MY OPINION… JUNIOR JUMBLE IS EASILY THE HARDEST."

"what? really, dude? that easy-peasy word scramble? that's for baby bones."

"UN. BELIEVABLE. HUMAN!" Papyrus dramatically points a finger at Frisk, making them jump a little. "SOLVE THIS DISPUTE!"

"Well, which do you think is harder? Jumble or crossword?" I ask.

"For me… Junior Jumble?" They say hesitantly. I look at them in confusion. Then it clicks. At least with crosswords, they can figure it out if someone tells them the clue. But being blind, they wouldn't be able to do a word search very easily.

"HA! HA! YES! HUMANS MUST BE VERY INTELLIGENT! IF THEY ALSO FIND JUNIOR JUMBLE SO DIFFICULT! NYEH! HEH! HEH!" Papyrus runs off, leaving Sans.

"He's such a delight," I say sarcastically. Frisk walks over to Sans.

"thanks for saying 'junior jumble' just to appease my brother. yesterday he got stumped trying to 'solve' the horoscope." He says. I think that he's being kind of rude to poor Frisk. But, we move on.

"There's a lot of things in here. Another mouse hole, too," I say. I see a piece of paper, that I can read out loud. "Here's a note from Papyrus. 'Human!'" My Papyrus impression could use some work. "'Please enjoy this spagetti! Little do you know, this spaghetti is a trap! Designed to entice you! You'll be so busy eating it, that you won't realize that you aren't progressing! Thoroughly japed again by the Great Papyrus! Nyeh, heh, heh, Papyrus.' Wow."
"You don't sound like Papyrus at all," Frisk says.

"I know, okay? I'm trying."

"No you're not."

"Fair point. Well besides that, there's a plate of frozen spaghetti on the table next to you. It's so cold, it's stuck to the table… Next to that is an unplugged microwave. All of the settings say spaghetti," I frown.

"I hope that the mouse can enjoy the spaghetti, even if I can't," Frisk says wistfully. I notice a shimmer on the ground.

"Knowing that the mouse might one day find a way to heat up the spaghetti… It fills you with determination." Frisk grins at me. They're always so happy. We come across a sign. "'Warning: Dog Marriage.' Under that it says, 'Yeah, you read that right.'" I blink a few times, unmoving. I narrow my eyes at the sign, and shrug it off, shaking my head.

"I like dogs," Frisk says.

"Really? I hadn't guessed."

"Did you ever have a pet?" They ask me. I turn around in surprise.

"Well, no… I guess I wasn't really an animal person?" This was a slight lie, since the people I considered family were all goat-people. But I had never had an actual pet before.

"That's a shame. I've never had a pet, either, though." They shrug. They start downwards, and I forget to walk for a moment or two.

Then, of course, we enter a FIGHT. "Oh, you'll like this one. Lesser Dog appears!"

"Yesssss. Act, check."

"ATK 7, DEF 0. Wields a stone dogger made of pomer-granite." The dog smiles happily, and Frisk dodges its attack with ease. Lesser Dog cocks its head to one side.

"Nice puns," They say, flashing some finger guns at me. "Act, pet."

"You barely lifted your hand and Lesser Dog got excited." I notice its neck get a little longer as it lets out a tiny bark. This attack is different, and Frisk gets hit once and loses 3 HP. Lesser Dog is barking excitedly.


"Please stop," I beg.

"No. Act, pet." I call the dog but it is too late. It cannot hear me. "Act, pet." …. "Act, pet." Its head
is coming down the other side. We can reach Lesser Dog again. "Act, pet." Lesser Dog is lowering. "Act, pet."

"It's possible that you may have a problem," I warn both of them. Lesser Dog continues to lower, until he is nearing the ground.

"Act, pet." Lesser Dog is learning to read. "Act, pet." Lesser Dog is now unpettable, but appreciates the attempt. "Act, pet." Lesser Dog is whining because he can't see us. He's blocked by a lot of text. Text about him, perhaps? "Act, pet." His tail is going nearly lightspeed. "Act, pet." Lesser Dog emerges from the text.

"Hello there," I say.

"Act, pet."

"Perhaps mankind was not meant to pet this much?" I hint.

"Act, pet." It continues. "Act, pet."

"Lesser Dog is questioning your choices," I say. I want to get a move on. As amusing as this is, it has to stop soon.

"Act, pet." Lesser Dog's head is submerged in the snow. He has gone where no Dog has gone before.

"Frisk. Stop. Now." I say. They giggle. It's the most response I've gotten out of them for the past twenty minutes.

"Alright." They spare Lesser Dog, earning them 60 gold. We walk down, further into the snowy abyss.

"There's some loose snow on the ground, and it looks like there's something under it. Spikes block the way," I narrate. Frisk kicks the snow around, and I see more markings underneath. "Yes, keep doing that." The snow is completely cleared. "It's a map! The X is over on the top right, between three, um, things… There's cliffs around it… I think this is a map of where we are. Go back up."

We go back up to where we fought Lesser Dog. "Is it over here?" Frisk asks.

"Well, there's three trees, and a suspiciously colored patch of snow in the middle. I think it is… Yes, there's a switch hidden in the snow." Frisk reaches down and puts their hand in the snow, pressing the switch. Their hand must be freezing. Their entire body must be freezing. I hope that we get someplace warmer soon.

"Now the spikes are probably gone!" Frisk says. We walk back to where the spikes were, and they are gone. We cross a short bridge, and stop as two menacing figures in black cloaks come towards us. They circle us for a moment, then stand on either side.

"What's that smell?" One says.

"Where's that smell?" Says the other.

"If you're a smell…"

"Identify yoursellf!" They circle us again, sniffing the air.

"Hmmm… Here's that weird smell… It makes me want to eliminate."
"Eliminate YOU!" We enter a FIGHT.

"Dogi assult you!" I say. "Dogamy and Dogaressa."

"Act, check Dogamy," Frisk says.

"He has 6 ATK and 4 DEF. Husband of Dogaressa. Knows only what he smells," I say.

"Let's kick human tail!" Dogamy says.

"Do humans have tails?" Dogaressa wonders. Frisk dodges all their attacks.

"The Dogs are practicing for the next couples contest," I say.

"Act, check Dogaressa," Frisk grins.

"She has 6 ATK and 4 DEF. This puppy finds her hubby lovely. SMELLS ONLY?" I frown.

"Don't touch my hot dog."

"He means me." This attack looks much harder to dodge, and Frisk gets hit, bringing them to 11 HP. They should heal soon. In a couple turns, maybe. The dogs start saying sickly sweet things to each other.

"Maybe if you smelled different, they could get confused?" I suggest.


"Now you smell like a weird puppy," I wrinkle my nose. They stick their tongue out at me. They dodge the next attack, though. "The Dogs may want to re-smell you."

"Act, re-sniff." Frisk holds out their hand to the Dogs, and they sniff them again… They seem to decide that they smell all right.

"What! Smells like a…"

"Are you actually a little puppy!?" They seem shocked.

"Act, pet Dogamy," Frisk says. I hope we don't have another Lesser Dog incident.

"Wow! Pet by another pup!" Dogamy says.

"Well. Don't leave me out," Dogaressa complains.

"Ok, act, pet Dogaressa," Frisk says.

"What about me…" Dogamy whines.

"You got your turn!" I yell. The great thing about being a… ghost, I guess? Is that I can be as loud as I want, and say anything I want. It's very freeing.

"A dog that pets other dogs… Amazing!" Dogaressa says. It seems the Dogs' minds have been expanded. We spare them, and get 40 gold.

"Dogs can pet other dogs?"
"A new world has opened up for us… Thanks, weird puppy!" The Dogi go back to wherever they came from. I notice Frisk is shivering.

"Are you cold?" I ask.

"Yeah. Do you think there's someplace warm around here?"

"I kind of doubt it. Maybe there's a murder cabin somewhere around, though." Frisk just gives me a confused look. "There's one in every horror movie, correct? This would be the perfect place for that. Monsters, skeletons everywhere… We can start a fire there, if we find one."

"Alright?" They give me a half confused, half concerned look. But it looks like it's a plan.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading!! <3 Tell me what you liked, didn't like, etc.
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 9- Even more puzzles and dogs

We walk a little bit further.

“There’s no murder cabin, but there are some rocks arranged in a pattern, with a couple of blue X’s. There’s a sign on one side, and a button on the other,” I explain.

“Read the sign?” Frisk asks.

“‘Turn every X into an O. Then press the switch. Alright, go over to the left. There’s an X to your right, try stepping on it.” Frisk does what I asked, and the X turns into a red O. “Good! Now do that for the other side, and press the switch.” They walk around the side, past the sign, and we can see Papyrus on the other side of the wall of spikes.

“What!? How did you avoid my trap? And, more importantly… is there any left for me???” Papyrus asks.

“What will you say? The truth, or a lie?” I ask Frisk.

“I… I left it,” Frisk admits.

“Really!? Wowie… you resisted the flavour of my homecooked pasta… just so you could share it with me???” Papyrus looks absolutely delighted, not to mention flattered. This is not the reaction I expected. “Fret not human! I, master chef Papyrus… will make you all the pasta you could ever want! Heh heh heh heh heh heh nyeh!” And then Papyrus runs away.

“Well... Finish the puzzle, then.” I nudge Frisk, careful to not unbalance them. They nod and step lightly on the X, turning it into an O, and then they press the switch and the spikes disappear. We walk down the path a little, and Papyrus is right there. “Watch out, tall skeleton at 9 o’clock,” I warn.

“Hello!” Frisk calls. Papyrus enthusiastically waves at them.

“Hello, human! My brother started a sock collection recently. How saddening… sometimes I wonder what he would do… without such a cool guy taking care of him??? Nyeh heh heh heh!” Papyrus says.

“...Why did he tell us that?” I ask. “What was the point?” Frisk shrugs. We walk forward and see another X’s and O’s puzzle. Papyrus follows behind us.

“Human!! Hmmm… how do I say this… you were taking a long time to arrive, so… I decided to improve this puzzle… by arranging the snow to look more like my face. Unfortunately, the snow froze to the ground. Now the solution is different! and, as usual, my lazy brother is nowhere around. I suppose what I am saying is… worry not, human! I, the great Papyrus, will solve this conundrum! then we can both proceed! meanwhile, feel free to try the puzzle yourself! I’ll try not to give away the answer!!!”
I frown at the puzzle. It doesn’t even look like Papyrus… Well, it kind of does, if you look at it a certain way. But I wouldn’t have ever recognized it. “I guess I’ll have to solve this one, huh? … Alright, try going across the bottom first.” They hold out their hand, and seem to look at me pointedly. “Right, you can’t talk with him over there,” I realize. I think I get the message, though, and take their hand, leading them across the bottom row of X’s, turning them to O’s.

“What now?” Frisk asks. They make it sound as if they were just thinking out loud, so that Papyrus won’t be suspicious.

“Umm…” I frown. “Well, if we go- no, that wouldn’t work. But hey, what happens if you step on an X twice?” I ask. Frisk turns and taps one with their foot. “And… It’s a green triangle. Try it again.” It stays a triangle. “Well… Guess we should reset.” I lead Frisk around the top of the puzzle, and they press the switch in front of Papyrus. The O’s and triangles go back to being X’s. Frisk looks at me quizzically. “Let me think… No, that wouldn’t work… Here, let’s try the middle.” I lead Frisk through the middle of the puzzle, then up, then right, then down again, and then we go across the bottom, and back up to get the two that we missed.

“Nice!” Frisk smiles.

“It wasn’t hard as it looked at first, I guess,” I blush. We press the switch, removing the wall of spikes.

“WOW!!! YOU SOLVED IT!!” Papyrus yells. “AND YOU DID IT ALL WITHOUT MY HELP… INCREDIBLE! I’M IMPRESSED!! YOU MUST CARE ABOUT PUZZLES LIKE I DO!!”

“Mmm, yes, that’s why,” I say. Since I’m the one who actually solved it. I will admit, the praise feels good. And since it’s coming from Papyrus, I know it’s genuine.

“Well, I’m sure you’ll love the next puzzle then! It might even be too easy for you!! NYEH! HEH HEH! HEHEHEH!!!” Papyrus walks away instead of sprinting, for once. We walk around the puzzle again, and cross over where the spikes were. Sans is standing there.

“Good job on solving it so quickly. you didn’t even need my help. which is great, ‘cause i love doing absolutely nothing,” says Sans.

“I promise Sans wasn’t there while we were doing the puzzle,” I frown. We walk down the path, and into another room. “There’s a bunch of grey tiles on the ground, in several different shades. Papyrus and… Sans are on the other side.” How and when did Sans get there? He was right behind us a second ago. I look behind us, and he’s not there. He’s in front of us, next to Papyrus, grinning widely.

“HEY!! IT’S THE HUMAN!! YOU’RE GONNA LOVE THIS PUZZLE! IT WAS MADE BY THE GREAT DR. ALPHYS!” Papyrus proclaims. I have never heard of a ‘Dr. Alphys’ before. “YOU SEE THESE TILES?! ONCE I THROW THIS SWITCH… THEY WILL BEGIN TO CHANGE COLOR! EACH COLOR HAS A DIFFERENT FUNCTION! RED TILES ARE IMPASSABLE! YOU CANNOT WALK ON THEM! YELLOW TILES ARE ELECTRIC! THEY WILL ELECTROCUTE YOU! GREEN TILES ARE ALARM TILES! IF YOU STEP ON THEM… YOU WILL HAVE TO FIGHT A MONSTER! ORANGE TILES ARE ORANGE-SCENTED. THEY WILL MAKE YOU SMELL DELICIOUS! BLUE TILES ARE WATER TILES! SWIM THROUGH IF YOU LIKE, BUT… IF YOU SMELL LIKE ORANGES! THE PIRANHAS WILL BITE YOU. ALSO, IF A BLUE TILE IS NEXT TO A, YELLOW TILE, THE WATER WILL ALSO ZAP YOU! PURPLE TILES ARE SLIPPERY!
YOU WILL SLIDE TO THE NEXT TILE! HOWEVER, THE SLIPPERY SOAP… SMELLS LIKE LEMONS!! WHICH PIRANHAS DO NOT LIKE! PURPLE AND BLUE ARE OK! FINALLY, PINK TILES. THEY DON’T DO ANYTHING. STEP ON THEM ALL YOU LIKE. HOW WAS THAT!? UNDERSTAND???”

I can almost see Frisk’s head spinning, and my state of mind is not much different. That was… a lot to take in, to say the least. I definitely don’t remember half of that. But that doesn’t mean I want to hear it again. “Relax, Frisk. I got this.” I say, even though I really don’t. But Frisk is almost shaking. They turn to me, with their almost-closed eyes, and I think about how worried I would be if I couldn’t see, or know what color was what. This was going to be really difficult. “We don’t need to hear it again,” I tell Frisk.

“I got it,” Frisk says to Papyrus.

“GREAT!! THEN THERE’S ONE LAST THING… THIS PUZZLE… IS ENTIRELY RANDOM!!!!!! WHEN I PULL THIS SWITCH, IT WILL MAKE A PUZZLE… THAT HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE! NOT EVEN I WILL KNOW THE SOLUTION! NYEH HEH HEH! GET READY…!” Papyrus pulls the switch. The tiles start flashing every color imaginable, faster and faster. It makes me dizzy looking at it. I don’t know how I’m going to do this one.

The flashing colors stop, leaving… A surprisingly easy walk? “Oh, it’s all pink. I mean there’s some red on the side, but it should be an easy walk,” I smile. “We don’t even need to hold hands.”

Papyrus sees the tiles, lets out a sigh, and spins, spins, out of the room.

“Um…” Frisk says, uncertain. They take a step forwards, and when nothing happens, take a few more. Their confidence grows, and they easily walk the rest of the way. The walk over to Sans.

“actually, that spaghetti from earlier… it wasn’t too bad for my brother. since he started cooking lessons, he’s been improving a lot. i bet if he keeps it up, next year he’ll even be able to make something edible,” Sans says.

“Alright,” Frisk says. They walk over to a machine that Papyrus had been standing next to.

“The machine isn’t working.” I tell them. “Either it was always broken, or somehow Papyrus broke it. I’d bet the latter.” We leave the tile puzzle room and find ourselves in a snow-covered clearing.

“There are failed now sculptures of a long-necked dog everywhere. Most are broken. There’s also another sentry station.”

“A sign?” Frisk asks.

“Yes. ‘AWARE OF DOG. pleas pet dog.’ Alright then,” I shrug. “On the floor inside is a box of pomeraisins.”

“This has got to be Lesser Dog’s, right?” Frisk asks.

“Yes, probably. Oh, hey, a SAVE point. Knowing that the dog will never give up trying to make the perfect snowdog… It fills you with determination,” I say dramatically. “Oops, there’s a person over there. Hopefully she didn’t notice you talking to yourself,” I say.

“Oh, hi!” Frisk calls to the monster girl.

“Hey. A dog just rushed in here, filled with inspiration. It kept trying to build a snowdog that expressed its own emotions… But, as it built, it kept getting more excited about the sculpture… Its neck got longer and longer, and it added more and more snow, until… It was rather sad to watch, but
“I couldn’t turn away.”

“Look what you’ve done, Frisk. You’ve ruined this dog’s life.” I nudge their shoulder, and I see them smile a little as we walk away from the cowgirl. Which… I feel is some sort of pun. I see the next puzzle of sorts and groan. “It’s another X’s and O’s puzzle. But this time there’s ice.”

“Ok, what do I do?” Frisk asks.

“Well, there’s also a path going down. Do you want to check down there first?”

“Yeah, sure.” We walk down, and enter a small clearing in the forest.

“Well, it’s a snow Papyrus. Very muscle-y, and it has a red scarf. And over here is a lump of snow with the word ‘sans’ written on it in red marker. We should leave now,” I say. They laugh, but nod and head back up. “Now, for this puzzle… Maybe we should go in a circle?” I pace next to the ice for a bit, then nod. “Yes, that should work. Go along this bottom area here.” I push them so that they slide gracefully along the ice. They stop at the first X, and it turns to an O. I help them slide to the next one. “We need to be careful, there’s cliffs on every side,” I warn.

“What?! Cliffs??” Frisk exclaims as they land on the second X. I turn them so that they’re facing up, and shove them that way. “Be more careful, then!”

“I can’t control how fast you go, but I can point you in the right direction. If you fall, it’s your fault,” I say nonchalantly. They land on the third X, and I keep pointing them and pushing them, until I screw up. It’s the first time in my life, I swear.

Frisk slides right off the edge and falls. “Frisk!” I yell after. But since I’m not entirely corporeal, my feet lift off the ground, like they did back in Toriel’s house. I begin floating after them, and no matter how much I resist, I’m floating right off the cliff. And spinning a lot. It’s like doing cartwheels in the air, and it would have made me nauseous if I had a body. Now, it was an enjoyable feeling.

I look down, I think, towards where I am generally drifting and see Frisk standing below me on a ledge. I land on the ground next to them, thankfully on my feet, and I pat their shoulder to let them know that I’m here. “We’re in the same clearing that we were in before, with the snow sculptures,” I say.

“Did you fall off the edge, too?” They ask.

“Nope, I just floated off. You can’t get too far away from me, remember?” I shrug.

“Really? You floated again? What’s even like?” Frisk stares at me way too intensely for someone who can’t see.

“It’s not a bad feeling. I think I like it, besides all the spinning,” I tell them.

“I bet if you practiced more you could stop the spinning,” Frisk suggests.

“Practice, you say? I wonder if I can even do it voluntarily…” I lift one foot off the ground, but I’m hesitant to try lifting the other. The most likely result is me falling on my face.

“I’m sure you can do it if you try!” Frisk encourages with a smile. I huff at their positive attitude. I hop into the air with my remaining leg, and I surprisingly don’t fall on my face. I stay in the air.

“Frisk, I’m doing it!” I say, spinning my arms to try not to fall over midair. “I’m never walking again!”
“I knew you could!” They say, happily clapping their hands together.

“Well, that was fun. Now let’s go back up.” I will myself to move up, but I can only go about a foot from where I was. At least I can control myself, I guess. “I think I can only float a couple feet away from you at a time… But I know how to fix this,” I say with a mischievous glance at Frisk.

“Wha-” Frisk starts to say when I wrap my arms around their shoulders. I will myself up, and gravity obeys. I carry Frisk back up to the part of the puzzle where we fell from, and place them gently on the next X that we needed. “Oh, well, that’s one way to do it!” Frisk laughs. “That was fun! And I think you’re getting better at it, too.”

“I always was a fast learner,” I say a bit smugly. “Let’s finish the puzzle, though.” We finally have all the X’s covered but one, and I slide them over to the last one. “At last. A pathway is extending into some really dense trees. Let’s slide one last time.” I push them, and glide behind them easily.

It’s too dark to see anything in the forest. It’s a kind of long slide, and I can tell that it’s really cold in here by the sounds of Frisk’s shivering. We emerge from the woods, and I start to laugh.


“Oh, nothing, it’s just that you have a huge lump of snow on your head,” I snicker. Frisk blushes and shakes their head, ridding themselves of the snow.

“Where to?” They ask.

“There’s a path going down, and a path continuing in the same direction we’ve been walking. Your choice,” I say.

“Let’s go down,” Frisk nods. We head downwards, careful not to slip on the slight slope.

“There’s Sans, again,” I say.

“What’s up?” Sans says. He doesn’t say anything else. Frisk looks sideways at me, and I shrug. They shrug back, and we continue.

“There’s eyes in the cliffside…” I say. Their shoulders tense up, and their walk slows. They roll their hand out from their body towards me. “Um… What does that mean?” I ask, uncertain. They sigh exasperatedly. “You know what, we should both learn sign language. As soon as we are able.” They nod their head enthusiastically. “Oh, look out, Smiley’s in front of you…?” They jump, and smile shakily at the skeleton. “Wait, turn back a second,” I say.

They go back a little ways, and there Sans is, once again behind us. We turn back around, and it seems no matter which way we go, Sans is there. My distrust of him goes up. Then, as Frisk moves to go talk to him, we enter a FIGHT. “Gyftrot confronts you! He’s heavily decorated, he looks nice,” I tell Frisk.

“Act, decorate,” Frisk says.

“There’s some googly eyes on the ground by your feet,” I helpfully supply. They pick up the googly eyes, and apply them to the Gyftrot.

“GOSH DARN TEENAGE GOOGLY EYES!!!” The Gyftrot storms.

“Oops, looks like that made him angrier,” I laugh nervously. Frisk doesn’t dodge in time, gets hit by his attack, bringing them to 16 HP. “Now Gyftrot can’t see anything.”
“Act, undecorate,” Frisk amends.

“Thanks for nothing!” Gyftrot huffs.

“Touchy,” I comment. “He’s eying you suspiciously.”

“Act, undecorate.” Frisk removes a small, confused dog, giving it a few pets before setting it free into the wild.

“That’s a little better,” Gyftrot says. Frisk gets hit again, losing 4 HP. He seems a little less irritated now.

“Act, undecorate.” Frisk removes a barbed wire made of pipe cleaners. “Act, undecorate.” They remove the striped cane that says ‘I use this tiny cane to walk’ on it.

“A weight has been lifted,” Says Gyftrot. His problems have been taken away. We spare it, and receive nothing and nothing.

Frisk sighs in relief, and continues over to Sans. “Hey,” They say.

“are you lost?” He asks. He looks terribly amused. We go back a little, and he’s still there behind us. How is he doing that?! I give him a dirty look and push Frisk’s shoulder. They take the hint and continue down the path.

“Stop!” I interject, before they walk right off a cliff. “Cliff! Don’t walk off of the edge.”

“Heh, thanks,” They say quietly. “Anything over here?”

“Yes, there’s a cave to your right,” I say. “It looks pretty creepy, though.” They shrug, and enter the cave. “Ooh, it’s pretty! It’s a lovely teal color, and there’s little star-like things drifting through the air. There’s a door at the end, with the Delta Rune on it.”

“That what rune?” Frisk asks in confusion.

“Oops, I guess you don’t know about that yet. I’m sure you’ll find out someday,” I say, laughing nervously.

“Can’t you just tell me?” They whine.

“No. That would be cheating, probably,” I say. “Try the door?” They tug on the door, but it doesn’t budge. “It’s locked.”

“Isn’t there a way to open it?” Frisk asks.

“Not that I can see,” I shrug. “Let’s just leave it for now. We can come back to it later.”

“Alright.” We walk back down the tunnel, and go through the entrance to the cave. We see Sans again.

“say… are you following me?” Sans asks. Frisk shakes their head, and we continue down the path, and pass Sans again. “you sure do like to exercise.” Is all that he says. We move on, back up the slope, and to where we emerged from the dense forest.

“Alright, now we’ll continue down the path,” I tell Frisk. They walk up to the closest object in the area.
“What’s this?” They ask.

“It’s a snow poff,” I answer. They walk over to the next one. “And this… is a snow poff.” They point at another one. “This, however, is a snow poff.” They point again. “Surprisingly, it’s a snow poff.” They point at another, a smile slowly growing. “Snow poff…” I sigh. They continue this pointless endeavour. “Is it really a snow poff?” I ask cryptically. They walk over to another one. “Behold, a snow poff.” They move to the last one. I see a glint within it. “Eh? There’s 30 g inside this… what is this?”

“My efforts have paid off,” Frisk smirks. I hadn’t been aware that they could make that expression before. It seems too… devious. We move to the last snow poff.

“A tail extends from the snow poff… Oh, a dog’s head popped out! It’s so- oh. Oh, never mind! It’s huge! And it has armour and a spear!” I reel back a couple steps. We enter a FIGHT. “It’s the Greater Dog.”

“As compared to Lesser Dog?” Frisk asks.

“I guess?” I shrug.

“Act, check,” Frisk says.

“6 ATK and 4 DEF. It’s so excited that it thinks fighting is just play,” I explain. It’s attack hits them, and their HP is now at 8. “You should probably heal soon,” I recommend.

“Yeah, probably. Act, beckon,” Frisk says. They call the Greater Dog. It bounds towards them, flecking slobber into their face. I wrinkle my nose. Gross. They don’t get hit, but they haven’t healed. “Act, pet.” Greater Dog curls up in their lap as it is pet. It gets so comfortable it falls asleep… Zzzzz… Then it wakes up! It’s so excited! It pats the ground with its front paws. “Act, play.” Frisk makes a snowball and throws it for the dog to fetch.

“Your snowball splatted on the ground. Greater Dog is picking up all the snow in the area. It’s bringing it to you. But now it’s very tired,” I narrate. It rests its head on Frisk. It wants some TLC.

“Act, pet.” As they pet it, it sinks its entire weight into them… Now Frisk can barely move under it. But, apparently they haven’t pet it enough. Pet capacity is at 40 percent. “Act, pet.” They pet decisively. Pet capacity reaches 100 percent. The dog flops over with its legs hanging in the air. It is contented. We spare it.

Greater Dog hops out of its armour, and licks Frisk on the nose, making them giggle. It then jumps back in, backwards, and walks away. We follow in the same direction, but the Greater Dog is gone.

“Woah, be careful,” I say quickly as we step into the next area.

“What is it?” Frisk asks as they slow to a stop.

“Well, remember that bridge from a while ago? The short one over a cliff without any railings?” I ask.

“Yeah? Is it another one of those? I handled that one well enough,” Frisk says, and starts walking again.

“Well, it’s like that one,” I put a hand on their shoulder, effectively stopping them. “But, this one’s at least ten times bigger. And with a bigger drop below…” I peer over the edge. I kind of wonder what would happen if I jumped. Would I float, like in Toriel’s house? Would I fall? Would I die again?
Would I be trapped down there forever? ...In my opinion, it’s not worth the risks.

“Oh. Yeah, I see the concern,” Frisk says nervously.

“At least this one has railings. But it’s super wobbly.” I despair. This could be the end of our journey. “I can’t even see the other side, there’s so much mist blocking my view…”

“I can’t even see.” Frisk says, flashing finger guns.

“I’m glad you can joke about being blind, but now is probably not the time,” I sigh. “Look, just hold onto both sides of the railing, and try to stay balanced. I’ll try my best to help if you start to fall.” They nod, determined, and I think that there should be a SAVE point around here. Sadly, there isn’t.

Frisk starts to walk across the swaying rope-and-wood bridge, gripping the rope railings so hard that their knuckles turn white. They seem to be doing well so far. It’s kind of slow going, but they’re making progress. I walk casually behind them, since I don’t weigh anything and can’t unbalance the bridge.

“You’re almost there,” I encourage. We’re a little more than halfway. I focus entirely on Frisk’s back, ready to step in if they lose balance.

“HUMAN!” I hear Papyrus yell. Frisk jumps, (and so do I, but I’m not telling anyone), and almost starts to fall. My arm darts to their elbow, and I steady them.

“That was closer than I would have liked,” I complain. “Hey, jackass, you could’ve killed us!” I yell at Papyrus. I believe that strong words should be saved for strong scenarios. Frisk is surprised by my words, and I have to steady them again.

“THIS IS YOUR FINAL AND MOST DANGEROUS CHALLENGE!” Papyrus continues, completely ignoring me. “BEHOLD, THE GAUNTLET OF DEADLY TERROR!” Papyrus presses a button in his hand, and several things surround the bridge.

“There’s a mace and chain, a spear, a flamethrower, another spear, and a cannon hanging above and below you. Also, a dog dangling on a rope. Wow, Papyrus really did go all out on this one,” I explain to Frisk. I start to admire Papyrus’s determination. This actually looks dangerous, for once. I can’t wait to try this one.

“Are you kidding?!” Frisk whispers urgently.

“WHEN I SAY THE WORD, IT WILL FULLY ACTIVATE!!! CANNONS WILL FIRE! SPIKES WILL SWING! BLADES WILL SLICE! EACH PART WILL SWING VIOLENTLY UP AND DOWN! ONLY THE TINIEST CHANCE OF VICTORY WILL REMAIN!!!” As Papyrus speaks, my excitement only grows.

“Do you think I could do this one? With the, um, body-merging thing?” I ask hopefully. Frisk doesn’t answer for a moment, and seems to actually consider it.

“If I need your help, then I’ll ask,” They decide. My shoulders sag a tiny bit, but there’s still hope.

“ARE YOU READY!? BECAUSE! I! AM! ABOUT! TO DO IT!” Papyrus says. I shift anxiously from foot to foot. But nothing happens.

“well? what’s the holdup?” Sans asks.

“HOLDUP!? WHAT HOLDUP!? I’M… I’M ABOUT TO ACTIVATE IT NOW!” And yet
nothing happens. I can feel my hope shrink in my chest. I don’t think it will be as cool as I had thought it would be…

“that, uh, doesn’t look very activated.” Sans comments helpfully.

“THIS CHALLENGE!!! IT SEEMS… MAYBE… TOO EASY TO DEFEAT THE HUMAN WITH. YEAH! WE CAN’T USE THIS ONE!!! I AM A SKELETON WITH STANDARDS!!! MY PUZZLES ARE VERY FAIR! AND MY TRAPS ARE EXPERTLY COOKED! BUT THIS METHOD IS TOO DIRECT! NO CLASS AT ALL! AWAY IT GOES.” All of the cool-looking weapons retract back to wherever they came from.

“Nooo…” I whisper with an outstretched hand. I drop my arm and pout.

“PHEW…” Papyrus sighs in relief. Frisk looks at him blankly, then starts to smile widely. “WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT!? THIS WAS ANOTHER DECISIVE VICTORY FOR PAPYRUS! NYEH!! HEH!! … HEH???” Papyrus walks away, head hanging.

“This is your fault!” I tell Frisk. “You’re too adorable and helpless and innocent, and Papyrus couldn’t bring himself to actually put you in danger! You’re keeping him from his potential!”

“Can we get off this bridge?” Frisk asks quietly, almost too quiet for me to hear. I look down and notice that they’re still holding on for dear life, and they’re still shivering from the cold. I sigh.

“We need to find someplace warm, soon.” I agree. We carefully make our way across the rest of the bridge, and stop to talk to Sans.

“i don’t know what my brother’s going to do now. if i were you, i would make sure i understand blue attacks.” Sans says. Frisk nods, accepting his advice. We walk a little further.

“A big sign! It says ‘Welcome to Snowdin Town! Finally!’” I’m hugely relieved. Hopefully there’s somewhere we can get warm, and possibly sleep a little? We’ve spent almost the entire day solving puzzles, FIGHTing, and petting dogs, not to mention dealing with the skeleton brothers. Frisk’s got to be tired by now.

Frisk yawns, proving me right. “A town? Fantastic. Let’s go.”

Chapter End Notes

As always, thanks for reading! Thanks for all your comments! I think I’ll go delete the previous A/N since I’m pretty sure I know what I’m gonna do. But also, I’ve changed some of my headcannons, for stuff like how FIGHTS work. So if I were to go back and edit a lot, would anyone read it? Or should I just keep it, because I can roll either way. Tell me your thoughts pretty please!

Side note, this is the longest chapter so far, at about 4,800 words! That’s a lot!
Chapter 10- Adventuring is Exhausting

“The sight of such a friendly town fills you with determination,” I say when I see a shimmer in the snow. SAVE point, yes! HP fully restored. “There’s a box here. We should probably use it this time, since your pockets seem to be filling up.” Frisk nods. We open the box, and Frisk uses their phone to look at all of the stuff they have. “You have some monster candy, spider cider, a bandage, a stick, a toy knife, the pie, the snowman piece, and the nice cream. What do you want to put in the box?”

“Let’s put in the stick, the knife, the pie, and the snowman piece,” Frisk says, unloading their pockets as they go. That leaves us with the monster candy, the spider cider, the bandage, and nice cream. Only the essentials, I guess.

“There’s also shop next to you. Would you like to enter?” Frisk nods. We enter the shop.

“Hello, traveller. How can I help you?”

“Buy?” Frisk asks.

“What would you like to buy?” The shopkeeper asks as she lays out some items.

“There’s a Tough Glove, a Manly Bandana, a Bisicle, and some Cinnamon Buns,” I explain.

“The Manly Bandana?” Frisk says. They pay 50 g and the shopkeeper bunny thanks them. We also buy a Cinnamon Bun and a Bisicle, filling back up our inventory.

“Care to chat?” The bunny lady asks.

“Sure, hello,” Frisk greets.

“Well hiya! Welcome to Snowdin! I can’t remember the last I saw a fresh face around here. Where did you come from? The capital? You don’t look like a tourist. Are you here by yourself?” She asks.

“Yeah, I guess you could say that,” Frisk says with a sneaky sideways glance at me. “What’s there to do here?”

“You want to know what to do here in Snowdin? Grillby’s has food, and the library has information… If you’re tired, you can take a nap at the inn. It’s right next door- my sister runs it. And if you’re bored, you can sit outside and watch those wacky skeletons do their thing. There’s two of ‘em… Brothers, I think. They just showed up one day and… asserted themselves. The town has gotten a lot more interesting since then.”

“The inn sounds nice, I’ll probably go there next,” Frisk nods. “For now, could you tell me about the town’s history?”

“Think back to your history class… A long time ago, monsters lived in the Ruins back there in the forest. Long story short, we all decided to leave the ruins and head for the end of the caverns. Along the way, some fuzzy folk decided they liked the cold and set up camp in Snowdin. Oh, and don’t think about trying to explore the Ruins… The door’s been locked for ages. So unless you’re a ghost
or can burrow under the door, forget about it.”

“Fascinating. So, tell me about yourself.” Even when they’re tired, Frisk is surprisingly good at conversation. And borderline flirting.

“Life is the same as ever around here. A little claustrophobic… But… we all know deep down that freedom is coming, don’t we? As long as we got that hope, we can grit our teeth and face the same struggles, day after day… That’s life, ain’t it?” She sighs dreamily.

“That’s a shame… I guess I’ll go to that inn, now,” Frisk says.

“Bye now! Come again sometime!” She says, and Frisk waves.

“Let’s look at the stuff you bought,” I suggest. They nod, agreeing. “The Manly Bandana has Armour DEF 7. It has seen some wear. It has abs drawn on it.” They take the Faded Ribbon out of their hair, and tie on the Manly Bandana. I think it looks less cute, but it still somehow suits them, in some kind of ironic way.

We enter the Inn. The first thing Frisk does is greet the small kid bunny behind the counter.

“Hello!” Frisk says.

“Did you know, mom says that sleeping can recover your health above your maximum HP… What’s maximum HP?” It asks.

Frisk shrugs. “Thanks for the advice,” They say, and we turn to the older rabbit, presumably the shopkeeper’s sister.

“Welcome to Snowed Inn! Snowdin’s premier hotel! One night is 80g,” The innkeeper explains.

“We probably have that much, right?” I ask. Frisk nods, and hands over the money. We have more than enough.

“Here’s your room key,” The bunny says, holding out an old-fashioned skeleton key. “Make sure to bundle up!” We walk up the stairs and enter the first room on the left. It’s pretty simple, with one twin bed, a bedside table, and a desk. I like it though, it’s cozy.

Frisk immediately collapses asleep on the bed, and I sit on the floor leaning against the bed. I like to listen to the peace and quiet. And that’s when it starts. From the other side of the wall, the loudest snoring I’ve ever heard starts. I cover my ears with my hands but it does nothing.

“Frisk?” I ask. They’re dead asleep. “Friiiisssskkkk,” I hiss. I grind my teeth and I just want the noise to stop. I need it to stop. It seems like it’s getting louder, if that’s even possible. I can feel my breathing growing faster, and I’m not sure why this is affecting me like this, but I do know that either I remove myself or something’s going to die.

I shake the sleeping human. They make a face in their sleep, and I shake them harder. So hard, in fact, that they fall off the bed. Now they wake up, and look up at me in confusion. “What is it?” They ask.

“Listen,” I say. They tilt their head to the side, and obviously hear the snoring. “We can’t stay here, Frisk. We’ll find somewhere else, somebody’s couch or something. But not here.” Frisk seems amused with me. They look a little better than when they were sleep deprived. Just a little.

“I guess, if you need to.” I’m glad Frisk understands me, at least. They put their hand on my arm,
and when I look down I notice that I’ve been twisting and stretching the hem of my sweater. It’s slightly ripped. I unclench my hands, and put them down at my sides. Frisk smiles at me encouragingly.

“Let’s go then,” I say. We go out the door, and down the stairs.

“Hiya!” The bunny girl says when she sees us. “You look like you had a great sleep. Which is incredible, because you were only up there for about two minutes…” I can tell that she was just trying to be polite, but it wasn’t really working. “Here’s your money back. You can pay me if you’re going to stay overnight,” She smiles. We leave the inn.

“There’s a couple of houses and several more rabbit people. And a bear person, and… a Christmas Tree? With presents under it,” I tell Frisk. “Do we have to talk to everyone or can we just go?” I ask. I’m not very patient, and I don’t like wasting time.

“I think we should talk to everyone. We need a place to stay tonight, remember?” Frisk says, as quietly as they can.

“Ugh. Alright, then,” I say. “There’s a rabbit dude to your left.” Frisk walks over to him and waves in greeting.

“That lady over there… Something about her disturbs me,” He says simply.

“Thanks, I didn’t ask,” I say. “Why is it that people always feel the need to tell us things we don’t care about? Why doesn’t anyone just say, Hi! How are you? What brings you here? They always have something weird to say, have you noticed that?” Frisk just shrugs in response, already moving on to the next person. Who happens to be another bunny girl, and the one that the guy was talking about. Frisk waves.

“Isn’t my little Cinnamon just the cutest?... Bun-buns are so adorable… Tee hee!”

“Still didn’t ask. You understand what I’m talking about, right, Frisk?” Frisk nods at me, a smile on their face. They’re just amused, and they probably don’t feel my pain. Whatever. “Alright, now the bear guy under the tree? Let’s see what pointless topic he has to inform us about.”

“Awful teens tormented a local monster by decorating its tree-like horns. So we started giving that monster presents to make it feel better. Now it’s a tradition to put presents underneath a decorated tree,” He says.

“Ah, the origins of Christmas. Fascinating,” I say. “Oh, there’s a little orange fellow. What does he have to say?”

“Yo! You’re a kid too, right? I can tell ‘cause you’re wearing a striped shirt,” The monster kid says.

“Yeah, I am!” Frisk answers with a smile.

“He’s also wearing a striped sweater, but it matches his skin color, which is orange, and he doesn’t have arms,” I say boredly. “And there’s another bear person over here, outside a restaurant called ‘Grillby’s.’” Frisk greets him.

“This town doesn't have a mayor. But if there’s a problem, a skeleton will tell a fish lady about it. Thaaaaaat’s politics,” He says.

“I wonder if he’s talking about Papyrus?...Well, let’s go into Grillby’s, then,” I say. We go inside, and I can see the relief on Frisk’s face when the inside is very warm. Pleasant music greets us. “All
of the dogs we fought are in here, along with ...6 people we haven’t met, including the bartender. I assume we’re talking to everyone?” Frisk nods back at me. It’s a shame that they can’t talk to me in public. “Hey, when we get out of here, we should learn sign language,” I suggest. They give me a discreet double thumbs up.

“You better watch where you sit down in here, kid,” Dogamy says. “Because that big guy WILL jump into your lap and give you lots of love and attention.”

“We’re sentries, but we never get any respect,” Says Dogaressa. “I wish those skeletons would throw us a bone.” ...Was that a pun, or a legit wish? Who can tell? “We love bones.”

We walk over to a drunk-looking bunny with its head on the table. “No matter where I go, it’s the same menu, the same people. Help! I want new drinks an’ h-h-h-hot guys!!!!” It says. ...Alright, then.

“Hmm… Isn’t human food different from monster food? It does things like ‘spoil.’” Says a monster with a face full of teeth.

“He’s right, you know. While human food can heal your body slowly, and has to be processed and all that, monster food directly heals your soul instantly, which is why it helps so much to eat some in FIGHTs,” I explain to Frisk.

“And when you eat it, it passes all the way through your whole body. Disgusting. I’d love to try it sometime,” The teeth monster continues. Frisk nods thoughtfully, and moves on to the next person in the diner, a horse with sunglasses leaning on the bar.

“The capitol’s getting pretty crowded, so I’ve heard they’re going to start moving here. Hmmm… I don’t want to see the erasure of our local culture. But I definitely want to see some city slickers slip onto their butts!” The cool horse says. Frisk goes to look at the jukebox in the corner. I lean over their shoulder to get a closer look.

“The jukebox is broken,” I say. Frisk gives me a confused glance. “Then where’s the music coming from?” I ask. They shrug in response, and go over to see Greater Dog, who just barks softly at them. They move over to a hungover-looking bird sitting on a barstool.

“Those dogs are part of the Royal Guard, the elite military group led by Undyne. She’s rude, loud, and beats up everybody who gets in her way… It’s no wonder all the kids want to be like her when they grow up!” The bird says. We greet the other hungover-looking bird next to him.

“I ‘put out a line’ for some girls today. Someone told me there are plenty of fish in the sea… Well, I’m taking that seriously. I’m literally going to make out with a fish.” He says. Frisk makes a disgusted, yet concerned, face.

Frisk must sense Lesser Dog is there or something, because their face lights up and they almost run over to it. It doesn’t seem to have anything to say. “Its playing poker against itself. It appears to be losing.” I tell Frisk. They look slightly disappointed, but they still smile at the dog. We move to talk to Doggo.

“I’m thinking of getting a spiked collar to show off my personality. It makes a statement like… ‘Attach a leash to me and take me for a walk please.’” Doggo says. Finally, we go over to the bartender, a man made of fire. Frisk slides onto a stool, and I slide onto the one next to them. They’re at different heights, which is weird.

Grillbz begins to murmur something, very quietly, so that only I can hear if I lean very close. Frisk
can’t do that without it being weird, so I lean over the counter and turn my ear to him. “Grillbz said that he’d offer you a glass of water, but he doesn’t touch the stuff. Because he’s made of fire,” I relay to Frisk.

It seems that that’s all there is to do in the diner, so we exit back into the cold winter weather. Outside we see a couple of monsters, one a small mouse all bundled up in tons of scarves, and the other a dark orange monster with curved horns and crosses for eyes. Frisk waves to the mouse monster.

“Everyone is always laughing and cracking jokes, trying to forget our modern crises… Dreariness. Overcrowding. Lack of sunlight. I would join them, but I’m just not very funny.” The mouse says. We turn to the other monster.

“We all know the underground has problems, but we smile anyway. Why? We can’t do anything, so why be morose about it?” They say.

“Good philosophy,” I comment. “Let’s go up this path, here,” I suggest. Frisk double checks behind themself while we’re in the trees, and begins to speak.

“I hadn’t realized that life was so grim down here,” Frisk says as we walk down the path, frowning for the first time in a while.

“Yeah, everyone wants to get to the surface pretty badly. It’ll happen sooner than later, though. It should have happened a long time ago,” My voice gets bitter in that last part. If only Asriel and I had succeeded, then nobody would have to suffer again! If only Asriel hadn’t ruined my plans…

“I’m sure that we can do it! Not only can we get out of here, but we’ll take everyone else with us!” Frisk says as they stop walking, dramatically clenching a fist and grinning. If only there was a SAVE point here. They begin to walk again, but I can hear voices coming from down the path. I put a hand in front of Frisk, and shush them.

“Let’s play Monsters and Humans!” A voice says.

“You aren’t going to make me be the human again, are you?” A different voice asks. We round the corner to see some rocks playing together. There’s a bigger rock with a mustache watching them.

“What’s happening here?” Frisk asks the bigger rock.

“Ah, to be young again. The world sure felt boundless,” It says. That doesn’t answer their question, but Frisk doesn’t bother asking anything else. They knock on the door to their right.

“Ahh, what a beautiful knock…! Maybe if I don’t answer, I’ll hear it again,” A voice on the other side of the door says. Frisk seems amused, and knocks again. “Ahh, my patience rewards me.”

“Alright, we are leaving now,” I say, nudging Frisk’s shoulder. This, whatever it is, shouldn’t continue. We go over to a huge wolf monster throwing chunks of ice into the river, where they float off to who knows where. We watch for a little while, and then decide to leave. This monster’s too intimidating to talk to, anyway. So, we walk back down the path. The fact that my legs aren’t sore from all this walking, and will never be sore again, doesn’t even phase me anymore.

“Next stop is the Library. Oh, wait, that sign says ‘Librarby.’ Interesting,” I frown. It’s kind of a hard sign to read, though. Frisk shrugs and goes in. The air is pleasantly warm.

“Welcome to the library. Yes, we know. The sign is misspelled,” A lizard-like monster manning the front counter says. Frisk giggles. Next we greet a rhinoceros-like monster lady.
“I love working on the newspaper. There’s so little to report that we just fill it with comics and games,” She says.

“If we play our cards right, we’ll give them something to report about,” I nudge Frisk’s arm with my elbow. They shake their arm, and I get the message. We turn to another monster, one that looks like she could be related to the Loox that we fought a while back. She’s just a different color, and has a sweeter aura.

“That look in your eye…” She says. “You’re someone who has trouble solving Junior Jumble, aren’t you?” …Well, I take back what I said about her being sweet. ‘That look in their eye?’ They’re blind, of course they have trouble doing that! Rude!

We go over to the last lady in the room, who has her hair up in a bun and is possibly smoking. Or holding a pen? I’m not sure. “When I was younger, my teachers gave me word searches when they ran out of assignments. I thought they were a waste of time. But look at me now… I’m the number-one word-search creator in the entire underground!” She says.

“Great. I don’t care,” I say. Frisk rolls their eyes at me. They go over to the book shelf, grab a book, opening it to a random page. They point at me, then the book. “Ah, you want me to read it. Alright. It’s a school report about monster funerals. ‘Monster funerals, technically speaking, are cool as heck. When monsters get old and kick the bucket, they turn into dust. At funerals, we take that dust and spread it on that person’s favorite thing. Then their essence will live on in that thing… Uhhh, am I at the page minimum yet? I’m kinda sick of writing this,’” I read. Frisk closes the book, and moves on to another one. “While monsters are mostly made of magic, human beings are mostly made of water. Humans, with their physical forms, are far stronger than us. But they will never know the joy of expressing themselves through magic. They’ll never get a bullet-pattern birthday card…” I frown at this. I could remember getting a bullet-patterned card, back before I died. They weren’t that cool.

“Here I am… Writing this book. A person comes in and picks up the book… They start reading it…! Oh, sorry, I’m still writing that one,” Says the rhinoceros-like monster girl. Frisk looks startled when I’m not the narrating voice this time.

“Anyway. This one says, ‘Because they are made of magic, monsters’ bodies are attuned to their Soul. If a monster doesn’t want to fight, its defenses will weaken. And the crueler the intentions of our enemies, the more their attacks will hurt us. Therefore, if a being with a powerful Soul struck with the desire to kill…’ Um, let’s stop reading here,” I tell Frisk. Since they’re currently the most powerful Soul in the Underground, by a lot, I feel like it would make them feel guilty if they knew what they were truly capable of. We move on to the next book. “‘Monster History Part 4. Fearing the human no longer, we moved out of our old city, Home. We braved harsh cold cold, swampland, and searing heat… Until we reached what we now call our capital. New Home. Again, our King is really bad at names…?’ I laugh because that last part is very true. And I know from firsthand experience. Frisk opens a book from the last shelf. “‘Love, hope, compassion… This is what people say monster Souls are made of. But the absolute nature of ‘Soul’ is unknown. After all, humans have proven their Souls don’t need these things to exist.’” I read. “Well, that one was a bit of a downer.” Frisk nods, and looks sad. “Let’s leave the library. I think we’re almost to the end of the town.”

“I hope we find a place to sleep soon,” Frisk comments quietly.

“What was that, dear?” One of the librarians asks.

“Nothing, talking to myself,” Frisk says hurriedly.

“I agree, though, about the sleeping arrangements. You look nearly dead on your feet!” I say. And they do look exhausted. We exit the library, and walk along the path through the town. We come
across a house.

Frisk gestures vaguely at the object in front of them. I can tell what they want, but it’s not a good sign if they feel too out of it to talk more.

“It’s a mailbox overflowing with unread junkmail,” I say. They point to the second mailbox. “This mailbox is labeled Papyrus.”

“Awww...” Frisk hums in sympathy.

“No, I have two theories about this. Theory 1: Sans is more popular than Papyrus, which is the sad option. But theory 2, which is happier, is that Sans is too lazy to ever go through his mail, which is mostly junkmail, and so this has been building up for years. But Papyrus, on the other hand, gets lots of mail but he makes sure to read it and respond as soon as possible. That’s why his is cleaner,” I explain. Frisk looks at me in wonder.

“Hmmm. Maybe.” They say simply. “So that’s probably the skelebro’s house, huh?” Frisk goes to knock on the door. There’s no answer, so they try to open the door.


“Let’s keep going. If we see Papyrus or Sans, we’ll ask about sleep.” Frisk says hopefully. I shake their shoulder a bit, and they pick their head up to look at me. I really hope we don’t have to fight someone anytime soon.

Chapter End Notes

hey, congrats! the big one-oh! let's invite all your friends over for a big shindig. we can have pie, and hot dogs, and... hmmm... wait. something's not right. you don't have any friends.

But in all seriousness, 10 chapters! Wow. Things to know: my tumblr, instagram, twitter, ff.net, and even snapchat all have the same username (agentaace). Weird, right? But speaking of tumblr, I've been kinda obsessed with those Chara ask blogs lately, and I kinda want to make one? For the Chara of this fic. Anyone have any thoughts on that? Username ideas I have are saltychara, paci-chara, askcharatale, etc. If you have ideas to share that's also great!

Always love feedback, thoughts, critiques! Thanks for reading!

UPDATE: I did the thing! The URL for the blog ended up being Saltychara, because I'm attached to that, and Charatale was unfortunately taken. So the URL's http://saltychara.tumblr.com/
Chapter 11- I came out to have a good time and I’m honestly feeling so attacked right now

We walk. This part of the forest feels much colder than the rest, actually dropping a few degrees every couple of feet. Frisk huddles into themselves, and I awkwardly hold their shoulders to attempt to keep them warm, and to keep them from actually falling over. I don’t think it’s very effective. It gets colder. Freezing frost fills the air.

“I can see a silhouette up ahead,” I tell Frisk. They nod to show they heard.

“HUMAN.”

“Oh, it’s Papyrus. Are you going to ask about the couch?” I remind Frisk.

“ALLOW ME TO TELL YOU ABOUT SOME COMPLEX FEELINGS,” Papyrus says.

“I’ll wait till he’s done,” Frisk mumbles.

“FEELINGS LIKE… THE JOY OF FINDING ANOTHER PASTA LOVER. THE ADMIRATION FOR ANOTHER’S PUZZLE-SOLVING SKILLS. THE DESIRE TO HAVE A COOL, SMART PERSON THINK YOU ARE COOL.” What is happening here? “THESE FEELINGS… THEY MUST BE WHAT YOU ARE FEELING RIGHT NOW!!! I CAN HARDLY IMAGINE WHAT IT MUST BE LIKE TO FEEL THAT WAY. AFTER ALL, I AM VERY GREAT. I DON’T EVER WONDER WHAT HAVING LOTS OF FRIENDS IS LIKE. I PITY YOU… LONELY HUMAN… WORRY NOT!!! YOU SHALL BE LONELY NO LONGER! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, WILL BE YOUR…”

“Aw, he’s gonna be your friend! Frisk, that’s great, right?” I ask. Frisk smiles and nods. I wouldn’t mind hanging out with Papyrus for a while, to be honest. When I consider it for a moment, I can warm up to the idea. I have a feeling it’d take a long time for me to get bored of him.

“...NO…”

“...What?”

“NO, THIS IS ALL WRONG!”

“What are you saying?” I ask, knowing he can’t hear me.

“I CAN’T BE YOUR FRIEND!!” Frisk looks distressed by this turn of events.

“No!”

“YOU ARE A HUMAN! I MUST CAPTURE YOU!!! THEN, I CAN FULFILL MY LIFELONG DREAM!!! POWERFUL! POPULAR! PRESTIGIOUS!!! THAT'S PAPYRUS!!! THE NEWEST MEMBER… OF THE ROYAL GUARD!” We enter a FIGHT.

“NO!” Frisk and I gasp at the same time. “Papyrus blocks the way!” I say.

“Act, check!” Frisk says. I can see that they would rather do anything else than this.
“Papyrus has 8 ATK and 2 DEF. He likes to say: ‘Nyeh heh heh!’”

“NYEH HEH HEH!” Says Papyrus. His first attack appears, some bones that we avoid… extremely easily? Frisk literally just has to hover above it? Seems suspicious…

“You could try flirting with Papyrus?” I suggest. Since Frisk has previously proved to be strangely good at it, I figure that that might be a way to defuse some of the tension. Frisk shrugs in response.

“Act, flirt. Papyrus, see that heart? It belongs only to you!” Frisk says, smiling sleepily. Not their best, I’ll admit. But it seems to do the trick.


“I have a feeling I know exactly what to say. Tell him you can make spaghetti,” I tell Frisk.

“Ok. I can make spaghetti,” Frisk says.

“OH NO!!! YOU’RE MEETING ALL MY STANDARDS!!! I GUESS THIS MEANS I HAVE TO GO ON A DATE WITH YOU…? LET’S DATE L-LATER!! AFTER I CAPTURE YOU!” Papyrus proclaims. Frisk laughs and nods quickly, and it’s the most I’ve seen them do in a while.

“Papyrus is thinking about what to wear on his date,” I tell Frisk. That’s mostly a guess, but knowing Papyrus, it’s true. Frisk dodges the attacks again with too much ease.

“Spare.”

“So, you won’t fight… then, let’s see if you can handle my fabled blue attack!” Papyrus says. There’s a lot of bones this time, but now they’re blue.

“Frisk, don’t move. Blue stop signs, remember?” I remind Frisk. Normally I’d assume that they remembered, but they seem really out of it right now. But they don’t move, and they don’t take any damage… Until the last second, of course. Frisk’s red heart turns blue, and it falls to the ground, bringing the rest of Frisk with it. They collapse. “Woah, Frisk, are you alright?” I ask in concern. They make a disgruntled noise, and I sigh in relief. They aren’t asleep or anything worse. The attack only took 1 HP, so now we’re at 19.

“Wha’?” Frisk asks, dazed and lying in the snow. They can’t seem to get up, but I don’t know if that’s the exhaustion, or the blue heart.

“Your heart turned blue, and the gravity changed. It seems that that’s Papyrus’s blue attack,” I comment.

“YOU’RE BLUE NOW. THAT’S MY ATTACK!! NYEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH!!!” Papyrus gloats.

“If Frisk gets hypothermia and dies, I’m blaming it on you! I will END you!” I point an accusing finger at Papyrus and float closer to him. “I mean, they’re lying face first in the snow. I understand you’re a skeleton, but humans can die from cold! Why are you even wearing a scarf? You don’t need it!” He, predictably, doesn’t answer. Frisk giggles, and I blush a little bit.

“Spare.”

“HMMM… I WONDER WHAT I SHOULD WEAR…” Papyrus ponders. His attacks are slightly faster, and taller bones. Frisk can’t even gather the energy to jump over them, and ends up hitting
two. HP now at 13.

“Spare.”

“JUMP HIGHER, JEEZ!” Papyrus commands. Frisk apparently doesn’t take his advice, as they hit two more bones. HP at 9.

“Spare…”

“YEAAH, DON’T MAKE ME USE MY SPECIAL ATTACK!” Bones come from above, too. HP now at 2.

“Frisk, heal!” I say.

“Spare,” Frisk says absently. “Wait, Chara, did you say som-” Frisk is cut off as a bone lightly taps them on the head, and they go limp. I look up sharply at Papyrus, who is scooping the tiny human up into his arms.

“YOU’RE TOO WEAK!! I WAS EASILY ABLE TO CAPTURE YOU!!! I WILL NOW TAKE YOU TO THE CAPTURE ZONE!! OR, AS SANS CALLS IT… OUR GARAGE...? YOU’RE IN THE DOGHOUSE NOW!! NYEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH!!!” Papyrus says, a little more gently than usual. I know Frisk isn’t dead, because if they were, we would have gone to our last SAVE point.

Papyrus starts to walk back into Snowdin town, and I trail behind him curiously. “DO NOT WORRY, HUMAN! I WILL NOT HARM YOU!” Papyrus says in his ‘inside voice,’ probably trying not to wake them up. I’d worry about Frisk, but Papyrus seems surprisingly gentle with them, making sure that they are comfortable against his chest. It’s kind of sweet.

He stops at the garage that was locked earlier, and holds Frisk with one arm as he takes a key out of his pocket and opens the door. We go through a short hallway, and the rest of the room is blocked off by bars. If they can even be called bars. Papyrus slips between them with ease, and lays Frisk down on a dog bed. It’s a bit too small to sleep on.

Papyrus turns the light off and leaves, and I’m struck with the realization that while Frisk is sound asleep, I have nothing to do. I sit on the floor, and wait.

“hey.”

I jump to my feet, and spin around. And there he is, leaning against a wall. How’d he even get in here without me noticing?! I mean, the lights were off and it’s kind of dim in here, but I’m not blind!

“yeah, i’m talking to you,” Sans says.

“what, me?” I ask incredulously.

“who else?” He shrugs. “i don’t see any other ghostly parasites around, do you?”

“Um, excuse me, but what did you just call me?”

“a ghost parasite, obviously. you’ve latched yourself onto the kid pretty tight, huh?” I give him a bewildered look. “i could see the kid’s soul when they were fighting my brother. it has a slightly darker color to it in the middle, don’t you think?” I shrug. I had never really noticed. “now, what do you want with the kid?”
I blink. “I just woke up next to them. I don’t want anything from them,” I attempt.

“then why hang around?” Sans asks.

“I just want to see what happens.” I’m not sure how to act around Sans, so I think that intimidation might be the best way to go. “I’m very curious, you know.”

“yeah, me too. just want to make sure your intentions are pure, s’all. can’t have you messing up their mind, not if their gonna be pap’s buddy. that means no murdering, kapeesh?”

“Who said anything about murdering?” I ask.

“don’t play dumb with me, kid. i heard you trying to convince your buddy here to off my brother and i. and i’m not entirely ok with that. not to mention, you called pap a jackass.”

“I’ll admit that that did happen. But he’s grown on me a little, so you shouldn’t have anything to fear. You know, for now,” I say cryptically.

“listen, i couldn’t care less about what you do, so long as nobody dies, ok?” Sans says. He must really be concerned about me. It seems like all I am to him is a problem that needs to be fixed, or at least just put out of the way where no one can see them.

I grin widely, going back to intimidation tactics. “But I’m afraid it’s too late for that. Sure, we reloaded, but it sure was fun to see the look on that old lady’s face as we killed her.” I can only hope that he might have a clue what I’m talking about.

Sans looks nervous, but quickly hides it. “reloaded? well, that was, uh, not a cool thing to do. did you regret it?”

“Not as much as Frisk.”

“oh, is that their name?” Sans asks curiously. “and what might yours be?”

“None of your business. Why are you really here?”

“like i said, to see what your motives are. it’s pretty obvious you care about the kid, even if you won’t admit it.”

“What? No, I don’t have a choice! I have to stay with them! I would leave if I could!” I huff, and cross my arms.

“that’s not what it sounded like when you yelled at pap while he was fighting them,” Sans grins. He’s got me there, but I don’t want him to win… whatever’s happening right now.

“So you’ve been stalking us?” I ask.

“sorta. yeah. making sure you two don’t get into any trouble. as far as i can tell, you’ve done pretty good so far. and i’m not too worried about you, for now. as long as you keep looking after the kid out of the goodness of your heart, then i’ll try not to get in your way. just no more murdering, ok?” I blink, and Sans is gone.

“Argh!” I yell as I kick a wall. I don’t like that skeleton very much. A sudden thought occurs to me. “Wait, how the hell can you see me?!” I shout. But he doesn’t come back. I look down at Frisk, but they’re still sound asleep. I’m not sure I could have slept through that, but this kid must be absolutely exhausted. Bone tired, if you will. Ugh.
Papyrus left some stuff in here, things he probably set up earlier today in anticipation for capturing Frisk. Or, maybe he had a dog before and improvised, because this looks like a house for a dog rather than a human. But I can barely see anything in the dark, since I forgot to look when we first came in. In my defense, I was a bit preoccupied.

I think about what Sans said, about the way Frisk’s soul looks. As I decide to look at it later, it pops up from where Frisk is sleeping, hovering above them. I blink my eyes curiously, and walk over to get a closer look.

It’s a candy red, but now that I’m really looking, there is a darker color down the middle. More of blood red than candy red. It’s the color of my own soul before I died…? The color goes through the center of the heart in a zigzag line, shockingly similar to the crack that appears when Frisk dies.

The heart emits a soft glow in the dimly lit garage, and it tints everything else the slightest bit red. I think it looks pretty.

And so I float there on my back, mesmerized by this heart, until it suddenly disappears. “What? Where did it go?” I wonder, rolling over in the air so that I’m in a sitting position.

“Where’d what go?” A sleepy voice asks. I look down from where the heart had been, and see that Frisk is waking up, rubbing their eyes.

“Your soul was out. I was looking at it,” I admit. “It must have gone back in when you woke up,”

“What was so interesting about my soul?”

“Nothing. It just glows pretty,” I lie. I’m not sure I want to tell them about what Sans said. “I guess I was staring at it for a long time, though, huh? How long do you think you were asleep for?”

“It’s hard to tell. A while, though. Maybe we can ask Papyrus…” They trail off. “We were fighting him, right? That's when I fell asleep?”

“Yes. He hit you over the head with a bone and then carried you here. Not very friendly, if you ask me,” I say. It was really rude of him, to be honest.

“Right. And where exactly is here?” Frisk asks innocently.

“Oh, of course. We’re in Papyrus and Sans’s garage. The lights are off, so if you could turn them on, we could look around,” I say. We fumble around for a couple minutes, looking for the switch.

“Found it!” Frisk says after feeling around the wall a bit. They flip on the lights, and suddenly I can see.

“Oh. Well, this something,” I comment.

“What? What is it?” Frisk asks.

“Papyrus really hasn’t ever seen a human, has he…” I mumble. “Over here there’s a squeaky chew toy. Shaped like a bone, of course. You were sleeping in a dog bed.”

“Yeah, it wasn’t the most comfortable. A little on the small side,” Frisk says. “But I’m flattered that Papyrus is trying so hard! I just wish he wasn’t trying so hard to capture me and then who knows what’ll happen to me then…”

“Knowing Papyrus, nothing bad could possibly happen,” I laugh. He’s really starting to grow on me,
despite my efforts not to let him. “There’s some food over there,” I continue. “Unfortunately, it’s just
dry food. And here’s a note from Papyrus…” I clear my throat to prepare for my Papyrus imitation.
“Sorry, I have to lock you in the guest room until Undyne arrives. Feel free to make yourself at
home!!! Refreshments and accommodations have been provided. Nyehfully yours, Papyrus.”

“Who’s Undyne?” Frisk asks.

“I’m not sure. I’ve heard Papyrus and Sans mention that name before, though. That’s probably
something important,” I shrug. “Anyways, as usual the bars are very far apart and we can go right on
through.”

“He probably builds them that way so that he can fit through them,” Frisk considers.

“Yeah, he did carry you in here. That would’ve been difficult if the bars were normal sized.” We exit
the garage, back into the cold Snowdin weather. “So I guess now we go and fight him again?”

“Yeah...” Frisk nods. They really don’t seem very enthusiastic, though. Probably because they don’t
want to fight Papyrus, on account of him being a swell guy. “Chara, I’m still not sure how to beat
Papyrus?”

“What do you mean?” I ask.

“Well, I’m not sure what to do when he turns me blue. That makes it really hard to move, making it
really hard for me to dodge,” Frisk explains.

“Oh. I can see why that’s a problem,” I shrug. “Too bad you can’t float like me!” I say, spinning in
the air.

“Hey, that’s an idea! Remember when you floated me up that cliff so long ago?” Frisk asks
excitedly.

“Yeah? So you want me to float you over Papyrus’s attacks?” I clarify. They nod vigorously. “Isn’t
that, like cheating? I mean I’ll do it, but are you really okay with cheating?”

“I don’t think it’s cheating. I mean, you’re technically a part of me, I think, so it’s fine,” They say. I
make a mental note to tell them about the way their soul is colored someday. Probably not anytime
soon, but eventually.

“Alright, then that’s our plan.”

It’s a very short walk. Short, yet extremely cold. That hasn’t changed. Papyrus’s silhouette appears
again from within the fog, and he sounds like he’s talking to himself.

“OH... WHERE COULD THAT HUMAN HAVE GONE. ...WAIT... IT’S RIGHT IN FRONT
OF ME!!! HELLO! I WAS WORRIED THAT YOU HAD GOTTEN LOST! IT SURE IS A
RELIEF TO KNOW THAT YOU’RE RIGHT HERE... WAIT A SECOND!!! YOU’RE NOT
SUPPOSED TO ESCAPE!!! GET BACK THERE!!!” We enter the FIGHT once more.

“Woah, hey! You have 30/20 HP!” I tell Frisk excitedly.

“Oh yeah! Didn’t that bunny kid at the inn tell us that sleeping can make it go above maximum HP?”
Frisk remembers as they Spare Papyrus. And I remember to lift them up over Papyrus’s attacks.
They’re a bit heavier now that gravity’s turned against them, but we dodge his attack flawlessly. To
Papyrus, it probably looked like they floated or jumped over his attack all on their own, which I hope
wouldn’t be weird for monsters.
“Papyrus just dabbed marinara sauce behind his ear. My only question is ‘why?’” I deadpan. Frisk gives me the most hilariously confused face I’ve ever seen.

“WHAT?! I’M NOT THINKING ABOUT THAT DATE THING!!” Papyrus says. They spare him again, but I’m so busy laughing at their face that I accidentally forget to lift them over a bone. But their HP is now at 27, so I’m not worried at all, even when they give me a dirty look.

“He dabbed MTT-Brand Bishie Cream behind his ear…” I tell Frisk. They give an amused smile, and we leap over his attacks flawlessly.

“YEAH! DON’T MAKE ME USE MY SPECIAL ATTACK!” Papyrus says. I wonder what he means by that? Probably not really anything, based on my judgement of Papyrus’s character so far.

“Now he’s dabbing MTT-Brand Anime Powder behind his ear.”

“I CAN ALMOST TASTE MY FUTURE POPULARITY !!!” Papyrus says, dabbing MTT-Brand Cute Juice behind his ear. “PAPYRUS: HEAD OF THE ROYAL GUARD! PAPYRUS: UNPARALLELED SPAGHETTORE!” As his attacks progressively become more complicated, I slip up and Frisk gets hit again. HP at 24. Papyrus dabs MTT-Brand Beauty Yogurt behind his ear. “UNDYNE WILL BE REALLY PROUD OF ME!!”

“There’s that name again, Undyne…” I comment, mostly to myself.


“Well someone’s being a downer. Have some faith, Papyrus! We can still make this work!” I say, and Frisk snickers. They know I’m being sarcastic… mostly…

“URGH… WHO CARES! GIVE UP! GIVE UP OR FACE MY… SPECIAL ATTACK !!!” We jump over a bone but ends up landing on a blue one, losing 3 more HP. “YEAH!!! VERY SOON I WILL USE MY SPECIAL ATTACK! … NOT TOO LONG AND I WILL USE THAT SPECIAL ATTACK !!!!... THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE… BEFORE MY SPECIAL ATTACK!!” Papyrus seems to be shaking with excitement, from the way I can hear his bones rattling. “BEHOLD…! MY SPECIAL ATTACK!”

“Here we go…” I say. We wait for a couple seconds, and nothing happens. Frisk turns to me in confusion, probably wondering if they’re missing something. “Yeah, nothing’s happening… Oh, there’s a dog. It’s chewing on a bone.”

“What the heck! That’s my special attack! Hey! You stupid dog! Do you hear me!? Stop munching on that bone!!!” The dog looks scared of Papyrus, and then runs away, not letting go of the bone. “Hey! What are you doing?! Come back here with my special attack!!! … oh well. I’ll just use a really cool regular attack.” He sighs. “Here’s an absolutely normal attack.”

It’s not a normal attack at all. It goes on for longer than it should, and I’m having a hard time dodging the new variety of attacks. Frisk gets hit three times, bringing them down to 12 HP. And that’s when
it gets weird. First the annoying dog runs straight through the battle, and since it's carrying a bone, we have to dodge it too. Then Papyrus gets creative. His bone attacks are stacked into a formation that says, ‘COOL’. Frisk jumps over it, to be met with a bone formation spelling ‘DUDE’. And then a bone on a skateboard skates by?

An avalanche, no, a forest of bones is rapidly approaching Frisk. I make a desperate jump, holding onto Frisk tightly, and try to make us go up as fast as possible. But we can’t accelerate quick enough, and they clip their feet on the attack twice, losing 5 more HP. There’s a huge bone at the end, which we’re able to fly right over, and then a single tiny bone.

“And… I think we’re done?” I say hesitantly.

“Well…” Papyrus pants. “IT’S CLEAR… YOU CAN’T! … DEFEAT ME!!! YEAH!!! I CAN SEE YOU SHAKING IN YOUR BOOTS!!!” Frisk is trying to contain some laughs, that’s all. No shaking here. “THEREFORE I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, ELECT TO GRANT YOU PITY!! I WILL SPARE YOU, HUMAN!!! NOW’S YOUR CHANCE TO ACCEPT MY MERCY.”

“Spare!” Frisk says happily. We exit the fight. Somehow, the fog clears up.

Papyrus turns away from us, his head drooping. “NYOO HOO HOO… I CAN’T EVEN STOP SOMEONE AS WEAK AS YOU… UNDYNE’S GOING TO BE DISAPPOINTED IN ME. I’LL NEVER JOIN THE ROYAL GUARD… AND… MY FRIEND QUANTITY WILL REMAIN STAGNANT!”

“What should you say?” I ask Frisk, even though I almost certainly know the answer.

“Let’s be friends!” Frisk calls, predictably.

“REALLY!? YOU WANT TO BE FRIENDS, WITH ME??? WELL THEN… I GUESS… I GUESS I CAN MAKE AN ALLOWANCE FOR YOU! WOWIE! WE HAVEN’T EVEN HAD OUR FIRST DATE… AND I’VE ALREADY MANAGED TO HIT THE FRIEND ZONE!!!”

“The friendzone isn't real…” I whisper. Frisk shushes me.

“WHO KNEW THAT ALL I NEEDED TO MAKE PALS… WAS TO GIVE PEOPLE AWFUL PUZZLES AND THEN FIGHT THEM!!? YOU TAUGHT ME A LOT, HUMAN. I HEREBY GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO PASS THROUGH! AND I’LL GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS TO THE SURFACE. CONTINUE FORWARD UNTIL YOU REACH THE END OF THE CAVERN. THEN… WHEN YOU REACH THE CAPITAL, CROSS THE BARRIER. THAT’S THE MAGICAL SEAL TRAPPING US ALL UNDERGROUND. ANYTHING CAN ENTER THROUGH IT, BUT NOTHING CAN EXIT… EXCEPT SOMEONE WITH A POWERFUL SOUL… LIKE YOU!!! THAT'S WHY THE KING WANTS TO ACQUIRE A HUMAN. HE WANTS TO OPEN THE BARRIER WITH SOUL POWER. THEN US MONSTERS CAN RETURN TO THE SURFACE!”

“Thanks!” Frisk says, and starts to walk. But Papyrus doesn’t move out of the way.

“Oh, I almost forgot to tell you… to reach the exit, you will have to pass… though the king’s castle. The king of all monsters… he is… well… he’s a big fuzzy pushover!!! Everybody loves that guy. I am certain if you just say… excuse me, Mr. Dreemurr… can I please go home? He’ll guide you right to the barrier himself!”

“Papyrus is right, for once. The king’s actually a very nice king, despite what Toriel said.” I’m still
confused by what Toriel said about Asgore… Frisk smiles softly.

“ANYWAY!!! THAT’S ENOUGH TALKING!!! I’LL BE AT HOME BEING A COOL FRIEND!!! FEEL FREE TO COME BY AND HAVE THAT DATE!” Papyrus says, and takes a graceful leap, going right over our heads like a ballerina, cackling all the way.

“Well, we should do that right now immediately,” Frisk says, turning the way Papyrus went.

“What, the date? Right now?” I ask. They nod enthusiastically. “Then I guess we agree for once.”

End of Part 2

Chapter End Notes

Wooooo this chapter was pretty long too, and definitely one of my favorites so far. Yay for diverging from canon! It's fun!

Yeah now that that's out of the way, I did make an ask blog for Chara! It's http://saltychara.tumblr.com !! So ask them anything you'd like, and they'll answer within that day or the next! I'm excited about it tbh

As always, thanks so much for reading!
FRISK AND I GO ON A DATE!

CHAPTER 12- FRISK AND I GO ON A DATE!
INTERMISSION?

We decide to wait for Papyrus to get home first, so that it’s not weird for us to show up directly after he did. Have to play it casual, you know? It’s Frisk’s idea anyway, since they are the dating expert apparently.

“So…” Frisk says, sitting in the snow.

“So?” I ask, sitting down beside them.

“There’s so many questions in my head, I don’t even know where to start,” Frisk laughs nervously.

“Oh yeah? Like what?” I ask, curiously. This has taken an interesting turn.

“Well, for starters, I never knew monsters were actually real. I thought it was mostly stories?” They say.

“They’re real, obviously. There’s stories about them, but only because they’ve been here so long that humans mostly forgot. You know the legends though, right?”

“Yeah, who doesn’t?”

“Those are mostly true. Some facts got twisted, but the main parts are true. About the war and the 7 humans making the barrier and all that.”

“All right, I guess that makes sense. But my next question… You don’t have to answer if you don’t want to…” They face downwards. But this just makes me more curious.

“What?”

“Well... I was just wondering… Who are you…? I mean, nobody can see you, right? But I can feel you, and hear you, and you talk to me. Where did you come from? How do you know so much?”

Once they’ve gotten started, their words come out in a rush. I lean back from them, and consider my answer very carefully.

“I’m not really sure about anything concerning why I’m here, but I do remember… I mean, the last thing I remember is… well, dying.” I wince. I hadn’t wanted it to come out like that, without any warning for Frisk. I watch their reaction closely. First their blank eyes widen, and they go completely still.

“Oh,” They say.

“Oh, indeed,” I nod.

“I’m sorry I brought it up!” Frisk starts moving again, anxiously shifting, and their eyes go back to normal size and look off to the side.

“No, no. It’s alright. You were curious, right? I would be too. But it’s in the past.” I put my hand on
their shoulder and edge closer. “But I have a question of my own.”

“That’s fair, since you answered two of mine.” They say. I nod.

“Remember back in the Ruins, when that weird thing happened?” I ask. ‘That weird thing’ was an inaccurate summary of what happened. We killed a person when that happened. Frisk nods hesitantly, not sure what direction this will go.

“Haven’t really stopped remembering it, actually,” They say. The way they say it gives me pause, but I continue anyway.

“So you’re curious about it, too? Well, I’ve been thinking, and I think that it would… Be easier for both of us if we… Did that again?” Seeing the slight panic on their face as they shrug my hand off their shoulder, I backtrack a little. “We don’t have to do it for very long, just… I want to figure out what’s happening, that’s all! And there’s no one around, and we aren’t fighting…” I shrug.

“Chara… What happened last time, was not good. You know that, right?” Frisk asks in concern.

“Yeah, I know that now. But at the time, I didn’t see an alternative, and I didn’t want you to lose.”

“I guess I understand? It was cool being able to see for the first time in forever,” Frisk admits sheepishly. I think I’m winning them over.

“It would make my job easier, not having to describe everything,” I agree. Frisk hums thoughtfully.

“Maybe… But you have to promise to give me back control when I say so. Just in case,” Frisk sighs. I grin, and press my shoulder into theirs. I feel my body drift sideways,

And I’m in. I feel smaller, and my hair is shorter and thicker. I feel it for a second, noticing how my fingers are different. The nails are much neater than mine. My knees are cold, since Frisk wears shorts for some reason instead of pants.

Actually, everything is cold. Freezing, in fact. And my stomach growls, and I feel a little tired… I double over and groan.

“I forgot how much having a body sucks!” I say. I hear some laughter. But not with my ears? It sounds like Frisk. It clicks. Frisk is still in there, just not in control. I try to direct my thoughts at them.

**Can you hear me?** I think.

*Yeah. This is weird.* Frisk’s voice answers.

**It’ll be much more convenient this way, instead of talking out loud where people can hear.** I nod, and smile. It would probably look weird to someone watching, but I can say with confidence that no one is around. Unless Sans is still stalking us?

*What was that last part?* Frisk asks.

**What part?** I think in a panic. They weren’t supposed to hear that!

*The part about Sans. What are you hiding, Chara?*

**Well, um, about that… A thing happened while you were asleep…**
What thing?

A pretty big thing? I think?

Just tell me.

Um… well, as it turns out, Sans can kinda… see me? And hear me? I wince.

What?? Sans can see you? That’s great! Frisk thinks this with way too much enthusiasm.

Eh, not exactly.

Why, what did he say to you? They ask with a suspicious tone. I can hear Frisk’s other thoughts if I pay attention, ones that aren’t directed at me. Things like, ‘Can I trust Chara? Who are they? What’s up with Sans? I am kinda hungry… Woah, the world is bright! And pretty!’ And I think that I can see flashes of memories drifting through our shared head space. It’s all very overwhelming.

You know what, you were right. This was a bad idea. I pull away from Frisk, and I’m back in my regular form. Frisk is in control of their body again.

“Chara!” Frisk accuses.

“What! You were right, okay?”

“If this soul sharing thing or whatever this is is going to work, then we need to stop keeping secrets,” Frisk says. As if they don’t have any secrets of their own.

“Can’t we just drop it for now? We have a date to go on, and I don’t want to be in a bad mood,” I say. Frisk seems to consider me for a couple moments, and sighs.

“I’m not just going to forget about this. If something’s bothering you, then I think you should talk about it. But I can’t control you, so do what you want.” Frisk turns and walks back to Snowdin. I reluctantly follow behind. They were being passive-aggressive, and it’s making me feel guilty. Which was such an unfair thing for them to do, but it achieved what they wanted it to achieve.

Papyrus is standing outside of his and Sans’s shared home. Frisk isn’t the bundle of joy that they normally are, but he seems not to notice. I hope this cheers them up or something, because the silent, vaguely angry Frisk makes me uncomfortable. Especially since it’s my fault.

“So you came back to have a date with me! You must be really serious about this… I’ll have to take you somewhere really special… A place I like to spend a lot of time!!” Papyrus gestures for us to follow him, and he leads us to the beginning of town, and then back again. We stop finally in front of his house. “My House!!”

“Predictable…” I say. Frisk frowns at me. Papyrus goes inside, and holds the door open for Frisk, like a gentleman. They offer him a smile, and enter the skeleton brothers’ home. I quickly follow, so that I can get in before the door closes.

“Welcome to scenic my house! Enjoy and take your time!!” Papyrus says from a spot at the base of the stairs.

Frisk looks around, and I can tell that they’re just doing that to be polite. In reality, they’re probably trying to figure out what the objects they’re sensing are. This is when I realize it will probably be pretty difficult to go on a date while being blind. A… blind date. Ha. Haha. Jokes aside, I debate
how I could fix this without messing it up more.

“Hey, Frisk?” I ask. They pretend to examine an object.

“Mmm?” They mumble.

“This would be easier if you could see, wouldn’t it?”

“Mmhmm.”

“Go over to the other side of the room, not facing Papyrus,” I direct, hoping that they’ll trust me. They give me a curious look, but do it anyway. There’s a rock covered in sprinkles over there anyway, and they can pretend to examine that so Papyrus doesn’t get suspicious. “So, um.” I look around the room cautiously before continuing. “You know how I was talking to Sans while you were asleep? He said some interesting things…”

“You’re going to tell me?” Frisk whispers as quietly as they can.

“Yeah, I guess?” I shrug. “He told me some stuff, though. Like how he’s been watching us since we left the ruins. And how your heart looks weird, and not normal like it should be. Just thought you might want to know?”

“Yeah. That’s a good thing to know,” They whisper. “But where is this going? And what about my heart?”

“Well, I’ll show you that later. But I was thinking, since you know that now, maybe we can just… do the thing again. So that you can see, because it’s probably hard to go on a date if you can’t.” I speak in a rush, not sure at all how to phrase any of this.

“Thanks for telling me. And for asking me first. Go ahead, I guess,” Frisk nods. I lean on them and do the thing.

Yeah, this is much more convenient. Frisk thinks as I look around the room for their benefit.

They have a pretty nice house, huh? I comment. I turn around so we’re facing Papyrus.

Woah, that’s what he looks like?!! Frisk says in wonder.

Yeah, how were you picturing him?

I don’t know? Frisk mentally shrugs. Just… different. Not like that. But I like it!

Alright, you’re going to think that I’m super lazy, but I think that I’ll give you control over your body. I won’t separate, though, so that you can still see. I don’t really want control of their body right now, and I don’t want to put any effort into moving, or feeling hungry, or cold, or anything else.

That’s alright. Frisk says. I basically let our body go limp, and Frisk luckily catches it. It probably looked like we lost our balance for a second or something.

We turn back to the rock with sprinkles on it, for Frisk’s examining benefit.

“YOU HAVE BEEN STARING AT MY BROTHER’S PET ROCK FOR SOME TIME NOW. ARE YOU ALRIGHT, HUMAN?” Papyrus calls in concern.

“Yeah, I’m good,” Frisk calls back. “This is Sans’s pet rock?”
“YES. HE ALWAYS FORGETS TO FEED IT. AS USUAL, I HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.” Papyrus explains.

That explains the sprinkles. We walk over to where Papyrus is standing, and examine a book sitting on a table next to him. He watches us curiously. It’s a joke book. I take control of our hands and open it up. Of course, inside is a quantum physics book… And inside that, another joke book.

Frisk takes back control of the hands while I’m attempting to put the book down, and opens the second joke book. Another quantum physics book. Looks like someone in this house is into science.

Neither of them seem the type. Sans is probably responsible for the joke books, but I think he’s too lazy for any type of academic studies.

And Papyrus really doesn’t strike me as the physics type, either. Maybe they have a third roommate?

Doubtful. They close the book and walk over to the TV.

I haven’t watched TV in forever! Frisk thinks excitedly. They find the power button and turn it on to see only static. ‘Stay tuned for a new program, signed MTT,’ Frisk reads. Wonder what that means?

“OOH, IT’S MY FAVORITE GAME SHOW!” Papyrus says. “WHAT!!! IT’S USUALLY BETTER THAN THIS! THIS IS JUST A BAD EPISODE!!! DON’T JUDGE ME!!!” Frisk shrugs, and moves next to the TV, where a sock with a series of notes on it sits.

These must be from Sans and Papyrus. You read Sans, I’ll read Papyrus?

Yeah, sure.

Sans!!! Please pick up your sock!!! I read. Doing a good Papyrus imitation is very hard, mostly involving yelling everything. Luckily in the headspace I can be as loud as I want!

Ok.

Don’t put it back down!!! Move it!!!

Ok.

You moved it two inches!!! Move it to your room!!!

Ok.

And don’t bring it back!!!

Ok. This isn’t fair, why does Frisk get the easy role? It was your idea! Frisk thinks at me. I’ve got to be more careful of my thoughts in here.

It’s still here!!!

Didn’t you just say not to bring it back to my room?

Forget it!!! And forget this, I’m done. That last part is me. We investigate the couch next. Frisk pokes it, and I learn from listening to their thoughts that they thought it looked soft and wanted to see if it was true. As it turns out, even though it’s kind of old it is really soft. And we hear a jangling
sound coming from inside the couch.

Money? Frisk hesitates, but takes the loose change. It’s 20g, which is not a bad find. Next stop is the kitchen. As we move out of Papyrus’s line of sight, he rushes over the entrance of his kitchen. We check out the trash can first.

“THAT’S THE TRASH CAN. FEEL FREE TO VISIT IT ANY TIME,” Papyrus says. Frisk points to the stove, with a questioning look at Papyrus. “MY BROTHER ALWAYS GOES OUT TO EAT, BUT… RECENTLY, HE TRIED BAKING SOMETHING. IT WAS LIKE… A QUICHE. BUT FILLED WITH A SUGARY, NON-EGG SUBSTANCE. HOW ABSURD!”

Sounds like a pie to me… I think.

Aw, now I'm thinking of Toriel, Frisk protests.

Sorry?

I miss her.

...Me too. But let’s not think about Toriel, I think as I desperately try not to remember anything where Frisk can hear. I look around for a distraction. Woah, Frisk! Look at Papyrus’s sink!

“Oh!” Frisk says out loud.

“IMPRESSED? I INCREASED THE HEIGHT OF MY SINK. NOW I CAN FIT MORE BONES UNDER IT! TAKE A LOOKSY!” Papyrus gestures proudly at his sink. I wonder if Sans can even reach that at all? Or even Papyrus, for that matter. We open the cabinet under the sink.

A startled dog greets us, chewing on a bone. “Hello there!” Frisk says happily.

“What?!!” Papyrus yells. “CATCH THAT MEDDLING CANINE!” It runs from the cabinet, and Frisk makes a half-hearted attempt to grab it. The dog runs out through the front door.

“CURSES!!!”

We hear a trombone sound being played from above. I’ll go look, I tell Frisk. I separate, and float upwards. I see over the edge of the loft floor. Sans is poking out from behind a door, playing a tune on the trombone. He winks at me, and I quickly float back down into Frisk. Sans.

“SANS!! STOP PLAGUING MY LIFE WITH INCIDENTAL MUSIC!!” Papyrus yells, running for the stairs. By the time he gets there, Sans has gone back behind the safety of the door.

Quick, while he’s distracted, raid his fridge! I grab control for a moment, to open the fridge. Papyrus appears back behind us, and we both jump.

“AH-HA! INTERESTED IN MY FOOD MUSEUM? PLEASE. PERUSE MY CULINARY ART SHOW.” Papyrus says. I give control back to Frisk, and they turn to look in the fridge. Half of it is filled with containers all labelled ‘spaghetti.’ The other half contains nothing but an empty bag of chips. They shrug, and we turn back to Papyrus. The three of us walk back to the stairs, since there’s nothing left to explore downstairs.

Going upstairs we pass a door covered in signs, and investigate a picture of a bone hanging on the wall. “A CLASSIC IMAGE. IT ALWAYS REMINDS ME OF WHAT’S IMPORTANT IN LIFE.”
But what does it mean? I wonder. It’s just a bone? Frisk mentally shrugs. We look at the door Sans came out of, where party lights leak through across the floor. Does he have a disco ball or something?

Are we sure that’s not fire?

...Relatively sure? This is a wood cabin… A murder cabin!

What?

We were looking for a murder cabin, remember?

I see the cabin part, but I’m not so sure about the murder part?

Well… They’re skeletons. Maybe they were murdered once?

Please don’t make me picture Sans and Papyrus dying. Frisk asks.

Fair enough. I guess it’s time to go into Papyrus’s room, then? Frisk mentally nods, and we go over to his door. Papyrus notices us looking.

“THAT’S MY ROOM! IF YOU’VE FINISHED LOOKING AROUND… WE COULD GO IN AND… DO WHATEVER PEOPLE DO WHEN THEY DATE?”

Um… should we leave, or…

No! It’ll be fine, I think.

Ok… I am uncomfortable. Papyrus runs over and opens the door for us. And his room is… A lot to take in? It’s got a lot of colors, and it seems like there’s a lot to do in here. Maybe we can distract him with his own room long enough to not do any ‘date stuff.’ Yes, this plan is foolproof! Next to the door is a box full of bones. I wonder where he got them?

“HEY, THOSE ARE ALL THE ATTACKS I USED ON YOU. GREAT MEMORIES, HUH? SEEMS LIKE IT WAS ONLY YESTERDAY… EVEN THOUGH IT BASICALLY JUST HAPPENED.” He is such a delight.

Look, a computer. Let’s see what he gets up to in his spare time. I chuckle mischievously. We approach the computer, which is an old fashioned monitor that I haven’t seen in years. The computer’s internet browser is opened to a social media site.

“THE INTERNET! I’M QUITE POPULAR THERE. I’M JUST A DOZEN AWAY… FROM A DOUBLE DIGIT FOLLOWER COUNT!” Papyrus proclaims proudly.

I do some quick math in my head. Wait, that means he has negative two followers… Frisk shrugs.

“OF, COURSE, FAME HAS A STEEP PRICE.” Papyrus continues. “A JEALOUS TROLL HAS BESIEGED MY ONLINE PERSONA. ALWAYS SENDING ME BAD PUNS IN A GOOFY FONT…” Papyrus becomes lost in thought for a moment.

It’s Sans, isn’t it? Frisk asks.

Obviously.

Sans is cool. I’d like to hang out with him more often.
Speak for yourself, I guess. There’s a closet next to the computer, which we eye curiously, but hesitant to open it. Papyrus notices us looking.

“THERE ARE NO SKELETONS INSIDE MY CLOSET!!! EXCEPT ME SOMETIMES…” He assures us.

What do you think? Should we look inside, or no?

*Um, yes?* It’s anti-climactic. Clothes are hung up neatly inside, and there’s nothing else of interest. We move over to the bookshelf, and I take control to grab a book. I like to read. I choose a random one.

“THAT BOOK’S ONE OF FAVORITES. ADVANCED PUZZLE CONSTRUCTION FOR CRITICAL MINDS. THAT NEXT BOOK’S ANOTHER ONE OF MY FAVORITES.” Papyrus gestures to the next book. He leans over our shoulder to proudly look at it. “PEEK-A-BOO WITH FLUFFY BUNNY. THE ENDING ALWAYS GETS ME.”

...He can’t be serious, right? He’s saying this ironically, right?

*Probably not? Knowing Papyrus, anyway. Speaking of Papyrus’s weird interests, look! Action figures!* Frisk moves excitedly over to a table filled with action figures. They carefully pick one up, examining it closer.

“AH, YES, ACTION FIGURES. A GREAT REFERENCE FOR THEORETICAL BATTLE SCENARIOS.” Papyrus explains. Frisk gestures at them all, eyes shining. Papyrus puffs up a little. “HOW DO I HAVE SO MANY? WELL, LET’S JUST SAY THEY’RE FROM… A CHUBBY, SMILING MAN WHO LOVES TO SURPRISE PEOPLE.”

It’s Sans, isn’t it? Wonder where he got them.

“YEAH!! THAT’S RIGHT! SANTA!!!!” Papyrus says enthusiastically.

*Or Santa, that works too.* I send Frisk the mental equivalent of glaring, while they silently laugh at me. A black tapestry on the wall captures my attention. I turn our body to it, and feel the fabric with my hands. *This is so cool!* I tell Frisk. Pirates are cool!

“ISN’T THAT FLAG NEATO?” I nod. “UNDYNE FOUND IT AT THE BAY… I THINK IT’S FROM THE HUMAN WORLD? NOW, I KNOW WHAT YOU’RE THINKING.”

...What I am thinking? Only Frisk is allowed to know that. I raise a questioning eyebrow.

“WHY WOULD A HUMAN FLAG… HAVE A COOL SKELETON ON IT? WELL… I HAVE A THEORY. I THINK HUMANS… MUST HAVE DESCENDED FROM SKELETONS! NYEH HEH HEH!”

I nod. “That’s probably true,” I tell him. Frisk looks around and spot an object of interest.

*Is that… Is that a race car bed?!?* Frisk moves over to the bed and pats the blankets. *Soft…*

“IF I EVER GET TO THE SURFACE…” Papyrus gains a strangely wistful tone. “I’D LIKE TO DRIVE DOWN A LONG HIGHWAY. WIND IN MY HAIR… SUN ON MY SKIN… OF COURSE, THAT’S JUST A DREAM. SO INSTEAD I CRUISE WHILE I SNOOZE.”

We glance around the room a couple more times, making sure we didn’t miss anything. *Wow,*
**Papyrus** is actually pretty cool. I think as we look at everything, taking it all in. **He has pirate flags, race car beds, action figures, a computer… I’m kinda jealous.** I never had any of that kind of stuff. I quiet my thoughts before Frisk can hear anything more about myself.

*It’s ok Chara, we’ll come back here every once in a while to enjoy it.* They hug their arms around themself, probably trying to hug me somehow. Anyways, for some reason Papyrus doesn’t find it odd at all.

“SO, UM… IF YOU’VE SEEN EVERYTHING… DO YOU WANT TO START THE DATE?” Papyrus asks.

**Wait, start?** We both think. Apparently I wasn’t the only one that had assumed that this was the date.

“OKAY!!! DATING START!!!!” As Papyrus proclaims this, we enter a FIGHT? Weird. This should be an interesting date. “HERE WE ARE!! ON OUR DATE!! I’VE ACTUALLY NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE.”

**Really? Hadn’t noticed.** It’s different, thinking it to Frisk instead of just saying everything out loud.

“But don’t worry!!! You can’t spell *prepared* without several letters from my name!!!!” He whips out a book from some unseen pocket. “I snagged an official dating rule book from the library! We’re ready to have a great time!” Papyrus holds the book up to his face, squinting to read the words. “Let’s see… step one… activate the ‘Dating HUD.'”

*The what now?* Frisk asks when Papyrus looks at us expectantly.

**Here, I think I can do it?** I concentrate on our surroundings, and see if I can put measurements on how the date is going. And when I concentrate hard enough, projections form around us.

“WOWIE!!! I feel so informed!!!!” Papyrus says. We can see an inaccurate weather forecast (it says it's sunny out), an irrelevant population graph, a crime locator, and a dog radar. I don’t feel very informed at all. Also there’s an egg on the ground? Labeled ‘Egg.’ “I think we’re ready for step two!” Papyrus looks back in his book. “Step two… ask them on a date. Ahem. Human! I, the great Papyrus, will go on a date with you!! What do you say?”

“Yes!” I answer before giving Frisk a chance. I can feel their amusement, but I really am starting to enjoy myself. It’s obvious that this date isn’t exactly a *serious* date, not like the kind humans go on. Not even close to that. So yeah, I’m going to have fun with it.

“R-really?? Wowie!!!” Papyrus blushes. “I guess that means it’s time for part three! Step three… put on nice clothes to show you care!” He glances up suspiciously, looking us up and down. “Wait a second… wear clothing… that bandana around your head… you’re wearing clothing right now!!!!”

*Oh yeah, the bandanna. I almost forgot about that…* Frisk thinks. They haven’t looked in a mirror in a long time, have they?

“Not only that… earlier today, you were also wearing clothing!”

“Indeed,” I answer casually. It’s weird to talk out loud where other people can hear me. I’m not sure if I prefer it over talking only to Frisk, but it is kind of nice in some ways.
“NO… COULD IT BE??? YOU’VE WANTED TO DATE ME FROM THE VERY BEGINNING!”

“It’s true,” Frisk lies. I think? It might be true, but I kind of doubt that that was their intentions all along. *I can and will flirt with anyone.*

**Whoops, I keep forgetting you can hear my thoughts now.**

*Yeah, it’s still kinda weird.*

Meanwhile, Papyrus looks stricken. “YOU... YOU PLANNED IT ALL!!!” He blinks in disbelief. “YOU’RE WAY BETTER AT DATING THAN I AM!! N-NOOOO!!! YOUR DATING POWER…!!!” A new statistic projection pops up. It’s labeled ‘Dating Power’ and the blue bar rises very quickly. “NYEH! NYEH HEH HEH!!! DON’T THINK YOU’VE BESTED ME YET! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS… HAVE NEVER BEEN BEATEN AT DATING, AND I NEVER WILL!” Another stat bar pops up, showing the quickly rising tension of the date. “I CAN EASILY KEEP UP WITH YOU! YOU SEE, I, TOO, CAN WEAR CLOTHING!!”

Um… *isn’t he wearing clothes right now, or…?* I wonder. Frisk shrugs.

“IN FACT…” Papyrus continues, “I ALWAYS WEAR MY SPECIAL CLOTHES UNDERNEATH MY REGULAR CLOTHES!! JUST IN CASE SOMEBODY HAPPENS TO ASK ME ON A DATE!!”

*Aww, that’s kind of sad!* Frisk says worriedly.

**He’ll be fine.** I assure them. Papyrus slides backwards into his closet, and slides back out a second or two later.

“BEHOLD!!!” He’s changed clothes!

**Wow!** Frisk marvels.

… *I’m speechless.* Papyrus is wearing a tank top that says ‘Cool Dude’ on it, and it also has basketballs for the shoulders. He’s paired this with athletic shorts, sneakers with long socks, and a backwards baseball hat. I really am speechless.

*For once in your life!* Frisk teases. I shush them and move on.

“NYEH! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY SECRET STYLE!!??” Papyrus asks.

“I love it!” Frisk answers immediately. And I agree.

“NO!!!” Papyrus shouts. Frisk jumps. “A GENUINE COMPLIMENT…!!!” Our dating power goes up once more. “HOWEVER… YOU DON’T TRULY UNDERSTAND THE HIDDEN POWER OF THIS OUTFIT!!! THEREFORE… WHAT YOU JUST SAID IS INVALID. THIS DATE WON’T ESCALATE ANY FURTHER!!! … UNLESS YOU FIND MY SECRET. BUT THAT WON’T HAPPEN!!”

**Secret?** Frisk wonders. They tilt their head, considering the skeleton. Pointing their hand at Papyrus’s shirt, they raise a questioning eyebrow.

“THIS SHIRT DIDN’T ORIGINALLY SAY ‘COOL’, BUT I IMPROVED IT. EXPERT TIP: ALL CLOTHING ARTICLES CAN BE IMPROVED THIS WAY.” Papyrus explains. Frisk moves their hand to his basketball shoulders. “I SEE. I SEE. YOU LIKE CARESSING MY
Go for the hat this time, I recommend. Frisk nods and point up at his hat. It’s very high up.

“My hat…? My hat. My hat! Nyeh heh heh!” Papyrus’s hat float up, revealing… a mysterious box. “W-Well then… you found my secret! I suppose I have no choice! It’s a present… a present, just for you!!!”

What do you think? Should we open it?

Of course!

Could be a bomb, though.

It’s not a bomb. Frisk says confidently. They accept the gift, and carefully unwrap it. As it turns out, it’s a mess of something that looks just barely edible plastered onto a plate.

“DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS?” Papyrus asks.

“Of course?” Frisk replies uncertainly.

“SPAGHETTI. THAT’S WHAT YOU’RE THINKING, ISN’T IT? RIGHT! BUT OH-SO WRONG!”

This was supposed to be spaghetti? I think, internally grimacing. Frisk shushes me for being rude.

“This ain’t any plain ol’ pasta! This is an artisan’s work! Silken spaghetti, finely aged in an oaken cask… then cooked by me, master chef Papyrus!” Papyrus passionately pound a hand on his rib cage. “Human!!! It’s time to end this!! There’s no way this can go any further!”

If I die I’m leaving you my body. Frisk says as they prepare to take a bite of the spaghetti.

First of all, I would get your body anyway, but second of all you’d just go back to your last save point if you died. I respond. They take a small bite and their face reflexively scrunches up. The worst part is, I can kind of taste it. The taste is indescribable.

“What a passionate expression!!” Papyrus misinterprets. “You must really love my cooking! And by extension, me!!” He blushes a deep pink. Frisk blushes a little too. This is adorable. “Maybe even more than I do!! Augh!!! Urrrgh!!! Noooooo!!!” He yells as our dating power rises exponentially. It breaks through the end of the bar, and doesn’t stop going. It’s too bright, too quickly, and my eyes have to take a moment to adjust to the blinding flashes.

...Papyrus? Frisk thinks worriedly. When my eyes adjust, we see that he is standing with his back to us, his shoulders slumped.

“Human. It’s clear now.” This can’t be a good start. “You’re madly in love with me.”

...What?

“Everything you do. Everything you say. It’s all been for my sake.”

Um...
“HUMAN. I WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY, TOO. IT’S TIME FOR ME TO EXPRESS MY FEELINGS. IT’S TIME THAT I TOLD YOU. I, PAPYRUS…”

What is it, Papyrus? I’m curious where this is going. Frisk just stares at him in confusion, not saying anything.

“I… UM… BOY, IS IT HOT IN HERE, OR IS IT JUST ME??”

Do you think he’s in love with me? Frisk thinks anxiously.

Probably. That definitely seems like where this is going.

“… OH, SHOOT. HUMAN, I… I’M SORRY.”

What?

“I DON’T LIKE YOU THE WAY YOU LIKE ME.”

 Seriously, what?!

“ROMANTICALLY, I MEAN.”

Excuse me?!

“I MEAN, I TRIED VERY HARD TO! I THOUGHT THAT BECAUSE YOU FLIRTED WITH ME… THAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO ON A DATE WITH YOU. THEN, ON THE DATE, FEELINGS WOULD BLOSSOM FORTH!!! I WOULD BE ABLE TO MATCH YOUR PASSION FOR ME! BUT ALAS… I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, HAVE FAILED.”

I’m sorry, but I didn’t go through all of this just to get rejected.

“I FEEL JUST THE SAME AS BEFORE. AND INSTEAD, BY DATING YOU… I HAVE ONLY DRAWN YOU DEEPER… INTO YOUR INTENSE LOVE FOR ME! A DARK PRISON OF PASSION, WITH NO ESCAPE.”

This is bu-

Hey! No swearing in my head! Frisk should know that that only makes me want to swear more, but I don’t for their sake, since they seem to be younger than me. I have to be a good role model, right? Hah.

“How could I have done this to my dear friend…? ...NO! WAIT! THAT’S WRONG! I CAN’T FAIL AT ANYTHING!!! HUMAN!!! I’LL HELP YOU THROUGH THESE TRYING TIMES!!! I’LL KEEP BEING YOUR COOL FRIEND… AND ACT LIKE THIS ALL NEVER HAPPENED.”

Do we really mean that little to him? This was a special time, we can’t just pretend it didn’t happen! Frisk, do something!

Chara. Chara, it’ll be alright. We’ll make it through this.

“AFTER ALL, YOU ARE VERY GREAT. IT WOULD BE TRAGIC TO LOSE YOUR FRIENDSHIP.”

Aww, stop, you’ll make me blush.
Weird how you’re talking to Papyrus in my head, where only I can hear you, don’t you think? Frisk smirks mentally.

**Shut up. This is all I have.** Frisk laughs at me.

“So please… Don’t cry because I won’t kiss you. Because, I don’t even have lips. And hey, someday, you’ll find someone as great as me. Well, no, that’s not true. But I’ll help you settle for second best!!! NYEH HEH HEH HEH HEH!!!”

*I’m kind of relieved, to be honest.* Frisk tells me as Papyrus slides away.

But then he slides back, before I can respond. “Oh, and if you ever need to reach me… here’s my phone number. You can call me any time! Platonically. Well, gotta go! Nyeh heh heh!” Papyrus makes a hasty exit out of the room.

When we exit his room, he’s nowhere to be found. Frisk shrugs, and moves on.

**Chapter End Notes**

Ohhhh my god you would not believe how long it took to code this! For those who don’t know, you have to put certain things in front and behind every bold and italicized thing to make it look right and it took foreverrrrr. So tell me if there's any errors.

I have this labeled as an intermission because technically it’s optional, and you can do it at any time. The last intermission was so tiny compared to this! Definitely the longest chapter so far, omg. 5,400 words almost! Sheesh. Anyways, check out the ask blog for Chara at saltychara.tumblr.com, it’s doing better than I thought it would to be honest! I’d love your opinions on this chapter, by the way, since it goes more off-script from the game. I’ve always been a fan of body-sharing fics, so there’ll probably be more in the future depending on what you guys think ;) R&R! (read and review!)
Chapter 13- Will we ever get over Papyrus? (Probably not)

Part 3- Waterfall

Um, hey… Frisk says hesitantly. I can tell they want something, but what?

Hey…?

Not to offend you or anything, but would you mind getting out of my body? I send them some kind of an annoyed emotion. It’s just that, since the date is over, I don’t really need to see anymore?

But don’t you want to see? I can’t really imagine not seeing, much less not wanting to see.

I’m used to being blind by now, you know? Seeing is actually pretty weird for me, I feel like all my other senses are muffled. I don’t like it very much. At least, not for long periods of time.

Alright, I guess. I will myself to float sideways, and then I’m back to being a ghost. It’s weird, all my hunger and coldness suddenly vanish. I’m back to being taller than Frisk, with my long pants instead of shorts, and my normal colored sweater. I pick my feet up and go back to floating everywhere. “Are you happy now?” I ask out loud, for the first time in forever.

“Yup,” They answer.

“Cool.” We’ve entered Waterfall by now. It’s still as beautiful as I remember, all glistening and reflecting the light on the walls and floors. And the ceiling is the coolest thing ever, with the fake stars everywhere.

“It’s a lot warmer here!” Frisk says.


“You’ve been here before?”

“Maybe…” We walk down a long hallway.

“Come on, you can tell me!” Frisk complains.

“Fine, I have been here before. Back before I died. Thanks for bringing it up.” I roll my eyes. Frisk is about to respond when I shush them. “There’s people up ahead, shh.”

“Who?” They ask quietly.

“A guy we’ve never met, and that monster kid from Snowdin, and also Sans.” Frisk walks to the Monster Kid first.

“Hey!” They greet,

“Yo! Are you sneaking out to see her, too?” Monster Kid asks. Frisk makes a noncommittal gesture.

“Awesome… She’s the coolest, right?! I wanna be just like her when I grow up… Hey, don’t tell my parents I’m here. Ha ha.”
“How much do you wanna bet the mysterious ‘her’ is Undyne?” I nudge Frisk with my elbow. They swat my arm away, but they’re smiling. They walk over the monster that we haven’t met before, and wave a greeting.

“This is an echo flower. It repeats the last thing it heard, over and over…” He informs. Frisk looks intrigued, and taps the echo flower with a finger. It repeats what the guy just said, verbatim.

“Echo’s are neat, huh?” I comment. Frisk looks at me curiously, and then taps the flower again. It repeats the man again. “You were wondering if it would repeat my voice?” I ask. They nod an affirmative. “I wonder why it didn’t…” I look around, and see Sans is still there. Jeez, I had almost forgotten he was here. Well, he probably heard all of that. Oh well. Nothing he didn’t already know. “Oh, hey, there’s a SAVE point next to the flower.”

“The sound of rushing water fills me with determination,” Frisk whispers to themselves, smiling softly. They bounce over to Sans, since all their energy has been restored from saving. He’s sitting in a sentry booth, like the ones we saw in Snowdin. Speaking of Snowdin, there’s a lot of snow on that roof...

“what? haven’t you seen a guy with two jobs before? fortunately, two jobs mean twice as many legally-required breaks. i’m going to grillby’s. wanna come?” Sans asks.

“Yeah!” Frisk says. I stay standing behind Frisk, and try not to let Sans know what I’m thinking. It’s really weirding me out, knowing that he can see me.

“well, if you insist… i’ll pry myself away from my work…” Sans comes around the side of the booth, and turns to Frisk to offer them a hand. “over here. i know a shortcut.” Frisk hesitantly takes his hand, and I grab Frisk’s sleeve. Then with a pop, we’re standing inside of Grillby’s.

“We’re inside of Grillby’s now,” I tell Frisk as they stumble, clearly disoriented. They give Sans a confused look.

“fast shortcut, huh?” hey, everyone.” He greets the people in Grillby’s like they’re all good friends. And from what I can tell, that is true.


“Hey, Sans, weren’t you just here for breakfast a few minutes ago?” One of the hung-over birds asks.

“nah, i haven’t had breakfast in at least half an hour. you must be thinking of brunch.” The entire diner rumbles with laughter. I roll my eyes. “here, get comfy,” Sans says, gesturing to a stool at the bar. Frisk hops up onto the stool, and their eyes widen in surprise as Sans re-uses his old whoopee cushion joke. Bleh. “whoops, watch where you sit. sometimes weirdos put whoopee cushions on the seats.”

“I know it was you!” I mutter angrily. I have to keep my voice down for once, since the person I’m trash talking can hear me this time. It seems like he hears me anyway, though, judging by his knowing wink. He winks too much, has anyone else noticed that?

“anyway, let’s order. whaddya want…?” Sans asks, There’s only two options, fries or a burger.

“Go with fries!” I hiss into Frisk’s ear. They shrug and order fries.

“hey, that sounds pretty good. grillby, we’ll have a double order of fries.” Sans orders. Grillby disappears into the back room of the diner. “so what do you think… of my brother?” And that’s a
dangerous question. I wonder what would happen if Frisk said that they didn’t like Papyrus, or any other negative opinion.

But Frisk goes the nice and honest way. “He’s cool,” They answer.

“of course he’s cool. you’d be cool too if you wore that outfit every day. he’d only take that thing off if he absolutely had to. oh well. at least he washes it. and by that i mean he wears it in the shower.” Frisk snickers, and then Grillby shows up with the fries. “here comes the grub. want some ketchup?”

“No thanks,” Frisk says.

Sans shrugs. “more for me.” And then he drinks the ketchup seriously who does that?!?!? ...Ahem. I lean over to Frisk so that I can whisper in their ear.

“I think he’s crazy. I mean really, where does the ketchup even go? He’s a skeleton, he doesn’t have a stomach! How is he drinking it in the first place? He doesn’t have lips! Frisk there are so many things wrong with this situation. Help me. We’ve got to get out of here!” My voice grows slowly more urgent as I talk. And I’m not stupid, I know that Sans can hear me -even though he doesn’t have ears-, but I’m past the point of caring.

But for some reason, Sans ignores me. Probably because there’s so many people around. “anyway, cool or not, you have to agree papyrus tries real hard. like how he keeps trying to be part of the royal guard. one day, he went to the house of the head of the royal guard… and begged her to let him be in it. of course, she shut the door on him because it was midnight. but the next day, she woke up and saw him still waiting there. seeing his dedication, she decided to give him warrior training. it’s, uh, still a work in progress.”

“That’s an understatement. Papyrus even captured us and yet he still failed. She’s probably just humoring him at this point,” I point out. As much as I like Papyrus, which is an achievement in itself, to be honest he’s a really useless guard.

“watch it, kid,” Sans says ominously, his eyes going black. I blink as he acknowledges me for the first time since the garage. At least now I know that that happened, instead of it being my imagination. His attention switches back to Frisk, who was looking between us worriedly. His eyes go back to normal. “oh yeah, i wanted to ask you something.”

“Ok, shoot,” Frisk shrugs. Sans’s casual demeanor drops, switching to more serious. Frisk shivers, a chill going down their spine.

“Have you ever of a talking flower?” Sans asks. Frisk tenses and freezes up, and I do too. They draw in a shaky breath.

“Yes,” They whisper.

“So you know all about it. the echo flower.” Frisk breathes a sigh of relief, relaxing slightly. He’s only talking about the echos, nothing to be worried about. “they’re all over the marsh. say something to them, and they’ll repeat it over and over…”

“What does that… um…” Frisk starts.

“What about it?” Sans suggests. Frisk nods. “well, papyrus told me something interesting the other day. sometimes, when no one else is around, a flower appears and whispers things to him. flattery… advice… encouragement… predictions.” Frisk tenses again. This time I’m almost positive he’s talking about Flowey. “weird, huh? someone must be using an echo flower to play a trick on him. keep an eye out, ok?”
“Ok,” Frisk nods.

“thanks.” Sans slides off the stool, and prepares to leave. “Welp, that was a long break. i can’t believe i let ya pull me away from work for that long… oh, by the way. i’m flat broke. can you foot the bill? it’s just 10,000g.” I clench my fists. He know we don’t have that much! He’s just being a jerk on purpose!

“Um, I don-” Frisk starts awkwardly.

“just kidding. grillby, put it on my tab.” Sans walks to the door, but pauses before he leaves. “by the way… i was going to say something, but i forgot.” I sigh in exasperation.

“Hey, what about the fries?” I ask Frisk. They approach the bartender. He talks super quietly, and I lean closer to hear him. “He says that your food is probably cold by now. Well, then. I guess we’ll have to find something else to eat.” Frisk shrugs.

“Good thing I’m not even hungry,” They smile. We leave Grillby’s, and then we have to walk all the way through Snowdin again. It’s going to take a while. Like ten minutes, maybe? It feels like forever. “Hey, Chara?”

“You said my Soul was weird?” They ask.

“I did. And now you want to see?” I ask in return. They nod. “You’ll need my eyes to see it.” They nod again. We duck into an alleyway between a couple of building for privacy. I shrug, and will myself into their body. Summon your Soul, I tell them, careful not to control any part of them except for the eyes.

It’s so bright!

Yeah, it’s a nice red color. But you see that streak through the middle? The darker one? That’s what Sans was talking about. I was staring at it while you were asleep, remember?

Oh, yeah, I do remember that. So, why is the streak there? Do you have any ideas?

A couple, actually. First of all, that darker color was the color of my Soul, before I died. And it’s in the pattern of how the heart breaks when you die.

And you bring that up because?

That fall you took, it was a pretty bad fall… Yeah, I’m surprised I survived at all to be honest.

That’s the thing, though. I don’t think you actually did survive it.

What?!

You, uh, kinda landed on my grave.

Oh, I’m sorry!

No, don’t be. I think when you landed, you kind of died, but your Soul lingered long enough for the last little bit of mine to latch on and seal it back together.
How did you reach that conclusion?

Could you ever SAVE before you fell?

No, and it’s kind of weird.

I could always SAVE, if I was determined enough.

Oh. I always assumed that it was because of the magic that existed down here.

No, I think you’re using my determination power. I don’t think you’d be able to do it if I wasn’t here. Not to discredit you or anything, you are definitely determined enough for it.

This is a lot to think about, Chara. While we’ve been talking, we’ve sunken down to sit in the snow. I stare at the Soul, mesmerized again. It’s just so pretty.

Yeah, sorry. But you asked.

Do you think Sans knows about this? He was asking about it, right?

Yeah, he noticed it before I did. I’d safely assume that he knows something about it, or that he has some ideas or theories. I don’t think that it’d be a good idea to tell him, though.

Don’t worry, I won’t tell him if you don’t want me to.

Thanks. I pull out of Frisk, and go back to floating beside them. We finish up the walk back into Waterfall, and notice that Sans is back at his sentry station.

“Let’s hang out again sometime,” Sans says as we walk by him. Frisk gives him a thumbs up, and we continue.

“This room has a path going forward through a waterfall, and a path going down. There’s also another box, which you can put stuff in or take stuff out, remember? Like the one in Snowdin,” I say.

“What do we have?” Frisk asks, pulling out the cell phone that Toriel gave us.

“We have Papyrus’s phone number, now. That’s good. And we also still have that monster candy from the Ruins, the faded ribbon, nice cream, cinnamon bun, and a bisicle.”

“We could probably put the faded ribbon in, but we should keep the rest.” I nod in agreement, and Frisk puts in the faded ribbon.

“So we’ll go down, now?” I ask. They affirm this and start walking. “Careful, it’s kind of unsteady.” The path is more of a bridge going over the waterfalls. It’s made of wood, and who knows how old it could be? Frisk slows down their pace, but still seems pretty confident. We reach the end of the boardwalk, where a lone echo flower waits. Frisk taps a petal.

“I swore I saw something… Behind that rushing water….” It says. We go back along the boardwalk.

“Do you see anything?” Frisk asks as we pass the main point of the waterfall. I put my head under the water, but I don’t get wet at all. The water goes straight through me.

“Huh?” I mutter. “There’s a camera back here,” I tell Frisk as I pull back out of the waterfall. “We seem to find a lot of those.”
“Yeah.” We go back up to where the box was, and dodge falling rocks as we cross the bridge. About midway Frisk asks, “Can you check the waterfall up here, too? Just in case?”

“Sure.” I look behind the water, and see an entire room, albeit a small one. “There’s a room! Come on in!” I say, gesturing them in with my arms. “There’s a tutu lying on the ground here.”

“A tutu?” Frisk asks. They’re now soaking wet, which is unfortunate. Especially since Waterfall is so humid. Now it’ll be pretty hard to get them dried off.

“It’s pretty dusty. I wonder how long it’s been here?” I ask. Frisk shrugs, and equips the tutu. It looks kind of odd paired with their Tough Gloves that we found in Snowdin. “Finally, a protective piece of armour!” And it’s dry!

“Hush, you,” Frisk laughs. They twirl around, the tutu flaring out nicely. “How do I look?”

“You look like a natural! Have you done ballet before?”

“Yeah, when I was really little though, like six or seven,” They shrug. We go back out of the little cavel, and now the tutu is also soaked. Great. “Now we might as well put the manly bandana into the box, right?”

“Might as well,” I echo. They put it in the box, which is slowly running out of space. Only three slots left. We cross the water again, dodging the rocks, and as we go down the hallway the lights get darker. “There’s less light over here, Frisk. Looks like there’s a lot of tall grass though. I hope you’re not allergic to grass,” I say.

“I don’t think I am,” Frisk answers uncertainly. A weird feeling settles over the area, like we’re being watched. I don’t like it, and it feels like shivers are going up and down my spine. My first suspicion is Sans, but I feel like if he was there, then we’d never know it. This feeling was a lot different, a lot stronger.

We walk a little more, and as Frisk’s head disappears under the tall grass I hear a clanking noise. Frisk freezes, and I float above the grass, and see an imposing figure watching carefully from a ledge above.

“Frisk, get down and stay down!” I hiss, pushing down on their head. They sink below the grass, doing their best to muffle a small noise of surprise. That person up there does NOT look friendly. I watch them carefully, and they just seem to be on a lookout, for what I don’t know.

“H… HI, UNDYNE!” A voice says.

“Ah, so that’s Undyne. And is that… Papyrus?” I whisper. Frisk tries to respond, but I push their head down further before they can make too much of a sound. “Shhhh….”

“I’M HERE WITH MY DAILY REPORT…” Papyrus starts.

“Right, he works for her. Maybe he can convince her to not kill us?” I suggest hopefully. Frisk nods, unable to respond.

“H… HI, UNDYNE!” A voice says.

“Ah, so that’s Undyne. And is that… Papyrus?” I whisper. Frisk tries to respond, but I push their head down further before they can make too much of a sound. “Shhhh….”

“I’M HERE WITH MY DAILY REPORT…” Papyrus starts.

“Right, he works for her. Maybe he can convince her to not kill us?” I suggest hopefully. Frisk nods, unable to respond.

“UHHH… REGARDING THAT HUMAN I CALLED YOU ABOUT EARLIER…” Undyne seems to respond, but she talks really quietly, or we just can’t hear her since she doesn’t yell like Papyrus. “…HUH? DID I FIGHT THEM? Y-YES! OF COURSE I DID! I Fought them valiantly!” Undyne says something again, and Papyrus deflates a little. “…WHAT? DID I CAPTURE THEM…? W-W-WELL… NO. I TRIED VERY HARD, UNDYNE, BUT IN THE END… I FAILED.” She turns sharply to Papyrus, and he actually takes a step back. She must be
serious business, if she can shake even Papyrus’s confidence. “...W-WHAT? YOU’RE GOING TO TAKE THE HUMAN’S SOUL YOURSELF...” Papyrus walks towards Undyne, as if to try to placate her. “BUT UNDYNE, YOU DON’T HAVE TO DESTROY THEM! YOU SEE... YOU SEE...” Undyne says something in a sharp voice, much louder than before, but still not loud enough to make out the words. Papyrus backtracks a couple steps, hanging his head. “...I UNDERSTAND. I’LL HELP YOU IN ANY WAY I CAN.” Papyrus exits, looking thoroughly downcast.

“Papyrus, you traitor! Why can’t you stand up to her! Just when I thought we were friends...” I gripe, to no one in particular.

“Hey, don’t-” Frisk tries to defend Papyrus, but Undyne’s head snaps back towards us at the sound of their voice. I jet down as fast as I can and put my hand over Frisk’s mouth. Neither of us breathe for a couple seconds as Undyne summons a spear and surveys the tall grass with the eyes of a hawk.

After what seems like forever, she puts her spear away and backs into the darkness. I let out a sigh of relief, and put my hand back down at my side. “She’s gone.”

Frisk laughs nervously, obviously shaken. “That sure was a close one. I could’ve died there.”

“Let’s just get out of here,” I say. They stand up carefully, and brush the grass out of their way as they exit the hiding spot. As they leave it behind, a pair of footsteps approach eagerly behind us. I spin around, ready to... help, I guess, if it ends up being hostile.

As it turns out, it’s just the little yellow guy from Snowdin. Their face is lit up with excitement, almost the opposite of Frisk’s dread. “Yo... did you see the way she was staring at you...? That... was AWESOME! I’m SOOOO jealous! What’d you do to get her attention...? Ha ha. C’mon! Let’s go watch her beat up some bad guys!” The monster kid runs off ahead, but falls onto their face at the last second. But they pick themself up again, and continue to run off.

Frisk watches them go with a resolve that won’t ever die, and determinedly trudges on. “A feeling of dread hangs over you,” I say, “But you stay determined.” It’s a SAVE point, here of all places.

When we move into the next section of the hallway, the yellow guy is nowhere to be found. Now Frisk and I can finally discuss what we heard, and plan the best course of action. Or, I can just rant about it a little, either way works.

“I can’t believe Papyrus would throw away our friendship after everything we’ve been through,” I say bitterly. I can’t trust anyone, can I?

Frisk looks up at me curiously, confused by the sudden topic change. “Chara, you can’t just give up on him like that! He’s our friend, I’m sure he wouldn’t actually let anything happen to us!”

“He said he would do whatever he could to help her murder you! You can’t just let it slide, Frisk. Not this time, this is serious! More serious than being put in a garage, anyway. This time someone actually wants to kill you.”

“I know that she wants to kill me, but I know just as well that Papyrus doesn’t,” Frisk says, a hard look on their face. “Can we just try to progress, and maybe not think about this right now?” They ask.

“I mean, it’s definitely going to come up again soon, but I guess we could put it off for now,” I grumble. Frisk nods and keeps moving, and points to a sign on the wall.

“What does that say?”
“When four Bridge Seeds align in the water, they will sprout,” I read. “There’s some Bridge Seeds over here, and a gap in the path where a river’s running.”

“So I need to put four of them in a line across the river, and that’ll make it so I can cross?” Frisk clarifies. I hum in agreement, and they start picking up the plants and tossing them gently into the water. Once they’ve gotten four, the seeds sprout into a sturdy bridge that will support Frisk’s weight.

“Go on ahead,” I gesture. They make their way carefully across, and into the next room. “There’s a sign out in the middle of a pond here, and a river going ahead. But I think that up is the way we want to go, there’s a doorway up there.” I say as I float around the room. “There’s bridge seeds to help cross the river to the door.”

“What does the sign say?” Frisk asks.

“Well, I can’t read it from here. It’s facing away and I can’t float over water, so… If you want to read it, then use the bridge seeds,” I explain. They shrug and start to take the bridge seeds over, one at a time. Finally it’s done, and they sprout. I float behind Frisk as they walk up to the sign. “Wow, rude,” I say to the sign.

“What did it say?” Frisk asks curiously.

“It says ‘Congratulations, you failed the puzzle,’” I read. Frisk laughs and groans in disappointment, somehow at the same time. Then we’re attacked by a passing monster. “Aaron flexes in!” I say as we’re drawn into the FIGHT.

“Check,” Frisk requests. I think back on what I know about this monster, but I don’t remember him very well. There’s just enough there for a stat check.

“Aaron has 7 attack and 2 defense. This seahorse has a lot of HP (horsepower). All of his attacks are harder to dodge if you don’t keep moving.”

“CHECK all you want ;)” Aaron says.

“Wait what?” I ask no one in particular. “Oh, he probably heard you say that, not me,” I sigh in relief. I’ve realized how much I dislike people other than Frisk being able to see me. Frisk nods in response, and readies themself for his attack. Aaron is sweating bullets… Literally. Frisk dodges all of them easily. Aaron admires his own muscles.

“Shoo,” Frisk says, making sweeping motions with their hands. “Go away.”

“You’ll change your mind ;),” Aaron winks.

“Can he please stop winking? It’s really creepy!” I shudder. This is officially my least favorite monster. “Hey, Frisk. Can we maybe kill this guy?” Frisk makes a shocked face, and missteps into a bullet. “Only him, I swear. We don’t have to kill anyone else!”

“We aren’t going to kill anyone, Chara!” Frisk says. They’ve lost only 3 HP. They speak to Aaron again. “Um, could you please go away?” They attempt.

“Feisty, huh? ;)” This time his attacks are biceps, coming from the left and right. Frisk dances back and forth between them, dodging easily.

“Please leave now!” Frisk tries.
“Wow! Spunky! Love it ;)” Aaron says. Frisk hits a bullet, losing them 3 more HP.

“Ok. I’ll flex.” Frisk rolls up their sleeves, and curls their arm. It’s kind of pathetic, since they have noodle arms.

“Flexing contest? OK, flex more ;)” Aaron says, flexing again. He uses his muscled arm attacks again, which Frisk dodges all except the last one. HP at 16. They flex again, causing Aaron to flex thrice as hard. “Nice!! I won’t lose tho ;)” Meanwhile I am here, suffering. At least Frisk is kind of enjoying themself now. They flex as hard as they can, causing Aaron to flex as hard as he possibly can. Which is impressive to see, I’ll admit, but he flexes so hard that he is flexed out of the room. The FIGHT ends, and we earn 30g, which is nice.

“Well… That certainly… Happened?” I say. Out of all the things that have happened down here so far, that had to have been one of the weirdest. Right next to Papyrus’s date.

We’ve ended up next to the bridge that lead to the sign. Battles disorient me sometimes. “So what do we do about the plants?” Frisk asks. “They’ve already sprouted.”

“There’s a sign up there saying that the bell can reset them, trying hitting that?” I suggest. They walk carefully over to the bell, and tap it. It lets out a ringing chime sound, and the bridge seeds grow back instantly from the ground. Frisk grins, and picks one up.

“Where should I put this?” They ask.

“There’s a river separating us from the doorway I was talking about earlier, but it looks like there’s only enough room for three of them to fit.” I walk over to the water, examining it closely. There seems to be an invisible barrier preventing me from floating over it, which is inconvenient. “Do the seeds float forever?”

“Let’s check!” Frisk says. They go back down to where the sign was, and face away from it. There’s another river there, leading off to unknown places. They let go of the plant, and it floats to the very end of the river, or at least as far as we can see. “The answer is yes!”

“Alright, then I have an idea. Reset the flower,” I direct. They do as I say, and reset. “Okay, grab one and just go over… here,” I lightly grab their shoulders, steering them to the right spot, which is an outcrop of the ground over the river. “Now just let go, and put the other three there too.”

“Oh, I see where you’re going.” Frisk does the rest pretty quickly, and then as the bridge seeds sprout they step over to the other outcrop, and cross the river by going down and to the left. “There we go.” We’re about to go through the doorway, when our phone rings. “Toriel?!” Frisk exclaims, hurriedly answering the phone.

“HELLO! THIS IS PAPYRUS!!!” A loud voice greets.

“Oh. Hey, Papyrus,” Frisk says, trying not to sound disappointed. “How did you get my number?”

“HOW DID I GET THIS NUMBER…? IT WAS EASY!!! I JUST DIALED EVERY NUMBER SEQUENTIALLY UNTIL I GOT YOURS!!! NYEH HEH HEH HEH!!” Papyrus explains.

“That’s one way of doing it, I guess?” I shrug.

“SO…” Papyrus starts hesitantly. “WHAT ARE YOU WEARING…?”

“What?!” Frisk asks, flustered. I laugh at their blush.
“I’M… ASKING FOR A FRIEND. SHE THOUGHT SHE SAW YOU WEARING A DUSTY TUTU. IS THAT TRUE? ARE YOU WEARING A DUSTY TUTU?” Papyrus asks.

“Ugh, I almost forgot he was with Undyne now. If she saw you wearing it, then there’s no point in denying it. But we’ll take it off in a second. So just tell him yes, Frisk,” I say.

“I, um, yeah.” Frisk eloquently tells Papyrus.

“So you are wearing a dusty tutu… got it!!! wink wink!!! Have a nice day!” Papyrus hangs up the phone.

We go through the doorway, and find ourselves in a dimly lit hallway. By dimly lit, I mean that the light sources consist of echo flowers and glowing rocks in the walls and ceilings. “Now change,” I command.

“Into what?” Frisk asks.

“Back into the manly bandanna, I guess,” I shrug. Frisk slips off the tutu over their shorts, and pauses.

“But that’s in the box!” They say.

“Ugh, we have to backtrack, huh?” I groan.

“No, Undyne doesn’t know what you look like, so we should probably make sure that doesn’t change. Papyrus probably told her that you’re wearing it, anyways.” Frisk slumps, and we start walking back to the box, which is thankfully only about two rooms away. Not thankfully, it’s all the way back before we first saw Undyne, and we have to dodge rocks on the waterfall again.

Frisk takes the manly bandana out of the box, and ties it around their head. “There!” They say. “But let’s keep the tutu with us, since it’s better for protection.”

“Yeah, alright. Now let’s go back so we can progress!”

Chapter End Notes

Aahah screw it I'll post this a little early. Guess who got impulsive and started writing the sequel last night? I'm not even done with chapter 16 yet... we haven't even made it to hotland... heh. Also, hey, if someone could tell me what Papyrus says if you tell him you’re wearing a tutu and then immediately switch clothes? Because in my game i switched clothes right before the phone call because i forgot and everything worked out well with Papyrus? I don't think that's supposed to happen. Ah well.

Askblog: http://saltychara.tumblr.com/
Chapter 14- Memory

“Finally, let’s just go through this door already!” I sigh in relief, after we’ve gotten back to where we were. Frisk nods triumphantly, and we go through the door to find a hallway filled with echo flowers. Once I’ve relayed this to Frisk, they tap a flower next to the door.

“A long time ago, monsters would whisper their wishes to the stars in the sky. If you hoped with all your heart, your wish would come true. Now, all we have are these sparkling stones on the ceiling…” The echo flower says.

“Who was walking by and saying that? Where did the flower hear that?” I wonder. Frisk shugs, not wanting to talk and mess up the flowers. “The sign on the wall says ‘Wishing Room,’” I read.

Frisk taps the next flower. “Thousands of people wishing together can’t be wrong! The king will prove that,” it says.

The next flower says something else, a different conversation than the one we’ve heard. “C’mon, sis! Make a wish!”

Then we’re yanked into a FIGHT! “Woshua shuffles up,” I say quietly, not wanting to disturb the peace in the room.

“Check,” Frisk whispers.

“7 attack, 1 defense. This humble germophobe seeks to cleanse the whole world,” I say.

“Wosh u teeth and eyes,” Woshua whispers aggressively. The bird on its back tweets. It attacks in a spiral pattern, one that Frisk has to twist and jump to avoid. They hit one, bringing their health to 13.

“Touch!” Frisk says. The reach out, but Woshua recoils from their touch.

“Yuck!” Woshua dismisses them. It then tries to kill us with a bar of soap. It doesn’t work, of course, but it does do some damage. Health at 10. Woshua picks a piece of pizza off the ground, and begins to clean it.

“Would you clean me?” Frisk guesses. Woshua’s face lights up, and hops around excitedly.

“Green means clean!” It says, and uses the spiral patterned attack again. Frisk hits one bullet, but gains two green ones, losing only 1 HP in the end.

“We can spare it now,” I tell Frisk.

“Spare!” They say. We earn 25 gold.

“Echo on your left,” I point at the flower, and Frisk taps it to see what it says. It seems to be a continuation of the conversation we were hearing earlier.

“I wish my sister and I will see the real stars someday…” It says. It’s kind of sombering.
“There’s a telescope here, I’m going look at it.” Frisk nods, and I look through the telescope. “The stars are nice, even if they’re only rocks in the ceiling,” I shrug. There’s nothing else really on the telescope. “One last flower over here.” Frisk taps the flower.

“Ah… seems my horoscope is the same as last week’s,” It says. We turn the corner, deciding to dismiss that one.

“Oh, it’s a dead end.” I sigh. We go to the end of the hall anyway, and Frisk leans on the wall. Then it suddenly falls away, leaving Frisk to fall over into the new doorway. “You alright there?” I ask.

“Yeah, I’m good.” Frisk takes a bandage from their pocket and wraps it around their hand, which they had used to break their fall. “Just scraped it, that’s all. So where are we?”

“We’re on a boardwalk that goes along a wall beside the marsh. Ancient writing covers the walls… I can just make out the words,” I explain.

“Read to me?” Frisk asks.

“Of course. ‘The War of Human of Monsters.’” This is off to a great start. I know all this history already, in fact I’m sure I’ve read these exact signs before, but I’d assume Frisk doesn’t have any clue what it was like. It’s pretty depressing, if you ask me. “Why did the humans attack? Indeed, it seemed they had nothing to fear. Humans are unbelievably strong. It would take the Soul of nearly every monster… Just to equal the power of a single human Soul.”

“Why are monsters so weak and humans so strong?” Frisk asks.

“We read that in Snowdin, remember? Monsters are made of love and compassion and magic, while humans are made of who knows what. Definitely not any of that. Anyways, shall I continue?” Frisk nods thoughtfully. “But humans have one weakness. Ironically, it is the strength of their Soul. Its power allows it to persist outside the human body, even after death. If a monster defeats a human, they can take its Soul. A monster with a human Soul… A horrible beast with unfathomable power…” I happen to have first hand experience with this part. In fact… Yes, it’s still there. “The next panel… shows an illustration of a strange creature, There’s something very unsettling about this drawing.” It probably wouldn’t be very strange or scary for Frisk, but for me… I don’t like to look at it.

I drew it. It’s a picture of Asriel, but infused with the power of a human Soul. I had drawn it when we were planning our mission to free all of monsterkind. We always jokingly referred to this form as the ‘Absolute God of Hyperdeath.’ It was a stupid name, but we were just stupid kids. I mean, it was mostly me that was the stupid one. I should have known that Asriel wouldn’t ever hurt anyone, even a human. He was too innocent. I always knew that I had to protect him, no matter what. In the end, of course, I failed miserably. If I had just thought about his feelings a little more instead of my revenge trip, then maybe I could would have prevented all of this. At least I have someone new to take care of, now.

“Chara?” Frisk asks. I hum in response. “It’s just that, you were zoning out. You okay?”

“I’m fine. Just thinking.” I have to turn away, I can’t look at them when they have that face. They actually look worried. About me. That’s a new one. Last time someone looked at me like that was when I was literally dying. “There’s a raft here. Hop on it and hopefully it will take you somewhere nice.” Frisk shrugs, and steps carefully onto the rocking raft. It begins to float away of its own free will, and I hook a hand on Frisk’s shoulder so that I can drift behind them. The water’s very dark.

We reach the other side, and I immediately get that feeling again. It’s the same one as the last time
Undyne was around. The one where it feels like we’re being watched, and that our lives are in immediate danger. But this time, there’s no tall grass to hide in. “Frisk, don’t be alarmed or anything, but be prepared to run,” I whisper. I don’t have to control my volume, but I feel like this gets my point across better. Frisk tenses, but keeps walking. They look around nervously. They can probably feel the darker atmosphere, too.

They walk a few more steps, and then are stopped dead by a bright blue spear imbedding itself in the boardwalk an inch from their feet. As Frisk freezes, Undyne appears above us. She materializes another spear in her hand.

“Run now!” I yell. Frisk moves as fast as they can, which is surprisingly not that fast. “Be careful, or you’ll fall into the marsh!” They’re already not doing very well, though they’ve managed to avoid being hit by the first three spears. “Here, just let me do it.” I accelerate my floating speed so that I combine into Frisk in one smooth motion.

We trip a little, and a spear grazes our arm, losing us 4 HP. We really need to heal, soon, since we now only have 5 health. I only hope we make it that far.

Luckily, I’m a much faster runner than Frisk. It’s probably since I have a ton of energy to spare, on account of me not using it for anything other than being dead. The boardwalk is pretty twisty, and I have to sprint left and right and forward all at once. I even have to backstep every now and then to dodge the spears. Frisk is pretty decent at dodging, so they help out on that part. This is a joint effort, after all.

Finally we reach the end of the boardwalk, and I almost laugh in relief at seeing a large patch of tall grass to hide in. I all but leap into the center of it. Right now getting air is proving to be difficult, and it doesn’t help that neither of us are in excellent shape. I hear Undyne enter the grass, and I clamp my hand over Frisk’s mouth and hold our breath.

Don’t move, I think to Frisk, the first thing I’ve said to them in the mindspace. They nod in response, and I separate to float over to get a better vantage point and see what’s going on. Undyne creeps closer, and then raises a fist. She’s only about a foot away from where I think Frisk is, but they can’t move without confirming their location. Her hand swings down, and lifts something out of the grass. My heart stops for a second, and I’m sure that we’ve been caught.

But, thank the stars (or something), the person she pulls out of the grass is not Frisk. It’s that yellow kid that really seemed to admire Undyne. They’ve got this huge smile on their face, but upon seeing them and realizing they aren’t human, Undyne gently sets them back down. She then stomps away in frustration, giving up for now.

“Alright, I think the coast is clear,” I call to Frisk. They tumble out of the grass on the opposite side Undyne went, and the other monster kid follows them. They scamper around excitedly.

“Yo… Did you see that?!!?” They gush. “Undyne just… TOUCHED ME! I’m never washing my face ever again…! Man, are you unlucky. If you were standing just a LITTLE bit to the left…!”

“Thanks for making us feel better about our close brush with death, weird yellow fellow,” I say, crossing my arms.

“Yo, don’t worry! I’m sure we’ll see her again!” The monster kid sprints forwards, but same as last time, they fall face first in the dirt. We follow after them, but they’re much faster and therefore long gone. In here there’s a short table, an echo, and a mouse hole.

“What’s that?” Frisk asks, pointing to the table. “Cheese? Smells like cheese.”
“This cheese has been here so long, a magical crystal has grown around it. It’s stuck to the table…” I say.

“What’s this?” They point at the flower.

“Echo flower.” They tap it, but it only squeaks.

“And that’s a mouse hole?” Frisk gestures to the left of the flower. I hum a yes. They spin around to face me, a set look on their face.

“Let me guess. Knowing the mouse might one day extract the cheese from the mystical crystal… It fills you with determination, doesn’t it?” SAVE point added, and HP refilled, thankfully. Their face lights up, and they nod. “You like mice, don’t you?”

“Mice are so cute! Their ears are huge!” Frisk answers. I laugh. We continue down the hallway, and standing in a nook in the cavern wall is Sans.

“Hello, Sans,” I say. I don’t want to tell Frisk he’s there because talking about someone who’s listening is rude. So this is the best way to let them know. “And also onion person over there,” I want to let them know that there’s also another person in earshot, so that they don’t blow my cover. Sans gives me a weird look.

“Hey, Sans!” Frisk says in delighted surprise. Sans just lifts his hand in a wave.

“i’m thinking about getting into the telescope business. it’s normally 50,000G to use this premium telescope… but… since i know you, you can use it for free.” I notice he only looks at Frisk while he’s talking. “howzabout it?”

I give Frisk the gentlest push forward, since I don’t know if Sans knows that they’re blind, and if he doesn’t, then I don’t want him knowing. Yeah, I know Frisk probably doesn’t want to look in the telescope, but they are going to anyway.

“Yeah, sure,” They shrug. They look into the telescope, under the supervision of Sans. They finish doing that, and politely smile. “Neat.”

“huh? you aren’t satisfied?” Sans says, seemingly seeing through their fake response. “don’t worry, i’ll give you a full refund.” Frisk laughs, and turns to me, wondering what to do next.

“Sans!” I say seeing Frisk’s face. “You did not!” Frisk raises an eyebrow at me, and I tell them, “There’s a red circle around your eye.” Sans winks. I tug on Frisk’s sleeve, directing them away from that. “Box?” I ask. It’s really hard to be vague and secretive about my narrating job. I want Sans to not be here. “We don’t use the food very much, maybe that.” Frisk nods and puts the Spider Cider and the Bisicle in the box, opening space in our inventory.

I tug Frisk over to the onion person, and stop.


“The only stars are in your eyes!” Frisk tells them. The onion person blushes dark purple, now more of a red onion. Frisk shoots finger guns at them, and I tug their sleeve again. We duck into a cave, with a short hallway leading to an open space.

“It’s the nice cream man,” I tell Frisk. They nod.
The bunny man is mumbling to himself. “I relocated my store, but there are still no customers…” He sighs, and then opens his eyes. Seeing us, his attitude flips into an excited salesman. “Fortunately, I’ve thought of a solution!! Punch cards!! Every time you buy a nice cream, you can take a punch card from the box. If you have 3 cards, you can trade them for a free nice cream! They’re sure to get the customers back! Want one?”

“Yes,” Frisk nods. I check our funds, and they’re doing pretty well. We’ll have more than enough money for whatever we may need, hopefully.

“Super! Here you go! Your card’s in the box,” He explains.

“Well, that sounds like a waste of time. The ancient writings have even been covered up with 21 different flavors of nice cream!” I say. Frisk starts walking to the box, but I let out a high pitched whine. “I want to progress!” They sigh irritably but I get my way. We exit the cave, and make a quick deposit of the nice cream we just got into the box. “Let’s go to the right, instead of down. There might be secrets,” I tell them. They nod, and we head right.

“What do you think is over here?” Frisk asks.

“Oh, there’s a duck! It’s on the other side of the water,” I say.

“Can we cross it?”

“Well, the water down here is luminescent, possibly radioactive, so you probably should be careful. So yeah, better not.” It seems there’s no way to reach the duck from here, so we backtrack a little and go down instead. We walk along the water’s edge, over a bridge or two, until we come across another echo to hear a passing conversation.

“So? Don’t you have any wishes to make?” The flower says. It looks like it’s continuing the conversation we heard from ages ago. We find another one, fairly close by. “… hmm, just one, but… It’s kind of stupid,” A different voice says.

“There’s a crossroads here,” I say. “Down or right?” Frisk points to the right, so we go that way. Whenever they step too far to one side, I have to tug their sweater so that they don’t fall into the water. Unexpectedly, we enter a FIGHT. “You walk into Moldsmal.”

“I thought Moldsmals were only in the Ruins?” Frisk asks.

“Guess they’re here too. They probably like the moist climate more than the drier climate of the Ruins,” I guess. Frisk spares them without trouble, letting us continue. We find a patch of grass, surrounded by abnormally large mushrooms. “There might be something in the grass,” I suggest. Frisk rummages through the grass, and triumphantly holds up a pair of ballet shoes.

“This was worth it. I wish it was safe to wear the tutu, these would go perfectly together.” They smile.

“They would, huh? I wonder if that’s a coincidence… Where do you think they came from?” Frisk goes quiet. They hum thoughtfully, smile dropping. “Alright, let’s just go, then,” I say. Frisk slips on the ballet shoes, tying them with a practiced skill. “These used shoes make you feel incredibly dangerous,” I say. There we go, Frisk is smiling again. Not as much as normal, but it’s something. We go back to the crossroads, and go down this time.

The phone rings, making Frisk jump. “HELLO! THIS IS PAPYRUS!!! REMEMBER WHEN I ASKED YOU ABOUT CLOTHES? WELL, THE FRIEND WHO WANTED TO KNOW... HER OPINION OF YOU IS VERY... MURDERY. WELL, WORRY NOT DEAR HUMAN!
Papyrus would never betray you! I am not a cruel person. I strive to be comforting and pleasant. Papyrus! He smells like the moon. So, because of my inherent goodness… I told her you were not wearing a tutu! Even though you told me you were! Instead, I made something up! I told her you were wearing… A manly bandanna. It pained me to tell such a boldfaced lie. I know you would never ever wear a manly bandanna. But your safety is more important than fashion. Dang! I just want to be friends with everyone…” Papyrus hangs up.

“Papyrus you idiot! I had it under control!” I say.

“It’ll be fine, just wait and see. Even if we have less of a chance escaping from Undyne without confronting her, I’m sure I can still make friends with her.” Frisk smiles.

“Yeah, but now there’s a much higher chance of us dying. Wouldn’t it have been nice to evade her by throwing her off the trail? And it’s all my fault!”

“Your plan was great, I don’t think you should blame yourself. It would have worked, if Papyrus had trusted us to know what we’re doing.”

“Whatever. I’m still mad.” We walk a little further, running into a couple Moldsmals that we spare without incident. Another echo stands to our left, and Frisk goes over to tap it. It continues the conversation that we’ve been hearing.

“Don’t say that! Come on, I promise I won’t laugh.” We walk up, and come across a sign.

“‘The power to take their Souls,’” I read. It’s continuing the story of the war, it seems. “‘This is the power that the humans feared.’” We continue up. “The ground here’s not very wide, and there’s deep pools of water on both sides. Be careful and walk in a straight line,” I warn. Frisk nods. We walk further. “Ok, don’t be alarmed, but there’s tentacles rising from the water.” Frisk ignores my warning and is alarmed anyway. They pause as something rises from the water.

“Hey… there… Noticed you were… Here…” The sea-creature thing says. “I’m Onionsan! Onionsan, y’ hear!”

“Frisk, it’s an anime octopus! I don’t like this…” I mutter. It doesn’t say more, so we keep walking.

“You’re visiting Waterfall, huh! It’s great here, huh! You love it, huh!” It interrupts our walk. “Yeah! Me too! It’s my Big Favorite.” We keep walking, but Onionsan seems determined to tell us its life story. “Even though, the water’s getting so shallow here… I, have to sit down all the time, but… He-hey! That’s OK! It beats moving to the city! And living in a crowded aquarium! Like all my friends did! And the aquarium’s full, a-Anyway, so, even if I wanted to, I…” Onionsan ducks beneath the water. It seems very sad. But it immediately perks up again. “That’s okay though, y’ hear! Undyne’s gonna fix everything, y’ hear!”

“Ugh, Undyne.” I mutter.

“I’m gonna get out of here and live in the ocean! Y’ hear!” We’re almost out of the room, finally. “Hey… there… That’s the end of this room. I’ll see you around! Have a good time! In Waterfallllllllllllllllllllllllllllllllllllllllllll!” It drawls as it sinks back beneath the water’s surface. We finally leave the room.

But, in the next room as we pass a corner, we enter a fight…? “Shyren hides in the corner but somehow encounters you anyway.”
“Check?”

“Shyren has 19 Attack and 0 defense. Tone deaf. She’s too ashamed to sing her deadly song.” She hums a note or two, which solidify into magic. Frisk dodges them easily while Shyren pretends to be a pop idol.

“Hum,” Frisk suggests. They hum a funky song that I haven’t heard before, and Shyren tries to follow along with the melody. It actually sounds decent. She seems much more comfortable singing along.

“We can spare her now,” I say. Frisk shakes their head, and hums with her again. Monsters are drawn to the music. Suddenly, it’s a concert… I look around and jump when I see Sans behind us. “Sans is selling tickets made of toilet paper.” Frisk hums some more. The seats are sold out. “You feel like a rock star, don’t you?” I ask. Frisk gives me a double thumbs up. The crowd tosses clothing, it’s a storm of socks. Finally we spare her and earn 30 gold. The crowd disperses, and we decide to go up first.

“It’s kinda eerily quiet in here. I don’t think I like it…” Frisk shivers.

“I agree. But maybe we can fill the silence, since there’s a handy piano over there,” I explain. “And a sign that reads, ‘A haunting song echoes down the corridor… Won’t you play along?’”

“Oh, boy. I can’t play the piano at all. Can you, by any chance?” Frisk asks. I smile.

“Actually, yes. I was pretty good at it,” I tell them.

“Really?!” Frisk says, eyes lighting up. “Show me!” I look at them blankly, then realize what they want.

“I’ll have to use your hands. It might not sound very good,” I warn. They nod enthusiastically, and I lean on them. We click into place, and it feels strangely comforting to have someone to keep me company in my head. I look at the piano, and back at my hands. They’re smaller than mine, but I think that I can make it work.

Back to this, Frisk thinks.

 Yep. Did you miss me? I ask, and they laugh. I play a simple one-handed melody on the piano, and Frisk seems delighted.

 Nice! We still have to solve the puzzle, though. Let’s go down the corridor and see what we find, Frisk decides. We leave the piano room, and go down over to the right.

 Oh, there’s a sign here that I didn’t read. It says that ‘The northern room hides a great treasure.’ Looks like we have to figure out the piano puzzle to see. Frisk nods. And there’s a wall of signs, so here we go. I clear my metaphorical throat. This power has no counter. Indeed, a human cannot take a monster’s Soul. When a monster dies, its Soul disappears. And an incredible power would be needed to take the Soul of a living monster… There is only one exception. The Soul of a special species of monster called a ‘Boss Monster.’ A Boss Monster’s Soul is strong enough to persist after death… If only for a few moments.’ That’s like what Toriel was, and maybe Papyrus, I’m not sure. ‘A human could absorb this Soul. But this has never happened. And now it never will.

 Ominous, Frisk says. We walk a little further, and I see something that makes me freeze. Chara? Frisk asks when our limbs lock. They struggle to move their body, but I can’t move at all suddenly.
Chaaraaa!

Oh, yeah… I say. I try desperately not to think about what it means, and instead focus on the facts that I can see. It’s a statue… It’s getting rained on but the structures at its feet seem dry… Let’s just keep going… Frisk sends me a concerned look, but cautiously moves on. A little further down the way there’s a basket of umbrellas.

“These are umbrellas, yeah?” Frisk asks. “Let’s put one on the statue!” I don’t respond. I can feel a tickling sensation in my brain, and I’m pretty sure Frisk is trying to read my thoughts. I close myself off, giving them full control. Frisk takes an umbrella with one hand, and put it over the statue, propping it up against it’s horns. Inside the stature, a music box begins to play… It’s a very very familiar tune.

My nerves shake Frisk’s fingers. I can’t hide my emotions from them very well, it seems. They definitely know that I’m not okay, and wrap their arms around us, trying to give me a hug, I guess. Why are you like this? I ask. My inner voice cracks a little. They tilt their head to the side in confusion, and I’m not sure if I’m crying or if Frisk is crying on my behalf. You don’t even know what’s wrong. I angrily wipe away the tears from our eyes, I’m not some crybaby. But staring at the statue… Frisk turns and examines the statue, stroking the stone it’s made of.

It feels like it should be carrying something? Frisk wonders to themselves.

Mm…

This must be the puzzle, then. Chara, are you okay?

Eh. I’m stuck staring at the statue for a while, before Frisk decides to walk down the corridor, tearing our eyes away from it.

Ok, Frisk says. We go down the corridor, back to the piano room. I feel better when I can’t hear the music or see the statue. Was the statue someone you knew? Frisk asks suddenly. I take a moment to collect my thoughts. Should I tell them? I guess it’s too late now, since it’s already been brought to the front of my mind..

Yeah. My brother, I admit, pointedly not thinking of his name. This will get easier with time, right? Frisk experimentally taps a few keys on the piano.

Oh, I’m sorry. They say in surprised sympathy. I move their hands over to the correct notes.

We need to play the song the music box was playing. Luckily, I already know how to play it. It starts with an… E, if I remember right. That sounds right, anyway.

Where did you learn the song? Frisk asks.

My dad. We play the first eight notes, and a door opens in the wall with a jarring noise. There’s a shiny ball on a pedestal. That must be the treasure. I feel too emotionally drained to care, though. I haven’t expressed any emotions in a very long time, and this is really draining.

Neat! I’ll take it! Frisk says, reaching for the artifact. I notice something then, about Frisk, and my eyes narrow in confusion.

You can’t, you’re carrying too many dogs, I say hesitantly. I’m not entirely sure what that means, but I know for a fact that it is true.
What? What does that mean? Frisk looks in their inventory, and sees that they have one Annoying Dog. It’s fast asleep… They try using the dog. It wakes up, jumps over to the artifact, and absorbs it. It then runs away, carrying the artifact with it. What just happened?! Frisk exclaims. I mentally shrug.

**Don’t know. Let’s move on**, I turn to walk out of the room, but I can’t leave because Frisk doesn’t want to move. **Frisk**?

*I feel like you should be freaking out about this more…?* They ask in concern.

**Well, I’m not, so you don’t have to deal with my annoying complaining. Be happy.**

*I can’t be happy when you’re distressed!* Frisk’s face scrunches up, and now we’re both in distress.

**I’ll be okay, I just need to take a moment.**

*Then let’s go find a place to sit*, Frisk says determinedly. We hurry past the statue, and Frisk grabs another umbrella. In the next room, it’s raining harder, and puddles litter the cavern floor. Frisk playfully splashes in a couple, and then sits down. We lean on the wall, the umbrella propped up next to us.

**My reflection wouldn’t be in the puddle. Yours is, though,** I tell Frisk. I’m not sure what to say, but just sitting and listening to the rain tap on the umbrella is therapeutic in a way. Frisk hums in response. We sit for a while, staring mesmerized at the rain creating ripples in the puddles. **I think I feel better now,** I say. It must have been at least fifteen minutes since we sat down, and Frisk’s clothes are wet again. It’s way more uncomfortable than I would have guessed. The ground must still be cold and wet from the rain. **We should hurry up, I don’t want you to catch a cold.**

*That’s probably a good idea. I get sick pretty easily,* Frisk admits. I feel kind of selfish now. What if Frisk gets sick? What if it gets worse? What if they die? What would happen to me? Would we both be ghosts or would we just cease to exist? I don’t like to think about it that much, though, so I stop. The thoughts are shoved to the back of my head, where they can be dealt with later.

We stand up, and Frisk stretches their arms and legs. We continue down the hall, Frisk still splashing in the puddles. As we round a small corner, we see that Monster Kid standing in the rain, without an umbrella.

“Yo, you got an umbrella? Awesome!” They move to Frisk’s side, and Frisk seems delighted at the increase of friends judging by the smile spreading on their face. “Let’s go!” We walk down the corridor, and Monster Kid seems to take on a new train of thought. “Man, Undyne is sooooooo cool. She beats up bad guys and NEVER loses. If I was a human, I would wet the bed every night… Knowing she was gonna beat me up! Ha ha.”

**You’d be a really wimpy human,** I comment. Frisk pokes me disapprovingly.

“So, one time. We had a school project where we had to take care of a flower. The king- we had to call him ‘Mr. Dreemurr’-” I flinch a little at this name, “volunteered to donate his own flowers. He ended up coming to school and teaching the class about responsibility and stuff. That got me thinking… YO! How COOL would it be if UNDYNE came to school!!?”

**Pretty cool, to be honest. You know, if she wasn’t trying to murder us,** I say.

“She could beat up ALL the teachers!!” Monster Kid seems to reconsider their words. “Ummm, maybe she wouldn’t beat up the teachers… She’s too cool to ever hurt an innocent person!” I snort.
Chara, be nice! Frisk mentally frowns at me.

The cavern wall ends to reveal a stunning view across almost the entire underground. I can see all the glowing rocks in the ceiling for miles, and even further is the castle in New Home. It looks small from up here. Frisk and I both gasp, and we shiver from the breeze suddenly hitting our face. Monster Kid takes a moment to look in awe as well. All too soon it ends, and we’re back in the slightly claustrophobic caverns of Waterfall. We come across a ledge that’s too high to reach, and another umbrella basket.

“Yo, this ledge is way too steep… Yo, you wanna see Undyne, right…? Put up your umbrella and climb on my shoulders,” Monster Kid directs. Frisk shrugs and does as they say, letting us be boosted up onto the ledge. I suppose I could have floated them up, but eh… Too lazy to separate right now. If Monster Kid is offering to do the work, then who am I to take that away from them? “Yo, you go on ahead. Don’t worry about me. I always find a way to get through!” They scurry away, predictably faceplanting as they run.

Finally, we reach a SAVE point. I examine Frisk’s thoughts curiously, since nothing’s happened to warrant determination recently. Their thoughts are an open book, to a point. But I know what the SAVE point is, now.

The serene sound of a distant music box… It fills you with determination, I smile. Frisk grins at me, as if they’re proud or something.

It’s kind of nice.

Chapter End Notes

Sooooo... I don't have a lot to say here. Just that, Undyne is definitely the coolest and I love her. Also I’ve been trying to move from mostly light-hearted stuff to a bit more serious stuff, which is hard for me to write for some reason, so it'll be gradual, mostly just mixed in every once in a while. If anyone has tips for writing angst without it sounding whiny, I'd love to hear it!

Ask blog: http://saltychara.tumblr.com/ (very fun you should check it out)
Chapter 15- That Dummy

The humans, afraid of our power, declared war on us, I read. Frisk can see the words now, but they can’t read very well at all. They attacked suddenly, and without mercy. In the end, it could hardly be called a war. United, the humans were too powerful, and us monsters, too weak. Not a single Soul was taken, and countless monsters were turned to dust…

Dark. Frisk says. I feel really bad about being a human…

Humans are terrible. Monsters are infinitely better. …Oh, but you’re great, Frisk.

You’re great too, Chara. Frisk’s optimism is a nice change of pace. But I don’t respond. We walk onto a bridge, over where the ground drops out into the underground rivers. Do heights make you nervous?

Not really. You?

A little. But, I mean, I did fall from a really long way up.

Yeah, me too. We should start a club.

What kind of club has only two members? I mentally shrug. Then the bad feeling hits again.

Crap.

What?

Move faster. I think something bad’s about to happen. Probably Undyne.

Again? Can’t she give up so that we can be friends?

No. Just keep moving, and we’ll be fine. I take that back, nothing is fine. A blue spot of magic appears directly in front of us, making Frisk stop short. Which is lucky, because a second later a bright blue spear erupts from the magic, an attack that could have done some serious damage. Many more of those appear, completely surrounding us. We glance over the edge of the wooden platform, and see Undyne below, glaring at us through her helmet. Spears block the path, but it seems like this type of magic is temporary, and they vanish a moment later.

This is new! Frisk shouts as they start running, evading attacks left and right. I use some of my energy to help them go faster, since they’re not a very good runner. The boardwalk twists and turns, which is probably why Undyne chose this place to attack. It’s harder to get away fast. The paths diverge, and come back together, creating a labyrinth that had death above and below, left and right, up and down, forward and back.

We hit some dead ends, and have to backtrack in a panic, searching for a way out of here. A spear hits us, shooting pain across our side. 4 HP lost. The attacks only get worse when we reach a large, open landing. They’re more frequent, and there’s no path to follow, so we run around blindly, not
sure where the exit is. We keep going forwards anyway.

We find the one exit, but as we run along it, it turns out to be a dead end. The attacks continue as we dash to the end of the pier, and Frisk gets hit again, this time on the leg. Another 4 HP gone. This makes running significantly harder. The spears slow as we reach the drop off of the boardwalk. Underneath us, the cavern has opened up, and only darkness lies below.

*What now?!* Frisk thinks in a panic.

**If we go back a little, maybe we can escape.** I suggest. Wow, the pain across my stomach and leg really hurts. I’m really not used to this kind of physical pain, but if I withdraw control, then Frisk has to shoulder all of it by themselves. And that would make it harder to walk than it already is. So we each take about half of it, and limp back the way we came.

*Um, I don’t think escaping is possible now.* Frisk stops when they see Undyne walking menacingly towards us. I make us stand straighter, even if it hurts more, and try to look strong and proud, instead of weak and hurt. I won’t let Undyne think she’s won! But she stops a couple feet away from us, instead of walking up and spearing us like I expected.

Undyne raises several spears with magic, and uses them to slice into the wooden supports of the platform. It’s completely severed, and then we’re falling.

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“It sounds like it came from over here…” A voice says. “Oh! You’ve fallen down, haven’t you… Are you okay? Here, get up… Chara, huh? That’s a nice name. My name is…”

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I wake up on a bed of flowers, just like I did when I first fell into the Underground. Frisk wakes up a second or two later, and sits up.

**Morning, sunshine,** I say. I figure we must have slept for several hours, and we’ve got a huge headache. And wow, I actually slept. This is weird. And on top of that I actually dreamed.

*Hey, Chara. How did you sleep?*

**Fine. You?**

**Fine, but I had a weird dream…**

**Oh? Tell me.**

*I dreamed that I had fallen down again, except there was someone there when I woke up.* Frisk looks around, seeing where we fell. We’re in a shallow pond at the base of the huge waterfall, probably the deepest part of the Underground.

**Who was it?** I ask.

*I don’t know, I woke up just before he said.*

**He?** Oh no. I know exactly what’s going on here.

*Yeah. Do you have any ideas on who he was?*
Actually yeah, I do. I figure that there’s no harm in telling them, as long as I don’t use names. There’s a huge chance that we’ll run into someone who remembers him, and I don’t want Frisk to know the whole story yet. I had the same dream, but it’s actually more a memory. It was when I first fell.

Then he must have been… Your brother?

How did you figure that out?

I just guessed. You were adopted, right?

How do you know?

Lucky guess.

You’ll have to teach me your witchcraft someday, I tell Frisk. It’s possible that they have seen more of my memories, which is probably a bad thing. I should keep a tighter lid on those.

I will, I promise. Someday. Now shall we continue? And figure out where we are? I silently agree, and we walk carefully on the bridge debris, jumping over holes. Even though we’re already soaked, we don’t want to get more wet.

We landed in some flowers again. That’s probably what triggered the memory.

How did they get here?

Beats me. They might have washed down here, down the waterfalls. Then we run out of debris to walk on, and are forced to wade through the pond. It smells bad down here. And then we find out why. Oh, those are all piles of garbage. There are quite a few brands I recognize.

Yeah, me too. The garbage is stacked pretty high, about a whole other Frisk taller than us. We keep trudging through the smelly water, and I see a shimmering SAVE point. It’s at the base of a waterfall, where the trash seems to be clustered.

Oh, I think I got it. The waterfall here seems to flow from the ceiling of the cavern… Occasionally, a piece of trash will flow through… And fall into the bottomless abyss below. And now I think I understand the SAVE point, too. Viewing this endless cycle of worthless garbage… It fills you with determination. We walk through the area, and stop to examine some trash.

You know what this is? Frisk asks.

Just garbage. Frisk rests their hand on a rusted bike. Its horn wheezes a honk of despair.

This?

A beat-up desktop computer. The inside is empty.

This?

A trash heap. That’s all that’s here. Do you have to check every little thing we see? Can’t we just go through an area without stopping to look at everything, for once?

No! What if we miss something important?! Like this cooler. Tell me about it.
You can see now, what’s the point?

It’s still your job, you’re the guide here!

Ugh. Fine. It’s a cooler. It has no brand, and shows no signs of wear… Happy? This child will be the death of me. The second death of me. And also the life of me, since they’re the reason I’m not completely dead anymore. Hmph. I can’t even insult them like I want to!

And what’s inside the cooler? Frisk asks. They open it, and wait for me to tell them, even though they already know. This is ridiculous.

What do you know, a couple of freeze-dried space food bars. Take one?

Yeah, sure.

You got the Astronaut Food. We walk further, and peer down at something poking out of the water. It’s a DVD case for an anime. Desperate claw marks cover the edges.

Someone really wanted to watch this.

Probably some nerd. Frisk sends me mental disapproval, and checks the next trash pile. Your persistent garbage habit shows no signs of payoff. It’s trash.

You're rude.

Fight me. Or fight this regular training dummy. Do you want to beat it up?

No, of course not!

Boring. You stare into each other’s eyes for a moment… But nothing happens.

You’re narrating what I do now? Even though I already know it?

You seem to want me to narrate, so why not?

Fair point. We walk a little further, and then a crash sounds behind us. Frisk whips around, and sees that the dummy that we chose not to fight has come to life, and it looks really mad. It somehow teleports in front of us.

“Hahaha… Too intimidated to fight me, huh!?” The dummy says. “I am a ghost that lives inside a DUMMY. My cousin used to live inside a DUMMY, too. Until… YOU CAME ALONG! When you talked to them, they thought they were in for a nice chat… But the things you SAID…!”

“I don’t remember saying anything… “ Frisk complains. But the Mad Dummy keeps yelling.

“Horrible. Shocking! UNBELIEVABLE! It spooked them right out of their dummy! HUMAN! I’ll scare your Soul out of your body!”

Mad Dummy has attack 30 and defense yes.

What?

Because they’re a ghost, physical attacks will fail. Wait, this is a ghost, right? I’m a ghost.

“Feeble. Feeble! FEEBLE!” The dummy says. Smaller dummies pop up and shoot tangled magical
bullets at us.

Yes? And? Frisk thinks as they dodge the first attack. Or try to, anyway. They lose 2 HP, probably because I’m distracting them. Oh, well.

Maybe you didn’t say anything to their cousin, but I’m pretty sure I wanted you to fight them.

“OWWW, you DUMMIES!! Watch where you’re aiming your Magic attacks!” The Dummy yells. “...Hey! You! Forget I said anything about Magic!!!” Mad Dummy is looking nervous.

What’s your point, Chara? Frisk thinks as they chose to talk to the Dummy. It doesn’t seem much for conversation, much like their cousin. No one is happy with this.

“I’ll rip your Soul from your body!” It yells. Frisk has to take a couple hits to direct the magic attacks back at the dummy, so they lose 4 HP. The Mad Dummy is doing an armless ska dance. Frisk talks to them again.

What I’m saying is, what if other ghosts can see and hear me? This one’s pretty bent on taking your Soul, which is half me. Just saying.

Interesting. Frisk dodges the next attack, and is successful in aiming its attacks back at it.

“I’ll use your Soul to cross the barrier!” It glares into a mirror, then turn to us with the same expression. “I’ll stand in the window of a fancy store!” Conveniently, it smells like a clothing store. Frisk missteps, and loses 4 more HP. They should heal soon, if they take any more damage. “THEN EVERYTHING I WANT WILL BE MINE!!!” Mad Dummy is harder to hit when it’s bobbing in the air, back and forth. Frisk still manages to hit it a couple times, though.

Frisk, you should heal. They took more damage in the last wave, and so they split a Bisicle in half, to save the rest for later. 11 HP restored.

“Huh? Yeah, I guess that’ll avenge my cousin.” Mad Dummy is getting cotton all over the dialogue box. “What was their name again? ...Whatever. Whatever! WHATEVER!!!” The attacks this time have a couple of automated dummy robots, which Frisk ducks between the gaps to escape without injury. “Foolish. Foolish! FOOLISH!” Frisk takes 4 damage. This guy is tough to beat! “Pitiful. Pitiful! PITIFUL!” Mad Dummy gets hit more, and it seems like that’s about its limit. “HEY GUYS!” It yells. “Dummies. Dummies! DUMMIES! Remember how i said NOT to shoot at me? Well… FAILURES! YOU’RE FIRED! YOU’RE ALL BEING REPLACED!!! Hahaha. Hahaha! HAHAHA! Now you’ll see my true power: Relying on people that aren’t garbage!” Mechanical whirrs fill the room.

This one’s great! I think in delight. I like its rage, it’s very entertaining. Frisk continues to spare, and the next attack is very different. The magic dummies attacking us are now mechanical, and they fire some missile towards us.

How does this work!? Frisk thinks in a panic. The missiles follow them, and instead of baiting them to hit Mad Dummy, they fire off in a random direction.

“DUMMY BOTS! TRY AGAIN!”

Spin around, get them to shoot at it!

I’ll try. The results are a little better this time, but they still miss. They also get hit a couple times, losing another 4 HP. The next attempt is successful, hitting the Mad Dummy with the missiles twice.
“DUMMY BOTS! You’re awful???” It seems mad with its own magic attacks. It’s not combined with its body yet, so maybe it doesn’t have very good control yet. The attacks seem effective, despite what it’s saying, and they just keep coming from all sides. We get hit a lot this turn. Luckily, so does the dummy.

“DUMMY BOTS! FINAL ATTACK!” We’re surrounded by missiles, and our HP is low. Frisk tries to get them again, but they hit more than once. 1 HP left. Oh boy.

GAME OVER

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Our fate rests upon you… Chara! Stay determined…
~~~

We wake up in the garbage water, presumably at the same time as we SAVEed last. No time has passed.

I think I got another one of your memories, Frisk says.

Yeah, that one came up last time we died. Wow, that was all the way back in the Ruins. For a first time, we’re doing great!

Did you expect me to die more?

To be honest, yes.

Alright then. We get up, and decide not to beat up the dummy again. They say the same speech again, no changes. Our Bisicle is back in our inventory.

We go for a very long time without being hit once, which is nice. Then we slip up, and our HP goes to 16. We then get hit once by the robotic missiles, and when the Mad Dummy floats sporadically through the air, they’re really hard to hit. We get hit several times on their FINAL ATTACK, but we’ve survived! HP is at only 8, though. Hopefully there’s a SAVE point after this.

“N... no way!” It mutters. “These guys are even WORSE than the other guys! ...Who cares. Who cares! WHO CARES!! I DON’T NEED FRIENDS! I’VE GOT KNIVES!” The Mad Dummy yells.

Why can’t you be more like this dummy? Everything would be easier! Instead of summoning a magical attack, it uses some form of levitation to raise a real, actual metal knife.

No, Chara. Frisk sighs, more exasperated than anything. The dummy hurls the knife towards us, but Frisk merely sidesteps away.

“I’m… Out of knives… BUT IT DOESN’T MATTER! YOU CAN’T HURT ME, AND I CAN’T HURT YOU! YOU’LL BE STUCK FIGHTING ME… Forever. Forever! FOREVER!!!” It flings itself wildly, body pieces separating and flinging around as if stretching a rubber band. It’s incredible the amount of ghostly magic needed to keep it together at all!

“AHAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAH

As it laughs maniacally, drops of… something, -possibly magic?- drip from somewhere above us.

That must be magic, it’s hurting the dummy.

Who’s magic, though?
“Wh… What the heck is this!? Ergh! Acid rain!? Oh, FORGET IT! I’m outta here!” Mad Dummy slides away, off into the distance.

Napstablook floats in, and sighs sadly. “…sorry, i interrupted you, didn’t i?”

“No, of course not!” Frisk objects.

“As soon as i came over, your friends immediately left… oh no… you guys looked like you were having fun… oh no… i just wanted to say hi… oh no….”

“It’s ok, really!” Frisk tries to encourage the ghost, but it’s not really working.

“Well… i’m going to head home now… oh… um… feel free to ‘come with’ if you want… but no pressure… i understand if you’re busy…”

“I’m not busy!”

“It’s fine…”

“No, really!”

“no worries… just thought i’d offer…” Napstablook floats away, probably to wherever they live.

Guess we’re gonna hang out with them, huh?

You know it! We go up, and see them floating idly by an entrance to one of the residential areas of Waterfall.

“hey… my house is up here… in case you want to see… or in case… you don’t…” They float up, and i see a SAVE point.

You feel a calming tranquility. You’re filled with determination… We head in the direction Napstablook went, and see two nearly identical houses, each leaning slightly away from each other. One is an off-white, the other is pink. Frisk checks the pink one first. It’s locked.

I wonder what's in there.

There's got to be a way to get in there.

Maybe, but if someone doesn’t want me in there, then i won’t go in.

Boring. We go into the grey house, and see Napstablook floating in front of a computer, wearing some stylish headphones. They notice us, and turn around in surprise.

“oh… you really came… sorry, i… wasn’t expecting that. it’s not much, but make yourself at home.”

Where to first?

Fridge?


“oh… are you hungry… i can get you something to eat…” Napstablook floats over, and Frisk takes a step back to make room. “this is a ghost sandwich… do you want to try it…”

“Yes.” Frisk attempts to bite into the ghost sandwich. But they phase right through it. Um, Chara, do
Better not, they’d probably notice. But now you know how it feels to not be able to eat anything! Feel my suffering.

“oh... nevermind…” There’s an awkward moment of silence. “after a great meal i like to lie on the ground and feel like garbage… it’s a family tradition… do you want… to join me…”

“Absolutely.”

“okay... follow my lead…” Napstablook lays horizontally on the ground, which I guess is laying down for a shapeless ghost. Frisk lays down next to them. “here we go… you’ll lie down as long as you don’t move. so... only move around when you want to get up, i guess.”

The longer we lie there, the more tired Frisk gets. Pretty soon we’re in a delirious half-asleep state, and they start to notice patterns on the ceiling, their brain transforming them into images of galaxies and stars. It’s really weird, at least for me, since I can see most of what happens in their brain. It’s also kind of beautiful.

You know what else is beautiful? Frisk says, reading my thoughts again.

What?

You.

Really. I thought I was exempt from the flirting stuff.

I said I’d flirt with everyone, didn’t I?

I guess. Somehow, it’s not awkward. I’m done with this. I control Frisk’s body to make us sit up, and Napstablook hurriedly follows.

“well, that was nice… thank you…” Napstablook says.

“Any time!” Frisk curiously examines their TV, poking the antenna sticking up from the top.

“oh... that’s my tv… there’s a show i like to watch on it… sometimes…”

“Neat,” Frisk says, trying not to sound like they’re merely being polite. They are really enjoying themselves, I can feel that loud and clear. They look at Napstablook’s computer, of which the internet browser is opened to a music-sharing forum. I wonder what kind of music they make?

I bet we can find out. There’s some CDs on the floor over there.

You’re right, we should go listen! Frisk walks to the CD furthest to the left, and presses the play button. It’s not a device I’ve seen before, since there seems to be only one song on each thing. I’m not sure if they’re even CDs, to be honest.

This CD is labeled ‘Spooktunes.’ It has a nice sound, played on a weird instrument that I wouldn’t recognize. It’s definitely digitally made, and has an auto-tune effect to it. Frisk listens to it until the song is done, and then moves to the next CD. This CD is labelled ‘Spookwave.’ It has the same melody and notes, but it’s more of a swooshing sound, sweeping from one note to the next. It’s good. That one ends, and we go to the last CD. This CD is labelled ‘Ghouliday Music.’ That’s definitely a pun of some kind. I listen in confusion for a little bit, and then catch on to the melody. It
seems to be *Jingle Bells*, but a halloween remix. It has the wavering notes and sounds like a stereotypical ghost from the early days of horror movies.

“Oh, this one… once you learn the lyrics it’s hard not to sing along… ooo ooo oooo, ooo ooo ooo ooo ooo ooo ooo oo ooo oo ooo oo ooo.” They’re singing along pretty well, even if they don’t know how the original song goes.

**There’s a spider web in the corner. There’s a flyer for a bake sale on it.** I say idly. There’s not much else to do here, but I feel like it would be awkward to leave too suddenly.

*That’s for the spider bake sale we found in the Ruins, right?*

**Yep. Should we leave, or…**

*I guess?* We walk towards the door, and wonder if Napstablook is going to say anything, but they don’t. They just turn back to their computer. I feel bad about leaving them like that.

Out in the corridors of Waterfall, we can still hear the Ghouli day Music playing. It’s a nice change of pace from only hearing the water falling for so long. *Oh, I’ve been here before! Lots of snails out here. It’s a snail farm.*

*Tell me about them, if you know them so well.* Frisk walks over to the first snail they see. *What’s this one’s story?*

**It’s a snail.** There’s not much else to say, it’s really just a snail.

*Continue, tell me more.*

**For some reason, you can’t help but wonder what it tastes like…**

*Gross!* Frisk laughs.

**You’d be surprised.** We walk to the next snail. It has a mustache, and looks very proper.

“Snail snail…” The snail says.

**Hang on, I speak snail. I’ll translate.**

*You do not speak snail.*

**I do too! This one says, ‘A long journey extends in front of you…’** I pause, and listen to what it says next. *‘Reach far and stretch beyond the horizons. So snail eth Sam Byool.’*

*You’re making that up.*

**Am not!**

*Are so.*

**Screw you. Do you want to see what the next snail has to say? If it’s even a snail…** We walk over to the next… snail… which appears to actually be a small man lying on the ground, a snail shell covering a small part of him.

“I’ve been long overdue for a second house…” He says. We shrug, and look at the snail next to him. This one doesn’t have a shell, but is counting dollar bills.
Napstablook is over there, do you want to talk to them? Frisk sends me an emotional affirmative.

“awkward… i’m working right now…” They say, then reconsider. “i mean… welcome to the blook family snail farm… yeah. I’m the only employee. this place used to get a lot of business… but our main customer disappeared one day… now it’s just some hairy guy that shows up once a month…” I immediately know exactly who they’re talking about, but I’m careful not to think of any names while Frisk is sharing my brain. Frisk at least senses my recognition, though.

*Do you know that guy, too? Did you know the other customers?* Frisk asks. I hesitate, considering what they need to know.

*Yeah, I probably knew him. Probably. It sounds familiar, anyway. Hehe.* Ugh. That didn’t sound suspicious, not at all. The nervous laugh was a nice touch. *Hey, let’s see what that race track is all about!* I walk to Napstablook, who’s disappeared and reappeared next to a fenced-off race track, seemingly for snails.

“do you want to play a game? it’s called thundersnail. the snails will race, and if the yellow snail wins, you win. it’s 10g to play.” Napstablook explains.

“I’ll play!” Frisk say.

“okay… yell repeatedly to encourage your snail. ready?”

“Yeah!” The race starts. “Go yellow snail!” The snail seems encouraged, but barely keeps pace with the other snails.

*Frisk, you have to yell louder. And more. Let me do it.* Frisk lets me take control of their voice, and I start yelling. “Go snail! You can do it! Do it or you’ll lose! Move faster!” This doesn’t seem to be working. So I try harder. “GO! DO IT OR DIE!” The snail retreats inside its shell, scared. “Oh, come ON! GO GO GO! MOVE IT, SNAIL!” The shell starts to shake, and then catches on fire. Then the blue snail reaches the finish line, and the race ends.

“oh…….. looks like you encouraged your snail too much… all that pressure to succeed… really got to her… oh……..” Napstablook explains.

*Chara! You were way too mean!* I wanted to win, okay?

*Let me try next. I don’t want to pressure her too much!* Frisk turns back to Napstablook, holding out another 10g. “Let me try again?” The race starts, and Frisk yells out an encouraging, “You can do it!” The snail looks a little better, but still is not very fast. A moment or two later, Frisk says, “I believe in you!” The snail seems to try harder, but it’s just not a very speedy snail. “Please win!” The red snail has a huge lead, and wins the race.

“oh…….. you both tried your best… but the snail looks discouraged… her best wasn’t good enough… oh……..”

“I’m sorry, miss! I’ll try again, and it will be better!” Frisk promises. “Again, please!” They give Napstablook more gold.

*You’re wasting gold. What’s your strategy?*

*She stops and looks at me whenever I yell, so what if I don’t say anything, and just smile?*
It’s worth a shot. But if it doesn’t work, can we agree to not waste any more gold?

_I want to win, so probably not. I’ll keep trying!_ The race resets, and starts again, with Frisk giving our yellow snail an encouraging smile, but not saying anything. Not until the red snail is seconds away from the finish line, anyway. Because at that point, there’s nothing to lose.

**Frisk, I’m not letting you develop a gambling problem. I’m cutting you off.**

_But-

No buts about it! I’m the responsible one here!

_Are you really?

Without a doubt! And as the responsible one, I say that we’re done here. Don’t make me make you.

_Hmph. Ok, bossypants._

**Excuse me?**

_Notthing._ Frisk giggles, and I shake my non-existent head. Being the responsible one is exhausting. We leave the Blook Family Snail Farm, and go back out into the corridor.

_Oh, a sign. ‘North: Blook Acres. East: Hotland. ???: Temmie Village.’ We should not go to Temmie Village._

_You know where it is?

Yeah, I’ve been there once or twice. I wouldn’t recommend it. Let’s focus on getting to Hotland._

_Ok. We’ve still got to deal with Undyne, though._

_I guess._ With that distant threat looming, we make our way uneasily deeper through Waterfall.

_It’s ok, though, we can do that easily!_ I mentally shrug, causing Frisk to mentally pout. The next section has a doorway tucked into a nook in the wall, not visible from the rest of the hall. Frisk cautiously steps in, to be greeted by a very old turtle. I recognize him, too. He was definitely around when I was.

_“Woah there!” Gerson says. “I’ve got some neat junk for sale. What are you lookin for?”_ His goods are spread over the counter, including a Crab Apple, Sea Tea, Cloudy Glasses, and a Torn Notebook.

_Wow, look at all the stuff we could buy! You know, if someone hadn’t wasted all our money. And, our inventory’s almost full. Pick one thing._

_I don’t need the sass, thanks._ “I’ll take a Crab Apple, thanks.”

_“Thanks! Wa ha ha.”_

“So… Tell me about yourself,” Frisk asks curiously.

“I’ve been around a long time. Maybe too long. Studying history sure is easy when you’ve lived
through so much of it yourself! Wa ha ha!” Gerson laughs.

Chara, look! It’s the emblem you won’t ever tell me about! Well, maybe I’ll just ask this guy!

Suit yourself, I guess.

“What’s that emblem on the wall behind you?” Frisk asks.

“Eh? You don’t know what that is?”

“No one will tell me,” Frisk complains, aiming their words at me. I glare in response.

“What are they teaching you kids in school nowadays…? Wa ha ha! That’s the Delta Rune, the emblem of our kingdom. The Kingdom… of Monsters. Wahaha! Great name, huh? It’s as I always say… Ol’ King Fluffybuns can’t name for beans!”

“What does the emblem mean, then?”

“That emblem actually predates written history. The original meaning has been lost to time… All we know is that the triangles symbolize us monsters below, and the winged circle above symbolizes… Somethin’ else.” Gerson narrows his eyes. “Most people say it’s the ‘angel,’ from the prophecy…”

“The prophecy?”

“Oh yeah… The prophecy. Legend has it, an ‘angel’ who has seen the surface will descend from above and bring us freedom. Lately, the people have been taking a bleaker outlook… Callin’ that winged circle the ‘Angel of Death.’ A harbinger of destruction, waitin’ to ‘free; us from this mortal realm… In my opinion, when I see that little circle… I jus’ think it looks neat! Wahaha!”

That’s pretty cool. Don’t you think, Chara? Frisk asks. I try to hide my thoughts again.

You know it’s probably about you, right? I used to think it was about me, when Gerson first told me about it. Will you free everyone by breaking the barrier, or by killing everyone?

I’d like to not kill anyone. “What do you know about the King?” Frisk asks.

“King Fluffybuns? He’s a friendly, happy-go-lucky kind of guy… If you keep walking around long enough, you’ll probably meet him. He loves to walk around and talk to people.

“Why do call him that?” I ask. Luckily, no one can tell the difference between me and Frisk.

“Eh? Why do I call Dreemurr ‘Fluffybuns?’” Oh, that’s a great story! …I don’t remember it. But if you come back later, I’m sure I’ll have remember by then.”

“So what do you know about Undyne?” Frisk asks.

“Undyne? Yeah, she’s a local hero around here. Through grit and determination alone, she fought her way to the top of the Royal Guard. Actually, she just came through here asking about someone who looked just like you…I’d watch your back, kid. And buy some items… It might just save you hide! Wa ha ha!” Gerson narrows his eyes.

Oops, time to leave. For once, Frisk takes my advice and bids Gerson a goodbye.

“Bye, Gerson!” Frisk calls as we back out of the room. We hurry down the hall, hearing his voice echo behind us.
“Be careful out there, kid! ...And how did you know my name?”

But we’re already gone.

*Let’s head down,* Frisk suggests.

**There’s nothing down there,** I say, but we’re already moving. **It’s just the river, see?**

Why is this here? Isn’t it kind of pointless?

**There’s a river person that runs a ferry. They’re not here right now, though.** We go back up. **Do you want to use the box?**

*We probably should,* since our inventory’s full. Frisk opens up the box, and looks in their pockets. There’s two empty spots left in the box, but in our inventory there’s… **Dog residue?** Frisk asks in confusion. *When did that get there?*

**No idea. We should get rid of it to save room, though.** Frisk agrees, and drops the Dog Residue, but not before checking it. **Dog item. Jigsaw puzzle left unfinished by a dog. Safe to throw away.** Frisk drops it on the ground, effectively throwing it away.

*I’ll keep all the rest of the stuff.* Frisk decides. We move into the next room, where a sign on the wall sits.

‘Hurt, beaten, and fearful for our lives, we surrendered to the humans. Seven of their greatest magicians sealed us underground with a magic spell. Anything can enter through the seal, but only being with a powerful Soul can leave.’

Is my Soul powerful enough to do that?

...Probably. Let’s read the next sign, shall we? It says ‘There is only one way to reverse this spell. If a huge power, equivalent to seven human Souls, attacks the barrier… It will be destroyed.**. We wade through a waterfall, careful not be swept away by the current. There’s lots of echo flowers here, but we can’t reach any of them.

*Do the monsters have any of the power that they need yet?*

**Not as far as I know.** A blinding blur rushes towards us, revealing itself to be… **Special enemy Temmie appears here to defeat you!!**

This one is cute! “Check!”

**Temmie- Rated Tem outta Tem. Loved to pet cute humans. But you’re allergic!**

My one weakness! No!

“Oh no! Humans too cute!” Temmie’s legs grow very long via magic, and Frisk has to dodge between her legs to not lose HP. It’s fairly easy. But Temmie forgot her other attack.

“Hello, Temmie,” Frisk waves.

“hOi! I’m TEMMIE!” She tries to… glomp us. Her leg extends, like a snake, and follows Frisk’s movements very accurately.
You can spare her.

Kay. Frisk spares her, finally following some of my suggestions, and we read the next sign together.

‘But this cursed place has no entrances or exits. There is no way a human could come here. We will remain trapped down here forever.’ We run into some Moldsmals, which Frisk casually spares. For some reason, though, it only works for one of them. Oh… That’s not a Moldsmal. But… Frisk doesn’t have to know that, do they? Moldsmal is very normal.

That’s not suspicious… “Check?”

Moldsmal? Attack 6 defense 0. It’s a slime mold…? Hehe. Moldsmal sits motionless.

“Ok, flirt.” Frisk wiggles their hips. Suddenly…!

“Guuahp!” The ‘Moldsmal’ grows taller, emerging from the ground, transforming into a Moldbygg.

What?

What now, Frisk?

“Um… Hug? Wait, no, check.”

Moldbygg has 18 attack, and 18 defense. One size greater than Moldaverage. ...Get it? Moldsmal, Moldbygg, Moldaverage?

Yes, you’re very clever. How do I beat it?

Figure it out! This is your adventure, not mine. The only thing I’ll say is that it needs some distance. Hugs are not recommended. It’s attacks are complicated, and just one hit loses us 5 Hp.

“If I can’t hug it, can I… un...hug?” Frisk asks, face scrunching up.

It appreciates your respect of its boundaries. Moldbygg seems comfortable with your presence. That means you can spare it. They take my suggestion again, making it a new record. And, we earn 20 gold!

Things are looking up.

Chapter End Notes

Does anyone know of an easier way to code this? Because it takes foreverrrrrrrrrr

Anyways, guess what? Today is day 100 of writing this fic. Wow. That’s a lot. And every day has been pretty fun! I like to write this a lot.

Tune in next week for Temmie village, Woshua, and multiple game overs.

And check out the ask blog! It’s fun and I need more asks
http://saltychara.tumblr.com/
Chapter 16- NYAH

We move on to the next area, which is... difficult to explain. **You have to stay on the path. If you go off it...** Well, there’s no telling what will happen. At least, that’s what Mom and Dad told me. I don’t actually know what would happen, but I don’t want to find out. **Tap the mushroom to reveal more of the path.**

*Oh, that’s really cool! I like the lights here a lot, it’s all glowy and pretty.*

**Look out, Woshua and Aaron appear.**

“Flex at Aaron!” Frisk shows off their muscles, which don’t really exist -*Hey!*- and Aaron challenges them to a flexing contest. Woshua and Aaron both attack at once, leaving Frisk to get hit twice. HP at 6.

**Eat.** Frisk eats a CinnaBun, gaining them all their health back. Until they lose 4 of it in the next attack. They flex at Aaron again, which should make this next one the last. Yep, in Aaron’s next flex, he flexes himself out of the room. Easy-peasy. Now we just have to deal with Woshua. **Hey, Frisk. Want to do something funny?**

*Um, sure?*

**You tell a joke about two kids who played in a muddy flower garden.**

*What?*

**Just do it!** I chuckle.

“O-ok. There were two kids, and they played in a muddy-”

“NO! THAT JOKES TOO... DIRTY!” Woshua cuts them off.

**You tell a joke about a kid who ate a pie with their bare hands.**

“There was a kid who-”

“NO!” Woshua yells, not wanting to hear any more ‘jokes.’ That’s too bad, I still have one more.

**You tell a joke about a kid who slept in the soil.**

“There-”

“NO!”

Alright, I’ve had my fun. You can ask it to clean you now, and spare it.

*You have a really weird sense of humor, Chara.*
Believe me, I know. We continue down the lit up path, and tap the next mushroom. You said you wanted to go to Temmie Village?

Yes! Is it around here?

Yup. Are you sure you want to go?

Definitely.

Alright, go back to the beginning. There’s a new mushroom to tap, go do that. They walk back to the beginning, tap the mushroom, and go back to where we were. A new path is opened, see? Go down there, and you’re in Temmie Village. Welcome to the worst part of the underground.

Oh! There’s so many Temmies!

Hoo boy. Here we go. Frisk points at a sign, which I read for them. Ugh, I don’t want to do the voice. Hoi. Welcome to… Tem Village! I could have said that with more enthusiasm, but… Eh. Frisk greets the first Temmie they see, who greets them in return.

“hOi!! im temmie!!! and dis is my friend… temmie!!!” She says. This is going to be a long detour, isn’t it.

“hOi!!! im temmie!!! and dis is my friend… temmie!!!”

“hOi!! im temmie!!! dont forget my friend!” We look expently at the last Temmie.

“Hi. I’m Bob.”

...What? Not Temmie?

Nope. That’s Bob.

...Alright. We look behind the Tems and examine the elaborate painting on the wall. It looks like there’s a dragon facing off with a Tem.

Rich history of Tem.

That’s all you got?

I don’t know a lot about Tems. They’re pretty mysterious, to be honest. Frisk shrugs, and points my eyes in the direction of some signs outside an alcove in the wall. Hoi! You should check out… Tem shop!

I may not be able to read very well, but I’m pretty sure that’s not what it says.

It’s written in Tem language, a weird twist on English. I’m not going to read it as it’s written, so don’t even ask.

What does the other sign say?

Yaya, I agrees, should check Tem Shop.

It sounds so broken.
It makes more sense when Tems are saying it. I can’t speak Tem very well at all, I can barely read it. We notice a Tem eying us, smiling excitedly.

“Hello!” Frisk says.

“awawawawah!! humans... such a… CUTE!!!!” Temmie says.

“Thank you!” Frisk says, blushing. They notice a Temmie standing watch over an egg, and raise their eyebrows questioningly at her.

“tem... WATCH EGG!!! eg... WIL HATCH!!! tem... PROUD PARENT!!” She says.

What kind of egg is it? Frisk asks me.

It’s hard boiled. Frisk snickers.

That’s sad. They decide to investigate a mushroom with a friendly face. It starts to sing?

“Mushroom dance, mushroom dance. Whatever could it mean?” The mushroom raises its hood to reveal its eyes, which look like they’re seen a lot in its life. “It symbolizes my inner torment, trapped here by my hyphae. My struggle to pull away. My struggle to escape. But alas, to no avail.” It lowers its hood again.

What’s a hyphae?

The structure of a mushroom. The stem, I think.

Neat. What’s this Tem doing over here?

I don’t know, but I’m sure we’ll find out, I say as Frisk reaches out and strokes her head, unsure if that’s rude or not.

“p... tem heard human allergics to tem… dat OK. tem understan… tem… ALSO allergic to tem!!!” Her face starts to get hives, which is… kind of gross. “hOIVES!”

Tem Shop? Frisk asks, going back over to the alcove.

Feeling of being watched.

What?

Nothing. I brace myself for the Tem Shop, which is pretty much just as bad as I feared. The shopkeeper has loud music playing, and is gently vibrating with excitement.

“hOI! Welcom to… da TEM SHOP!!!”

Pretty sure you can sell stuff here.

I’ll keep my stuff, thanks. “What can I buy?”

“tem flake- 3g. tem flake (ON SALE)- 1g. tem flake (expensiv)- 20g. tem pay 4 colleg- 1000g.” Temmie explains.

“Oh, I would love to pay for college. Pretty sure I don’t have the money, though.” Frisk adds silently, What do tem flakes do?
Tem flakes heal 2 HP no matter the price, and you have 361 gold. Not near enough.

...Shouldn’t have played the snail race so many times.

Would you let go of that?

Nope. If you sell some stuff we can have more money.

I guess I’ll look at what we have… “I’m good, thanks. I’ll come back later, though!” Frisk tells Temmie.

“bOI!!” Temmie says. We go back out into the main part of Temmie Village, and look into the box.

I’m not getting rid of any clothes or weapons, though.

Why not? We don’t need them.

I don’t know, I feel like they belong to someone. It would be rude to sell them or throw them away.

But Frisk, the money! Don’t you want to pay for college?

Jeez, I’m looking at my stuff now!

I know, we share eyes. Frisk rolls our eyes in response, and investigates possible items to sell.

I don’t want to sell any of this, They admit. They sound a little guilty, probably since they can’t afford Temmie’s college. It’s all either food or clothes. We need that stuff.

We really don’t, but have it your way. While we’re here, though, let’s put the tutu back on. It’s better for defense.

And it matches the shoes! Frisk seems happy with this, and slide the tutu on. They put the Manly Bandanna back into the box, and consider reorganizing. Let’s put all the clothes in the box, since we won’t need them immediately, and keep all the food with us.

Sounds good, as long as we get out of here soon. I’m slowly but surely reaching my limit of Tem. We end up having exactly 8 food items, so we put the pie and the snowman piece in the box with the clothes. We’re still running out of room. Surprisingly, there’s a SAVE point here. You feel… something. You’re filled with determination, whatever that means.

It means… something. Frisk says. I’m pretty sure they’re mocking me. We leave Temmie Village, and go back into the crystal room. Frisk still has to take a minute to look around in awe, since this area of Waterfall is so pretty.

Ok, if we backtrack, then we can move on. And never come back here again. Frisk laughs but otherwise doesn’t comment. We traverse the rest of the room, and move into the next room.

Sign?

‘Without candles or magic to guide them Home, the monsters used crystals to navigate.’

Crystals?

The crystals in the floor need a tiny bit of light to absorb and amplify. This room’s harder than the last one, since that one had a natural light source. So, we need to light every lantern and make it to the next one as fast as possible.
Why can’t we just light one and be done?

They burn out pretty quickly, so if you want to see… We light the first lantern. The path lights up, and we head down. Lots of paths branch off, and it’s easy to see how lost we would get without any light.

You know what?

What?

I don’t think I need to see to get through this.

What do you mean? I told you, if we step off the path we fall into the void.

Yeah, but I can sense the path with my Soul. We stop walking. Here, see if you can feel it too. Frisk puts their hand over their heart, and then gives me the control of that hand. Can you feel it? That’s how I get around when you’re not here. It kind of feels like the heart is sending out pulses with every beat, and the pulses hit anything in their path, such as the ground. Or, they just travel through the empty air.

You’re a bat, I decide.

Um... I guess?

That’s how bats see.

I know. But it’s also how blind kids with powerful Souls see. The lantern dims, and now there’s no light to reflect off the crystals. It’s pitch black, and even when I wave the hand I still have control over in front of out face, I can’t see it at all. Just let me handle this.

Are you sure you can do it? You won’t fall?

Relax, I’ve been doing this for like, 5 years. It’ll be fine, trust me.

...Alright. They close their eyes, effectively cutting off both of our visuals. Not that there were any, but now even if there is some sort of visual, it’s gone now.... It would be bad to be attacked in here, wouldn’t it?

See? It’s fine.

No, I don’t see.

That was terrible. You should be ashamed. Frisk takes deep breaths, eyes closed, using their Soul to navigate their way around the area. Not once do we come close to falling. We do get lost several times, however, and hit a lot of dead ends. It takes a while, but at least we don’t have to focus on lighting any lanterns. It’s probably quicker this way.

We enter a FIGHT somewhere along the way. The monsters, Woshua and Aaron, look vaguely uncomfortable in the dark, but it’s Frisk’s element.

I don’t want to fight these guys.

Can I just leave? Is that how fights work?

Yeah, we can flee. Frisk does so, and we just dodge around them and continue on our way. I’m
outta here.

The next room doesn’t have any lanterns. Frisk splashes into some water with surprise, since they hadn’t seen it coming. They almost trip, and then laugh in surprise.

**Careful. There’s no light in here, either, so just… keep doing what you’re doing.** It’s weird for them to be in charge. I’m normally the one directing where we go and what’s happening, but now Frisk has to be the guide. They stumble over a ledge leading out of the water, but brush themselves off and continue. We reach the end of the hallway, evidenced by Frisk’s hand tapping the wall as the held it out in front of them.

*There’s an echo flower here,* Frisk says, and taps the flower. I would have never known it was there if they hadn’t pointed it out.

“Behind you,” The flower says. Frisk whips around, and behind their eyelids I can tell that the room was suddenly lit and seeable.

**That’s probably Undyne, let’s start using eyes again!** I warn in a rush. They open their eyes, and I see Undyne walking slowly towards us, taking her time, since there’s nowhere for us to go. To our right is a patch of grass, but she’s already spotted us.

“Seven,” Undyne says casually. “Seven human souls. With the power of seven human souls, our king… King Asgore Dreemurr… will become a god. With that power, Asgore can finally shatter the barrier. He will finally take the surface back from humanity… And give them back the suffering and pain we have endured.”

“That’s not very nice-” Frisk starts.

“Understand, human? This is your only chance at redemption. Give up your Soul… Or I’ll tear it from your body.”

**We are screwed,** I observe. This is not good. I would swear, but Frisk would be mad. Though I feel that this is worth it. Undyne adopts a fighting stance, materializing a spear in her hands. She marches towards us…

With a rustle in the grass, Monster Kid pops out. “Undyne!!! I’ll help you fight!!!” They look around, confused. They’re very clueless, aren’t they? But they’re standing between us and the spear, which I’m thankful for. They turn to us, and get excited again. “YO!!! You did it!!! Undyne is RIGHT in front of you!!! You’ve got front row seats to her fight!!!” They look around expectantly, and grow confused again. “...Wait. Who’s she fighting???” Undyne sighs in annoyance, and takes Monster Kid by the horn on the back of their head. “H-hey! You aren’t gonna tell my parents about this, are you?” They’re pulled away, leaving us safe for now.

Frisk let out a breath of relief, and sagged against the wall. That could have ended up really bad.

**Yeah. But if we die, then we can just reload, right?**

*I guess, but then we’d just die again and again.*

**We could get it eventually. But, you know… We could always just kill her. That would work.**

*No. How many times do I have to say it, we aren’t killing anyone!*

**But what if showing her mercy doesn’t work? What happens if we meet a relentless killer?**
We’ll just die, over and over and over again. What do we do then?

We could call for help, but I don’t think that we’ll ever be in that situation. Let’s be done talking about this, ok? We didn’t even end up fighting her, we’re safe!

For now… I think bitterly, but drop the subject. Now that there’s light in here, a path of crystals has shown up. Frisk hops into the shallow water, and climbs onto the crystal path, which turns out to be a bridge over to more water. There’s echo flowers dispersed throughout the room. Frisk taps the first one, letting us hear a passing conversation.

“...hmm… if I say my wish… You promise you won’t laugh at me?” It’s the same conversation we heard way earlier in Waterfall, which is weird. Maybe these two talk really slow?

“Of course I won’t laugh!” The next echo flower says.

“Someday, I’d like to climb this mountain we’re all buried under. Standing under the sky, looking at the world all around... That’s my wish.” The echo after that is full of laughter. “...hey, you said you wouldn’t laugh at it!”

“Sorry, it’s just funny… That’s my wish, too.” Frisk awws, and I groan. That was really cheesy. Cute, I’ll admit, but cheesy. Frisk points to a nearby sign on the wall, and I read it.

‘However… There is a prophecy. The Angel… The One Who Has Seen The Surface… They will return. And the underground will go empty.’

You said the prophecy was probably about me?

Yeah, why?

It said that they will return. I’ve never been here, how could I return?

Dunno. Maybe when we get out, we’ll come back and save everyone. Or kill everyone, either way the underground will go empty, like it said.

Or maybe… First of all, we aren’t killing anyone, but second of all… Maybe the prophecy is about you?

What?

know you lived here. And I know you died, Frisk explains. My thoughts are racing, trying to hold in any secrets I might have. So now you’ve returned.

But it’s not me! It’s you! You’re the one doing things, you’re the one who’s going to save everyone! This is your adventure.

You’re here too, though. You’ve helped everything that I’ve done. Maybe it’s a team effort.

I guess… We walk further, into a room with a bridge over a gaping chasm in the rocks. We carefully move across it, noticing and avoiding a loose board that we could fall down. We reach the end of the bridge, and hear a voice behind us.

“Yo!” We turn around to see Monster Kid, back from wherever they went with Undyne. They walk towards us, a little hesitantly. “Yo, I know I’m not supposed to be here, but… I wanna ask you something. ...Man, I’ve never had to ask anyone this before… Um… Yo… You’re human, right?
“...Yeah...” Frisk admits. I probably would have advised against it, but I’m pretty sure it wouldn’t have made a difference.

“Man! I knew it! ...well, I know it now, I mean... Undyne told me, um, ‘stay away from that human.'” They pause, trying to figure out what to say next. This seems really hard for them, which is weird. “So, like, ummm... I guess that makes us enemies or something. But I kinda stink at that, haha. Yo, say something mean so I can hate you? Please?”

“No, of course not!” Frisk protests.

“Yo, what? So I have to do it? Here goes nothing... Yo, I... I hate your guts.”

**Harsh.** I think sarcastically. Frisk actually does seem a little upset about it, though.

“...Man, I... I’m such a turd. I’m... I’m gonna go home now.” Monster Kid backs away, and spins around to start running. Frisk raises a hand to stop them, but they don’t get the chance. Monster Kid trips, and falls, over the loose board we noticed earlier. They land on a narrow supporting beam below, swaying to try to balance. “Yo, w-w-wait! Help! I tripped!” As they say this, Undyne rounds the corner, pausing to take in the situation.

We have to leave them! We need to get out of here! **I** say, trying to force Frisk’s legs to move.

*I am not leaving them.* Frisk’s face is set, and they run over to Monster Kid, pulling them up. We take a step to leave, but Monster Kid jumps and turns to Undyne. We hang back, curious but ready to run.

“Y... y.... Yo... dude... If y-you wanna hurt my friend... You’re gonna have to get through me, first,” Monster Kid says.

*That’s so sweet! We’re gonna live!* Frisk smiles warmly at their new friend, immensely proud of them. To my surprise, Undyne starts to back away. Then she turns and leaves. I wish I could see her expression under her helmet.

“She’s gone... Yo, you really saved my skin. Guess being enemies was just a nice thought, haha. We’ll just have to be friends, instead. ...man, I should REALLY go home... I bet my parents are worried sick about me!” They start to go back the way we came from, and turn back for one last comment. “Later, dude!” They run off, not tripping for once.

...Wow, I can’t believe she just let us go like that.

*She doesn’t hurt innocent people, remember?*

**I guess, but that shouldn’t have stopped her from moving MK out of the way.**

*Maybe she’s had a change of heart.* We walk over another small bridge, and arrive at the base of a cavernous mountain. *This looks fun.* The mountain makes me uneasy. It looks pretty foreboding, even though I’ve been here before. It’s different now, more weathered, more sinister looking.

We hear a noise from the top of the mountain. Armour. Frisk slowly looks up, and freezes when they see Undyne standing on the top of the peak. “Seven,” She says. “Seven human souls, and King Asgore will become a god. Six. That’s how many we have collected thus far.”

**Six?** I think in shock. How long was I dead?! Frisk was supposed to be the second human to ever
fall down here, and now I’m being told they’re the eighth?! Frisk notes my shock with concern, but needs to concentrate on Undyne for now.

“Understand? Through your seventh and final soul, this world will be transformed. First, however, as is customary for those who make it this far… I shall tell you the tragic tale of our people.” Undyne says, and take a deep breath. I groan silently. I already know this, and thanks to the signs throughout Waterfall, Frisk knows it too. “It all started, long ago…” She trails off, and looks thoughtful from what I can tell through the armour. “No, you know what? SCREW IT!” She suddenly shouts, making Frisk jump.

“Calm down, maybe…” Frisk says quietly, too afraid to speak up.

“WHY SHOULD I TELL THAT STORY WHEN YOU’RE ABOUT TO DIE!!! NGAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!” With a war cry, she turns throws off her helmet, which lands somewhere among the rocks below. Her eyes gleam as she turns back to us… I mean, eye. Singular. Undyne wears an eyepatch over her left eye, and her bright red hair in a pony tail, looking like the plume of an old roman helmet.

Woah… Frisk thinks, awestruck.

Now is not the time for flirting.

I wasn’t-

I can literally read your mind, don’t play that game with me.

“YOU!” Undyne yells, making Frisk jump again. “You’re standing in the way of everyone’s hopes and dreams! Alphys’s history books made me think humans were cool… with their giant robots and flowery swordswomen.”

Is that what monsters think humanity is like? If I’m being honest, that sounds more like a bad anime than what humanity is really like. Life would be easier in an anime.

“But YOU?” Frisk and I silently agree that Undyne should stop yelling. “You’re just a coward! Hiding behind that kid so you could run away from me again! And let’s not forget your wimpy goody-two-shoes-schtick!” Her voice goes into falsetto, making an insulting impression of Frisk. “Oooh! I’m making such a difference by hugging random strangers! You know what would be more valuable to everyone? IF YOU WERE DEAD!!!”

All right, she’s officially the first actually mean monster down here. Besides Flowey, I guess. And Sans. But yeah, she’s definitely the rudest.

I still have hope that we can be friends.

You might want to let that one go. You can’t save them all, right? Frisk obviously disagrees, but doesn’t feel like arguing right now.

“That’s right, human! Your continued existence is a crime! Your life is all that stands between us and our freedom! Right now, I can feel everyone’s hearts pounding together! Everyone’s been waiting their whole lives for this moment! But we’re not nervous at all. When everyone puts their hearts together, they can’t lose! Now, human! Let’s end this, right here, right now. I’ll show you how determined monsters can be! Step forward when you’re ready! Fuhuhuhu!” Undyne leers down at us from the top of the mountain. I see a shimmer next to us, where there definitely wasn’t one before. A SAVE point.
The wind is howling. You’re filled with determination…

*Yep, I’m not going to leave here until we’re friends.*

We’re going to be here a long time, aren’t we? Either just kill her or keep running.

*I’m kind of thinking that maybe Undyne’s right, though?*

**About what?**

They only need one more soul, and when’s the next time someone will fall down here? Maybe I should just give up, and let them take it.

*Out of the question!* ...Hey, what if I told you that I had a plan?

*And what would your plan be?*

Well, if we make it out of here… Past the barrier, and back into the human world, then maybe… We could take another human’s soul, some back here, and give it to the monsters.

*I don’t want to hurt anyone.*

Then I’ll do it! We can kill a really mean human, and then everyone will go free, and you’ll still be alive. It’s a good plan, but you have to commit. I’m aware that this plan has failed before, but I think, maybe since it’s just one soul instead of seven, then it could work. And so far, Frisk might be a little more reliable than Asriel was.

*Chara, I don’t know if I want to do that.*

**Well, we’re not going to just give up and lose to Undyne!**

*Alright, I’ll try to keep the death count low.*

**Just kill her.**

*No!*

It’s not that hard, and it’s the one solution I’m positive will work.

*Hey, can we maybe not fight for once? I’m going to need your help with this!*

I guess. Undyne looks confused, probably because we’ve been standing here silently for longer than is normal. We step towards her, ready to run. It’s lucky that we’re able to flee battles, since that’s probably what we’ll be doing mostly.

“That’s it, then…! No more running away! HERE I COME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” Undyne descends from the mountaintop, brandishing a blue spear. As we enter the FIGHT, she swipes her spear over Frisk, and their heart turns bright green.

*Why is my soul green?*

**Probably special attacks, like Papyrus’s.**

“En guarde!” She says.
“Check!”

Undyne attack 7 defense 0. The heroine that NEVER gives up.

“As long as you’re GREEN, you CAN’T ESCAPE! Unless you learn to face danger head-on… You won’t last a SECOND against ME!”

Chara, I can’t move my legs.

That is concerning.

I’m serious! You want to try? I try to take control and move their legs, but to no avail. Undyne tosses us a spear. What is this for?!

Block with it! My warning comes just in time, as a spear from above. Frisk holds the spear above their head, and deflects Undyne’s magic spear. It dissolves, but more follow it.

What now?

Don’t know. My running away plan has failed. You could try begging for mercy.

“Please, Undyne, I don’t want to fight!” Frisk pleads. But nothing happened.

“Not bad! Then how about THIS!?” More spears appear, a couple above, a couple to the right, and a couple to the left. Frisk spins their spear, and somehow manages to deflect them all through wild flailing. Then Undyne suplexes a huge boulder, just because she can.

“Your attacks are too easy!” I say, taking some control. If pleading isn’t the way to go, then maybe the opposite would work? Frisk gasps and covers their mouth, but the damage has been done. Apparently I was wrong. Undyne’s attacks get faster, and we lose 3 HP.

“For years, we’ve dreamed of a happy ending.” Undyne thinks of her friends and pounds the ground with her fists. “And now, sunlight is just within our reach!

Frisk, you’re doing great! I compliment. They’ve only gotten hit once, which is pretty impressive I think.

Thanks!

“I won’t let you snatch it away from us!” Frisk spares Undyne, but she seems to only get angrier. “NGAHHH! Enough warming up!” She seems tired. But, her attacks start to fly towards us very quickly, and unfortunately Frisk panics. They get hit a lot, losing 6 HP. With a sigh, Undyne swipes her spear over us again, turning us back to red. Any noticeable strain on her face disappears. She sends one last spear at us, but Frisk doesn’t move out of the way fast enough, and now we’re at 9 HP.

Let’s run now! I say. My plan is back in action.

Ok! Frisk flees the fight, and I propel them faster down the tunnel leading to Hotland. We only make it a little further before Undyne blocks us with her spear, quickly turning us green again.

“You won’t get away from me this time! Honestly, I’m doing you a favor… No human has EVER made it past Asgore! Killing you now is an act of mercy! So STOP being so damn resilient!” She unsticks Frisk from the ground, and launches another spear at us, which we get hit by again, bringing our health down to 7. We should eat soon. But first we should run!
Keeping you green takes a lot of energy, so we just need to wear her down. And also run. Frisk dashes out of the way, trying to run in a zig zag to keep Undyne from catching us. We turn a corner and make it to the Hotland welcome sign, but don’t have time to take it in before she catches up to us.

“You’ve escaped me for the LAST time!” Undyne bounces impatiently. “Alphys told me humans were determined…” Her attacks switch up, using a golden spear. Frisk is set to deflect it, but at the last second it swings around to the other side, nailing them hard on the back. I focus on not controlling anything except for the eyes again, so that I won’t feel as much of the pain. “I see now what she meant by that!” There’s more golden spears, but now Frisk can expect them to flip to the other side, and reacts accordingly. “But I’m determined, too!"

Trust me, you’re not nearly as determined as us! I taunt silently. Can you come back from the dead? ...Didn’t think so.

Don’t threaten her.

She can’t hear me!

So why are you saying it?!

...Touche. But I’m not going to stop! Her attacks this turn are all gold, making it very disorienting. We’re hit only once, though, dropping our HP to 5.

“...Determined to end this RIGHT NOW!” She shouts. She attacks intensely, but only hits us once. Frisk is very exhausted at this point. “...RIGHT NOW!” The spears come in various lengths, and throw Frisk off the rhythm. “...RIGHT… ...NOW!” They get faster, but we’re able to make it by one more turn.

Undyne turns out to be right. We get hit one more time and then...

GAME OVER

~~~
You cannot give up just yet… Chara! Stay determined…
~~~

I wake up before Frisk, lying on the ground in front of the cave’s entrance. Undyne looks down on us from the top, and I quickly jump to my feet. Frisk wakes up a couple seconds later, a little disoriented.

Back here again? They ask sleepily.

Yep. Right back into the fire. We walk into the tunnel, resigned to our fate. Hey, you okay?

Yeah, but really tired.

When’s the last time you slept?

Um… When Undyne broke the bridge and we fell.

No wonder you’re tired, that was a while ago.

But we have to keep going. We have to make friends with Undyne.
But can you even do that without any sleep?

Yes. I am determined. I can’t argue with that.

“That’s it, then…! No more running away! HERE I COME!!!” As was sure to happen, Undyne comes down at us from above, attempting to drive a spear through our head. It’s very rude of her. But I can’t really blame her, because humans are the reason for her entire kind being trapped underground. “En guarde!”

All we have to do is survive long enough for her to turn us back red, and then we can keep running. Sound good?

Yeah, sure. It’s the survival part that I’m worried about. They dodge her attacks well, and don’t lose a lot of health. Eventually she gets tired and drops the green paralysis, giving us a chance to run again. For some reason, Frisk is the slowest child I’ve ever met, and Undyne catches us not long after.

“You won’t get away from me this time!” Undyne says, but she ends up being wrong. We wear her down a bit, and keep running. We round the corner to Hotland this time. “You’ve escaped me for the LAST time!”

Keep telling yourself that, Undyne. It’ll come true someday.

Hopefully not! We don’t start taking hits until she sends the spears much faster than before.

“RIGHT NOW!” Undyne says, with the intention of ending the fight this turn. It doesn’t work, we’re still alive. “…RIGHT… …NOW!!” And now we’re at the point where we died last time. Luckily, we still have 15 HP, and we haven’t eaten anything yet. ...Scratch that, now we have 10 HP. These spears are really fast! “Ha…Ha… NGAAHHH!!! DIE ALREADY, YOU LITTLE BRAT!” Undyne yells in frustration.

Wow, that’s got to be the meanest thing a monster’s ever said to me. Most are pretty friendly. It really stung, yeah. The spears are all golden again, and Frisk can’t spin around fast enough to counter all of them. And then we die. Again.

GAME OVER

~~~

You cannot give up just yet… Chara! Stay determined!

~~~

This is fine, I grumble. This sucks. I just want to beat her already. We enter the fight again, but we don’t do a lot better. Eventually we get back to the stage of battle where we left off.

HP at 5, but we’re red again.

Hmm, run or eat?

Run! We’ll eat as soon as we can after that! Frisk says, dashing around Undyne. Then, of all the timing, the phone rings. Frisk stops in shock, and luckily, so does Undyne.

“HEY! WHAT’S UP!?” Papyrus’s voice calls. “I WAS JUST THINKING… YOU, ME, AND UNDYNE SHOULD ALL HANG OUT SOMETIME! I THINK YOU WOULD MAKE GREAT PALS. LET’S MEET UP AT HER HOUSE LATER!” Papyrus hangs up.
Of all the times! I shout in frustration as Frisk starts to run again. Of course, Undyne reaches us in no time at all, and now she seems really mad.

“STOP RUNNING AWAY!!!!” She yells. But it seems she forgot to turn us green again, so we just start running, despite her attempts to attack. We make it past the Welcome to Hotland sign, and see… Sans? He’s asleep in a sentry post.

“Sans! Sans, please help!” Frisk calls. He doesn’t move. Frisk makes a move to shake him, but I wrench them away to keep running over a narrow bridge over lava. I dare to look behind us to see that Undyne was also distracted by Sans, and she looks very angry with him. But she apparently decides to ignore him for now, and continues after us.

She looks tired. This will end soon. Undyne pants in her armour, and even Frisk is uncomfortable in the sudden heat. I mean, they are wearing a sweater.

She’s a fish, she can’t survive long here!

Don’t tell me you’re worried about her. Frisk doesn’t respond, and instead turns to check on Undyne. She’s a little bit behind us, and she looks… bad. Like, imminent death bad. She glares at us, and then collapses on the ground.

“Undyne!” Frisk yells in shock. They look around frantically, and spot a water cooler.

Frisk, maybe this is for the best.

It’s not! She’s going to die! They run to the water, and fill up a cup. She’s a fish, right? Should I just… Splash it on her?

I think that we should just leave her.

Alright, I’ll take that as a yes. Frisk pours the water over Undyne’s face, making her blink. Looking around disorientedly, she sees Frisk’s concerned face, and her eye widens. She stands up, watching us closely, and backs away.

Huh. That didn’t backfire like I thought it would.

See? Being nice gets you places!

Hmph. I’m not sure that I agree with Frisk, but I let it go for now. Anyways, welcome to Hotland.

Is it hot?

Very.

Great.

End of part 3

Chapter End Notes

Sorrryyyyy for not updating yesterday it was my birthday and I was busyyyy...
Next time: Intermission- Babysitting gone wrong
Chapter 17- This is by far Frisk’s worst idea ever

Intermission

We walk forwards, and see a laboratory. Turning, we can see two heavily armoured guards blocking the way to the elevator. And a shimmer on the ground.

Seeing such a strange laboratory in a place like this… You’re filled with determination.

Imma talk to the guards.

Probably not the best idea. But when has Frisk ever listened to my warnings? They wave hello to a guard.

“Sorry, UNDYNE, like, told us there was totally a human in the area. So, like, us Royal Guards are blocking off the elevators for now. Ngah! Even if the elevators aren’t working anyway, we’ll do our best, Ms. Undyne!”

Frisk turns to the other guard. He doesn’t say anything. They poke him. “…what?” He sounds pretty grumpy, so we don’t bother him anymore.

It’s amazing how many monsters have never seen a human.

Yeah, it’s actually kind of weird.

You lived here before, right? How come no one recognizes what a human looks like?

Apparently I’ve been dead for longer than I thought. I have no clue exactly how long, though. There’s definitely some people here who are old enough to remember me, anyway.

Maybe you could talk to them again, through me?

No thanks. They probably don’t want to see me again.

I’m sure they do!

But they’ve already grieved, they’re over it. It wouldn’t help them or me. We approach the lab, but spot a path leading south. Should we check that out first?

Probably. We go down the trail, and see a cloaked figure manning a boat that looked more like a canoe of some sort. “…Hello?”

“Tra la la. I am the Riverman. Or am I the Riverwoman…? It doesn’t really matter. I love to ride in my boat. Would you care to join me?” They ask.

“Um, sure,” Frisk says hesitantly. They carefully step into the boat, sitting on a small bench. The riverperson pushes off the shore.

“Where will we go today?” They ask.
Should we try Undyne’s house? Papyrus said to meet him there.

That’s a horrible idea.

“Waterfall, please.”

Ugh. You’re hopeless. We sail down the river, towards our certain death. I don’t know why Frisk would think that this could end well, but it looks like they’re going to try to make friends, even if it kills them. Which it likely will.

“Tra la la. The angel is coming… Tra la la,” The riverperson says.

What?

They always say something cryptic when on the boat. It’s not really supposed to mean anything.

Are you sure? That sounded like it means something.

I don’t know, it might. We dock in waterfall, in the spot that Frisk had pointed out earlier. We carefully step off the boat, and wave to the riverperson.

“Come again some time. Tra la la.” They speak in a drone, without any emotion. They will always be a mystery. We walk past Gerson’s shop, and find ourselves back in the residential area of Waterfall, by Napstablook’s home and farm.

Well, as far as I know these are the only actual houses in Waterfall, so chances are she lives here.

And since the center and right ones lead to Napstablook, then her’s must be on the left.

Yep. Good job. Oh, hey, and since there’s a SAVE point right here, we’d better save, in case we die.

I don’t think we’ll die. But that’s a good idea anyways, in case it goes south and we need to reload. So after saving, we go up that path and see a nervous Papyrus lurking. There’s some nice piano music coming from inside the house, which is shaped like a giant fish.

“OHO! THE HUMAN ARRIVES! ARE YOU READY TO HANG OUT WITH UNDYNE? I HAVE A PLAN TO MAKE YOU TWO GREAT FRIENDS!” He says.

“Yeah! Sounds great!” Frisk grins at Papyrus, delighted that they’re on the same page. I still think that this is a horrible idea.

“OKAY! STAND BEHIND ME!” He turns to knock on the door, but looks at us over his shoulder. “PSST! MAKE SURE TO GIVE HER THIS!” He stage whispers, and holds up a dog bone with a red ribbon tied around it. “SHE LOVES THESE!” He pockets the bone, and knocks on the door. Undyne opens it with a sour expression on her face. She brightens when she sees Papyrus, though.

“Hi, Papyrus! Ready for your extra-private, one-on-one training?”

“YOU BET I AM! AND I BROUGHT A FRIEND!” He steps to the side, gesturing to us with a huge grin.

“Hi, I don’t think we’ve…” She trails off, and looks at Papyrus in confusion. But Undyne-confusion
is more like anger. Papyrus looks back at her nervously. She grits her teeth. "Why don’t. You two. Come in?" I can tell that she’s making an effort to stay polite, but I’m still concerned that we’re walking to our death.

Papyrus fidgets nervously, and follows her inside. **Now’s the time to run, Frisk. Your last chance.**

*No, I'm seeing this through.* They step inside, revealing what a person like Undyne lives like. It’s nice. The walls and floors are pastel blues and yellows and pinks, there’s some purple rugs, a piano, and a lace doily on the table. It’s kind of like a smaller apartment, with the kitchen, living room, and dining room combined into one, and there’s one door off to the side, possibly leading to a bedroom. All in all, a lot nicer than what I was expecting. Undyne stands by the kitchen counter, not taking her eye off of us.

“*HERE, UNDYNE. MY FRIEND BROUGHT A GIFT FOR YOU, ON THEIR OWN!*” Papyrus tossed the gift-wrapped bow to her, which she catches easily.

“Uhhh… Thanks. I’ll, uh, put it with the others.” She opens a drawer packed with identical dog bones, and deposits the newest one. If Papyrus thinks he’s fooling her, he’d be wrong. “So are we ready to start?”

“*WOOPSY DOOPSY! I JUST REMEMBERED! I HAVE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM!! YOU TWO HAVE FUN!!!*”

**Papyrus, no, don’t leave, you’re the only reason we aren’t dead yet!** My silent plea comes too late, as Papyrus jumps out the freaking window.

Alright, he doesn’t exactly jump, it’s more of… -Flying? Floating- End over end through the air. And then through the window. It’s not even an open window, he just shattered the glass! **What the actual heck, Papyrus?!**

*We’re dead, aren’t we?*

**So you finally see what a bad idea this is!** Undyne looks between us and the window, and looks like she’s feeling about the same things I’m feeling.

“...So why are YOU here? To rub your victory in my face? To humiliate me even further? *IS THAT IT?*”

“No!”

“Then why are you here? …! Wait, I get it. You think that I’m gonna be friends with you, huh? Right???” She smiles, but I can tell that it’s a sarcastic smile. Like she’s pitying us or something.

“Yes!” Frisk’s smile grows, since it looks like their wishes are coming true. But I doubt it.

“Really? How delightful!! I accept! Let’s all frolick in the fields of friendship!”

“Really!?” Frisk asks in surprise. Poor kid.

“NOT! Why would I EVER be friends with YOU!?” Undyne looks mad again. Frisk’s face falls, and I can almost feel their heart breaking. “*If you weren’t my houseguest, I’d beat you up right now! You’re the enemy of everyone’s hopes and dreams! I WILL NEVER BE YOUR FRIEND. Now get out of my house!*”

“But…” Frisk’s eyes are actually stinging, and it’s the most pitiful thing I’ve ever witnessed. I try not
to be amused, because I actually feel pretty bad for them. We hear someone clearing his throat from
the broken window. Undyne and Frisk both look over, and Papyrus is poking his head through to
talk.

“DANG! WHAT A SHAME… I THOUGHT UNDYNE COULD BE FRIENDS WITH YOU
BUT I GUESS… I OVERESTIMATED HER. SHE’S JUST NOT UP TO THE CHALLENGE.”
He says.

That brilliant skeleton. He’s being so manipulative, and I’m proud.

“CHALLENGE!? What!? Papyrus! Wait a second…! ...Damn. He thinks I can’t be friends with
YOU!? Fuhuhu! What a joke! I could make friends with a wimpy loser like you any day! I’ll show
him!” Undyne sets her eye on us with a new fire. Papyrus’s plan is working fantastically. “Listen up,
human. We’re not just going to be friends. We’re going to be… BESTIES.” She says this with a
growl, in a very threatening way. Never mind, I don’t like this plan anymore and I’m scared. “I’ll
make you like me so much… You won’t be able to think about anyone else!!! Fuhuhuhu! It’s the
PERFECT REVENGE!!!” At least Frisk is happier now, if also terrified. Undyne’s demeanor
changes to one of a proud, hospitable homeowner. “Why don’t you take a seat?”

I never thought friendship could be so scary. This is scary.

Also your idea. Isn’t this what you wanted?

Shush. I’m still going to be her friend. Frisk walks over to the window Papyrus jumped through.
Undyne watches closely, and seems to decide that she’ll narrate for now.

“I can’t believe he lept through the window like that. Normally he NAILS the landing!”

“You play piano?” Frisk asks, pointing to the grand piano.

“Yeah. One time, Alphys’s… uh, friend??? Came over here. All he did was lie seductively on the
piano… and fed himself grapes. I don’t really like that guy. But I admire his lifestyle.”

He seems cool. I’d like to meet him. They start over to the single door on the left.

“You wanna see my room? TOO BAD! No nerds allowed! …well, maybe some nerds…” Undyne
blushes.

Ohhhh, she has a crush!

Or she’s dating someone. That was pretty, uh… I don’t know. Check out the sink? In the sink
is a teacup shaped like a fish. What about the oven?

“This oven is some top-of-the-line MTT thing. But, y’know, as much as technology advances…
Nothing beats food home-cooked with fire magic.”

Agreed. Oh, there’s a silverware drawer. It has forks, spoons, knives… tiny swords, spears,
axes, nunchucks…

Let’s look through the fridge?

“I hate cold food. So Alphys fixed up my fridge so it heats up food instead! Hot Fridge… The
world’s greatest invention!”

“Oh, you have a giant sword?” I ask in surprise. It’s leaning up against the wall.
“Yup. Humans suck, but their history… Kinda rules. Case in point: This giant sword! Historically, humans wielded swords up to 10x their size! RIGHT?”

“Oh, um. True,” Frisk says. I don’t want to make her mad or anything.

**Good plan. Play it safe.**

“Heh, I knew it! When I first heard that, I immediately wanted one! So me and Alphys built a giant sword together. She figured out all the specs herself… She’s smart, huh!?”

*Is it bad I have no idea who Alphys is?*

**Nah, I don’t know her either. But I think Papyrus mentioned her being a scientist.**

*Yeah, remember the lab in hotland? Maybe she lives there.*

**No, that’s where the royal scientist lives. The name Alphys doesn’t ring a bell, so…**

*She could be new?*

**Yeah, maybe.**

“It’s so nice to have you over! Why not take a seat at the table?” Undyne suggests. Frisk sits on a stool at the table, and looks back at Undyne. “Comfortable?”

“Yes,” Frisk answers.

“I’ll get you something to drink.” She moves to the fridge, and lays out several beverage options. “All set! What would you like?” Frisk starts to stand up, to grab a drink, but Undyne launches a spear at us, which splits the table down the middle. Frisk’s eyes go wide, and they sit back down in fear. “HEY!!! DON’T GET UP!!! YOU’RE THE GUEST!! SIT DOWN AND ENJOY YOURSELF!!! …Um, why not just point to what you want? You can use the spear!” Frisk picks up the spear, and looks at their options.

*What should I get?*

**Whatever you want, but the tea is the blatantly correct choice.**

*You like tea?*

**Yeah, it’s good.**

*What kind do I get?*

**Definitely the golden flower tea. It’s the best.** Frisk points the spear to the teabox.

“…tea, huh? Coming right up!” She puts a kettle on the stove, and gathers the teabox and some sugar. “It’ll take a moment for the water to boil.” We wait in awkward silence, and finally the kettle shoots out some steam. “Okay, it’s all done!” She grabs a cup with sugar and a tea bag in it and pours in the hot water. “Here we are,” She says, setting down the cup in front of us. It’s amazing that it doesn’t slide down the table, to where it’s broken in half. Maybe it’s an anti-gravity cup? Undyne sits down on the other side of the table.

*This is very uncomfortable. I don’t like this.*
It’s friendship, and it’s magical. Leave her alone, can’t you see how hard she’s trying?

Her ‘trying hard’ looks more like barely restraining from murder.

You’re one to talk! Frisk picks up the cup, and goes to take a sip.

“Careful, it’s hot,” Undyne warns. Frisk gently sets the cup back down. “It’s not THAT hot!! Just drink it already!” They jump and hurriedly take a sip of the tea. It’s burning, but other than that it’s pretty good. “It’s pretty good, right? Nothing but the best for my ABSOLUTELY PRECIOUS FRIEND!!”

Frisk nods. “This is good.”

“You know… It’s kind of strange that you chose THAT tea. Golden flower tea… That’s Asgore’s favorite kind.” Well, there goes my cover.

Asgore’s? How well did you know him?

How do you know I know him?

You’re always telling me that he’s nice and isn’t going to hurt anyone.

...Right. Well… Who doesn’t know him, he’s the king. Nice. I’m winning.

“Actually, now that I think about it… You kind of remind me of him. You’re both TOTAL weenies!!...sort of. Y’know, I was a pretty hotheaded kid. Once, to prove I was the strongest, I tried to fight Asgore. Emphasis on TRIED. I couldn’t land a single blow on him! And worse, the whole time, he refused to fight back!”

That sounds like him.

“I was so humiliated… Afterwards, he apologized and said something goofy… ‘Excuse me, do you want to know how to beat me?’ I said yes, and from then on, he trained me. One day, during practice, I finally knocked him down. I felt… bad. But he was beaming… I had never seen someone so proud to get their butt kicked.”

Chara, I really don’t want to fight him.

Me neither. But it looks like we’ll have to if we want to get out. Frisk silently whined a bit.

“Anyway, long story short… He kept training me. And now I’m the head of the Royal Guard! So I’m the one who gets to train dorks to fight! ...like, uh, Papyrus.” Her face gets a little more serious. It’s weird how even though we’re so different, we all care about Papyrus a lot. “But, um, to be honest… I don’t know if… I can ever let Papyrus into the Royal Guard. Don’t tell him I said that!”

I’m telling him.

Don’t.

“He’s just… well… I mean, it’s not that he’s weak. He’s actually pretty freaking tough! It’s just that… He’s… He’s too innocent and nice!!! I mean, look, he was SUPPOSED to capture you… And he ended up being FRIENDS with you instead! I could NEVER send him into battle. He’d get ripped into little smiling shreds. That’s part of why… I started teaching him how to cook, you know? So, um, maybe he can do something else with his life... “
“More tea?” Frisk asks politely, holding the empty cup.

“Oh, sorry, I was talking for so long… You’re out of tea. I’ll get you some more.” Undyne walks to the sink, then seems to be struck with a realization. “Wait a second. Papyrus… His cooking lesson… HE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE THAT RIGHT NOW!!! And if HE’S not here to have it…”

Oh no. I have a bad feeling.

“YOU’LL HAVE TO HAVE IT FOR HIM!!!”

Yep. This isn’t good. Our chances of getting out of here alive have decreased significantly.

Cooking is fun, though.

Do you see her face right now? We are so dead. And by we I mean you. I’m already dead.

Undyne leaps into the air, landing on the counter and dropping into a slide. She shoots across, knocking everything off onto the floor.

“That’s right!!! NOTHING has brought Papyrus and I closer than cooking! Which means if I give you his lesson… WE’LL BECOME CLOSER THAN YOU CAN EVER IMAGINE!!! Fuhuhu!!! Afraid!!?”

“Very!”

“We’re gonna be best friends!!!” She launches into the air again, landing right next to us. Frisk jumps at the sudden noise. Undyne grabs the back of Frisk’s shirt, and jumps across the room, carrying them with her,

Frisk you are literally going to die, right here and now!

Alright, I believe you! We land next to the counter, and Undyne sets us down.

“Let’s start with the sauce!!” She stomps her foot and some vegetables fall from the ceiling. We look up in curiosity.

“Do you keep vegetables in your ceiling?” I ask. She ignores me, too caught up in some kind of cooking adrenaline.

“Envision these vegetables as your greatest enemy! Now!! Pound them to dust with your fists!!”

So, how will you pound? Strongly or wimpy?

Um, wimpy? Frisk pets the vegetables in an affectionate manner.

“OH MY GOD!!! STOP PETTING THE ENEMY!!! I’ll show you how it’s done! NGAHHH!”

Undyne punches a tomato at full force, sending it and the other vegetables exploding against the wall. Her face gets covered in various vegetable remnants.

...Whoa! That was awesome.

If you say so. There’s tomato in my hair.

“Uhh, we’ll just scrape this into a bowl later. But for NOW!” She stomps her foot again, and a pot with a box of noodles falls from some compartment in the ceiling.
Seriously, why doesn’t she use cabinets?

*The ceiling’s more convenient?*

For her, maybe.

“...we add the noodles! Homemade noodles are the best! BUT I JUST BUY STORE-BRAND! THEY’RE THE CHEAPEST!!! NGAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!! ...Uhh, just put them in the pot.

How will you put them in? Fiercely or careful?

*Careful.*

Boring. They place the noodles in one at a time. They clank against the empty bottom.

“Nice??? Alright! Now it’s time to stir the pasta! As a general rule of thumb, the more you stir… THE BETTER IT IS! Ready? Let’s do it!” Undyne gestures to the wooden spoon sticking out of the dry noodles. Frisk takes it and gently stirs it. “Stir harder!” They go a little faster, casting a worried look at Undyne. “HARDER!” They use both hands, stirring faster.

**Full force, Frisk!**

*I’m trying!*

“HARDER!!!” Frisk is putting their whole body into it, but Undyne seems frustrated. “Ugh, let me do it!” She summons a spear and pounds the pot with it, leaving it dented and not good for cooking. She laughs. “Fuhuhuhu! That’s the stuff! Alright, now for the final step: TURN UP THE HEAT! Let the stovetop symbolize your passion! Let your hopes and dreams turn into burning fire! READY? Don’t hold anything back!!!”

**Careful, don’t put your arm over the pot.** Frisk can’t quite reach it, so they climb on the counter next to the stove. They turn the knob a little, and at Undyne’s encouraging smile, they turn it a little more. It goes full circle, and then keeps going.

“Is this broken?” Frisk asks. The flames seem to be much bigger than they should be.

“Hotter!”

“The fire-”

“HOTTER, DARNIT!”

“Undyne-” The fire completely encases the pot, and is growing.

“HOTTER!!!!!!” Frisk keeps turning it, nervously, and sure that this will not end well. “Wait, that’s too-” She yanks Frisk off of the counter and behind herself, blocking them from the oven. And that’s when it explodes, and catches the entire house on fire.

**Told you this was a bad idea.**

**Worth it.**

“Ah. Man, no wonder Papyrus sucks at cooking. ...So what’s next? Scrapbooking? Friendship bracelets? ...Oh, who am I kidding.” Undyne sighs. “I really screwed this up, didn’t I? I can’t force
you to like me, human. Some people just don’t get along with each other. I understand if you feel that way about me.”

“No, I still-”

“And if we can’t be friends… That’s okay. Because… If we’re not friends… IT MEANS I CAN DESTROY YOU WITHOUT REGRET!”

**Great. Survival chances have plummeted. You’re dead.** We enter a FIGHT.

“I’ve been defeated… My house is in shambles… I even failed to befriend you.”

*Is this really the best time? The house hasn’t stopped being on fire or anything.*

**Finish her quickly.** Frisk doesn’t respond, just sighs.

“That’s it. I don’t care if you’re my guest anymore. One final rematch! All out on both sides!!! IT’S THE ONLY WAY I CAN REGAIN MY LOST PRIDE!!! NOW COME ON! HIT ME WITH ALL YOU GOT! NGAHHHHH!!!” She’s mad again. Really mad, and determined.

**She’s letting you make the first attack.**

*Act. Um, fake attack?* Frisk pretends to swing at Undyne with all their might. Undyne looks absolutely shocked, and lowers her spear. *What, did I actually hurt her? Oh no!*

**Relax, you only did 1 damage.**

“What. That’s the best you can manage? Even attacking at full force… You just can’t muster any intent to hurt me, huh? …Heh, you know what?” She vanishes her spear, and seems to relax. “I don’t actually want to hurt you either.”

*Awwww!*

“At first, I hated your stupid saccharine schick, but… The way you hit me right now, it… Reminded me of someone I used to train with. Now I know you aren’t just some wimpy loser. You’re a wimpy loser with a big heart! Just like him…” Undyne looks away, thinking.

**At least she’s not dead set on murdering you any more.**

*The power of friendship, Chara. Also, that pun was terrible.*

“Listen, human. It seems that you and Asgore are fated to fight. But knowing him… He probably doesn’t want to. Talk to him. I’m sure you can persuade him to let you go home. Eventually, some mean human will fall down here… And I’ll take THEIR soul instead. That makes sense, right? Fuhuhu. Oh, and if you DO hurt Asgore… I’ll take the human souls… Cross the barrier… And beat the hell out of you! That’s what friends are for, right? Fuhuhu! Now let’s get the hell out of this flaming house!” Undyne slings an arm over Frisk’s shoulder, and they carefully walk out of the burning house together.

**Wow, look at her house!** The house is completely burnt black, making the fish look like it’s crying.

“Well, that was fun, huh? We’ll have to hang out another time…! But, uh, somewhere else I guess. In the meantime, I guess I’ll go hang with Papyrus. So if you need me, drop by Snowdin, OK!?! OH! And if you ever need help… Just give Papyrus a ring, ok? Since we’re in the same spot, I’ll be able to talk too! Well, see ya later, punk!!” Undyne runs off, presumably to Snowdin.
I guess we’ll go back to Hotland now, right?

*Nope. Snowdin.*

Really? Why?

*Don’t you want to see Papyrus again?*

...Yes.

*Then it’s agreed.* We exit Undyne’s ruined house, SAVE, and head back to the riverperson.

“*Tra la la. Care for a ride?*”

“Yes, please.”

“Where will we go today?”

“Snowdin, please.”

“Then we’re off…” The riverperson pushes off, and keeps going west. Frisk rests their head on the side of the boat, folding their hands underneath them.

*Don’t fall asleep. Now is not the time.*

*Yeah, maybe, when we get to Papyrus and Undyne, we can crash with them...* Frisk yawns.

“*Tra la la. Beware of the man who came from the other world,*” The riverperson advises.

*That’s got to mean something.*

*I don’t think so. Unless the riverperson knows something we don’t, and is trying to pull some kind of crazy foreshadowing, it’s just nonsense.*

*Hmm...* The rest of the journey is silent. Finally we arrive in Snowdin, above where the houses and the werewolf throwing ice are.

“Come again sometime. Tra la la.” We wave, and head down to Papyrus and Sans’s house.

“Hi Undyne! Hi Papyrus!” Frisk waves with a smile.

“Hey, punk! What’s up!? A-ACHOO! Papyrus, how can you stand this cold?” She turns to the skeleton, a hand on her hip.

“I HAVE NO SKIN,” Papyrus answers proudly.

“So why don’t we stand in Grillby’s instead?”

“BECAUSE I HATE GREASE.”

“But you don’t have a stomach!!”

“NO, BUT I HAVE STANDARDS!!” Papyrus turns to us, and brightens more than he already is. “I’M SO GLAD YOU AND UNDYNE ARE FRIENDS NOW. YOU TWO GO TOGETHER LIKE PASTA AND BURNING!” Meanwhile, Undyne is studying Papyrus closely.
“Papyrus, why do you live in an icy wasteland?” She asks, like it’s been weighing on her mind for a while.

“BECAUSE IT’S CHEAP,” Papyrus says simply.

“Really? Don’t you live in a huge house?”

“YEAH, BUT MY BROTHER PAYS FOR IT.”

“Where’s your brother get the money to pay for it…?”

“OH, THAT’S SIMPLE. IT’S A MYSTERY.” Papyrus smiles, and I can’t help but feel unsatisfied with that answer. Frisk tugs lightly on Papyrus’s scarf/cape to get his attention. He bends down, Undyne also looking at us curiously. “WHAT IS IT, HUMAN?”

“Do you think… I could, um, sleep here for a couple hours?” Frisk asks.

“OF COURSE! I SAID YOU COULD COME OVER ANY TIME, DID I NOT? IT MAY BE A LITTLE CROWDED WITH UNDYNE HERE, BUT WE SHALL MANAGE!” Papyrus beams.

“Yeah, it’ll be like a sleepover!!” Undyne says. She also looks kind of excited.

“AND SANS CAN COME TOO!”

“Yeah!” Frisk cheers, and smiles sleepily. They’re also getting kind of cold. I use their hand to point towards the door, to set things moving. I’m nervous about Sans, but we’ll be sleeping most of the time, right? I mean, I won’t be sleeping, but... And anyways, nobody is really on the same sleeping schedule as us anyway, so we might just sleep a couple hours and leave.

“WELL, COME ON IN! IT’S COLD OUT HERE, SO I’M TOLD!” Papyrus glances at Undyne, and gestures us inside. “WOULD YOU LIKE TO SLEEP NOW OR LATER?”

“Now,” Frisk answers. I can tell they feel kind of impolite for inviting themself over, and then not really hanging out with them.

“Well, I’m not sleeping anytime soon, so you go ahead and take the couch,” Undyne offers.

“Papyrus, got any blankets and pillows?”

“DO HUMANS NEED THOSE?”

“Yes! Go get some!” Papyrus rushes upstairs, and Undyne sits down next to us on the couch. “You know, I’m not really sure what people do in sleepovers. Do you know?”

“Nope.”

“Sweet, I’m not behind. All I know is what I’ve seen in Alphys’s animes.”


“Alphys? Well, she’s-”

“I GOT SOME STUFF FROM SANS’S ROOM!” Papyrus enters. He plops down on the couch in between Undyne and us, burying Frisk in bedding in the process. Perfect timing, Papyrus. “I AM SORRY IF IT DOESN’T SMELL THE BEST. SANS DOES NOT DO A LOT OF LAUNDRY.”
Frisk pops their head up from the blanket, saying, “It’s fine.”

“GOOD! WELL, HUMAN, I HOPE YOU HAVE A GOOD REST.” Papyrus gently pats our head, and stands back up.

“Yeah, you gotta start fresh!” Undyne says, and aggressively ruffles Frisk’s hair.

“PLEASE DO NOT NOOGIE THE HUMAN,” Papyrus asks. But I can tell that even he knows that his words won’t have any effect.

“I do what I want,” Undyne smiles, showing off her teeth. Very sharp, very impressive. Like a shark, out for human blood. Well, not anymore, I guess. Still have to be careful though. Frisk puts the pillow supposedly from Sans’s room next to the arm of the couch, fluffing it a little. There’s some dust on it, but the harmless kind, not the dead monster kind. They lay down, wrapping the blanket around them in the fetal position.

Papyrus and Undyne both leave to go back outside, turning off the lights as they pass. In order to avoid dreaming and sharing memories again, I separate and sit on the couch next to Frisk moments before they fall asleep. They’re lucky, to be able to fall asleep so easily.

“uhh, why’re the lights off? paps?” A voice asks. Sans stumbles down the stairs, rubbing his eyes. Eyesockets, I mean. Even though it’s pretty dim, he still manages to see us. “oh. you.”

“Yeah, me,” I say.

“So, uh, what are you doing here?” He plops down on the couch next to me.

“Sleeping,” I gesture to Frisk.

“obviously. someone let you in, though, right? you asked before taking the couch?”

“Of course. We asked Papyrus and Undyne. They wanted a sleepover,” I explain. I kind of wish he hadn’t come downstairs.

“you’re friends with undyne now?” Sans asks.

“Not me, really, but Frisk is.”

“good for them.”

“Yeah, I didn’t think it was possible, either.” This is going pretty well, no death threats or hostilities so far, even if it’s kind of awkward.

“…so…”

“So?”

“have you been having fun?”

“Yeah, it’s not bad. Temmie Village hasn’t changed, though.”

“had you been there before?”

“…Yes.”

“how long ago?”
“It’s rude to ask people when they died, Sans.”

“i’m just trying to figure you out, alright? make sure you’re cool.”

“And what does cool mean?”

“i dunno. what do you think it means?”

“I think it means you think I’m some huge threat that needs to be dealt with. But I haven’t even done anything bad, so leave me alone.”

“we might have different definitions of ‘bad,’ cause i’m pretty sure killing is a no-no.” It occurs to me that I really shouldn’t have told him anything back in the garage.

“I thought I told you, she’s just fine now!”

“because you messed with the timeline.”

“Is that what you call reloading?”

“guess so. how many times have you done that, anyway?”

“What, reloading? It happens whenever we die, so… a couple more times.”

“have you ever considered what it feels like for the rest of us?”

“No one ever remembers, so what’s the harm?”

“what about the people who do remember? what about them?”

“Tell me when you’ve found one, because if I hadn’t told you, nobody would know besides Frisk and I.”

“Alright, you know what? i’m going back to sleep. see you later.” Sans stands up, and exits the room.

“Bye!” I call. Ok, then. That happened. I’ll have to tell Frisk about it when they wake up. In the meantime… There’s not a lot to do. I’m confined to the living room and the kitchen for now. There’s a couple of joke books, and some quantum physics books, but I’m not really interested in looking at Sans’s stuff right now. The T.V. ’s off, too, which is a shame. I could call Sans and ask him to turn it on, but I get the feeling that he doesn’t like me very much. That’s fine, I didn’t come here to make friends.

I slouch down the couch, and roll onto the floor. I’m okay with this. I can just zone out here for a while, I guess.

Eventually, I’d guess a couple hours later, Sans comes back downstairs. He ignores me and goes into the kitchen, and from the light coming from the refrigerator I can tell he’s getting a snack. He comes back into the living room and sits on the couch. He doesn’t say anything, just eats some chips. I look up at him from the floor, and wonder what this means. Probably nothing.

“Kid can sleep for a while, huh?” He finally asks. I shrug. “you must be bored.” I shrug again. “i would turn on the T.V., but that would be rude to the kid. can’t have that, right?”

“Do you hate me?” I ask. It’s just a curiosity of mine.

“why, is there a reason i should?”
“I don’t know. Is there?”

“listen kid, we all mess up sometimes. you’d have to mess up pretty bad for me to actually hate you.”

“That’s fair, I guess.”

“do you hate me?” Sans asks. I consider this question for a while.

“I guess not. You haven’t really done anything to me besides being vaguely threatening.”

“guess that’s that, then. Pals?” Sans holds out his hand. I eye it warily.

“No thanks. I know your style by now.” I’m pretty sure there’s a whoopee cushion in his hand, so I’m not going to risk it. It’d probably wake up Frisk anyway. Sans chuckles.

“fair enough. i’m glad we had this talk.”

“Me too.” A long silence passes.

“now that we’re friends, can i give you a hint?” Sans asks. I look at him warily.

“Sure?”

“you remember that dog residue you threw away?”

“Yeah?”

“shouldn’t have done that. that was your ticket to getting temmie into college.”

“How so?”

“it will always appear back in your inventory, so you have an infinite amount. you sell it to temmie enough, get enough money, and you can send her to college.”

“With her own money? How does that work?” Sans shrugs.

“dunno. but since you threw that away, you should try using some of gerson’s stuff instead. you can sell it for way more than you bought it for.”

“Wow. That’s actually… Some solid advice. This had better not be a prank,” I warn.

“hehe. nope.” A silence passes. “welp, i’m going to grillby’s.” Sans stands up and exits the house. From outside, I can faintly hear him ask Papyrus if he wants anything. Louder I can hear Papyrus’s disgusted response. I laugh, and roll onto my stomach.

Eventually Frisk wakes up. They panic a bit when I’m not there, but I merge fairly quickly and we bid our friends goodbye. We leave Snowdin, and head back to Hotland.

Chapter End Notes

Intermissions are where I have fun, ok? They're the 'optional' stuff. If you're wondering, in this au the game doesn't take place in one day, since that's a hecka lot and kids need their sleep, ok?
Side note: Yes, it's basically canon that Papyrus can defy gravity. If you want, I can link to theory posts on tumblr on the blog, (saltychara.tumblr.com) if anyone wants. Paps is actually one of the most interesting characters, imo! And he's obviously the perfect companion for everyone's favorite big sister/angry babysitter.

Anyways, please comment and check out the aforementioned blog, where you can ask Chara (or Frisk) whatever you want! How many stories do that, really? Not a lot.
Chapter 18- Welcome to Hotland, a killer robot will be your guide

Part 4: Hotland

“Tra la la. Care for a ride?”

“Yes, please.”

“Where will we go today?”

“Hotland, please.”

“Then we’re off…” The riverperson pushes off, and we go east this time. The directions look the same, since we’ll always just be going forwards. Without a compass, there’d be no telling which direction we were going if we didn’t know our destination. “Tra la la. Somewhere, it's Monday. So be careful.” Frisk nods wisely, as if they know what they’re talking about.

The air grows consistently warmer as we approach Hotland, and finally we step off the boat onto the rocky ground.

“Come again sometime. Tra la la.” We wave goodbye to the riverperson. We go back up to where the SAVE point is, and SAVE again, and look at the lab looming over us.

Do you know who lives there?

No. I don’t have any idea of who the royal scientist could be. Come to think of it, I’m not sure there was one when I was alive, either.

Oh. So you don’t have any idea of what awaits us beyond the doors?

Not really. I’ve visited it before, but it’s probably been redecorated. We look at the lab, which has bright red letters over it reading “LAB”, and step inside the automatic door. It’s pretty dark in here, I can barely see a thing. The one source of light is coming from a screen, which we go over to investigate.

What?

It’s you…? We see an image of Frisk from the back, and in the image they’re looking at a screen, showing another image of them looking at a screen. It’s infinite, really. I wonder why this is here…

Kinda creepy. It’s too dark to see anything near the walls, so we continue down the room. We see a shadow move, and we stop. The figure exits from a room to the side, and flips on the lights. The figure turns out to be a yellow lizard lady wearing glasses and a labcoat. When she sees us, she freezes.

“Oh. My god. I didn’t expect you to show up so soon!” She bounces her feet nervously, looking at us with an anxious but curious expression. “I haven’t showered, I’m barely dressed, it’s all messy, and…” She trails off, and seems to calm down some. “Ummm… H-h-hiya! I’m Dr. Alphys. I’m Asgore’s Royal Scientist!”
Ohhhh. That’s two questions answered in one.

Yep. You’re sure you’ve never heard of her?

Not besides from Undyne.

“B-b-but, ahhhh, I’m not one of the ‘bad guys!’ Actually, since you stepped out of the Ruins, I’ve, um… been ‘observing’ your journey through my console. Your fights… Your friendships… Everything!”

And that explains the cameras we keep seeing.

It’s still creepy.

“I was originally going to stop you, but… Watching someone on a screen really makes you root for them.” She blushes. Frisk watches her with a small smile, amused. “S-so, ahhh, now I want to help you! Using my knowledge, I can easily guide you through Hotland!”

Goddamn lizard people stealing our jobs...

Don’t worry, nobody can replace you.

“I know a way right to Asgore’s castle, no problem!” She pauses, and looks embarrassed. “Well, actually, um, there’s just a tiny issue. A long time ago, I made a robot named Mettaton. Originally, I built him to be an entertainment robot. Uh, you know, like a robotic TV star or something. Anyway, recently I decided to make him more useful. You know, just some small practical adjustments. Like, um… Anti… anti-human combat features?

Are you kidding me? Why was this a good idea? Did Asgore even approve of this?

They need the souls, remember?

That’s no excuse. Still need permission from the king.

“Of cOURSE, when I saw you coming, I immediately decided… I have to remove those features! Unfortunately, I may have made a teensy mistake while doing so. And, um… Now he’s an unstoppable killing machine with a thirst for human blood? Ehhehehe… Heh. But ummm, hopefully we won’t run into him.”

No no no, don’t jinx it! A bang goes through the lab, rumbling the room. Alphys and Frisk share a concerned look. It happens again.

“Did you hear something?” Alphys asks. Frisk nods, and grows more worried. There’s another rumble, stronger this time. It keeps happening, growing steadily louder and louder. Alphys gets a scared look on her face. “Oh no.”

There’s a flash of light, and a resonating voice. “OHHH YES! WELCOME, BEAUTIES!” The lights in the lab go dark, and a spotlight appears on a machine holding a microphone. It looks like an oversized calculator balanced on a single wheel, with metal noodle arms coming from the sides. “...TO TODAY’S QUIZ SHOW!!!” Confetti rains from the ceiling, and an electric sign reading ‘Game Show’, along with some disco balls, descend. “OH BOY! I CAN ALREADY TELL IT’S GONNA BE A GREAT SHOW! EVERYONE GIVE A BIG HAND FOR OUR WONDERFUL CONTESTANT!” He claps, and more confetti showers us.
I’m assuming this is Mettaton.

“A game show?” Frisk asks, turning to Alphys. She shrugs.

“NEVER PLAYED BEFORE, GORGEOUS? NO PROBLEM! IT’S SIMPLE! THERE’S ONLY ONE RULE. ANSWER CORRECTLY… OR YOU DIE!!!” We enter some kind of a fight, but I have an idea that we wouldn’t be able to attack, even if we wanted to. This seemed like a different kind of battle.

**Mettaton attacks!**

“Check!”

**Frisk, are you kidding? He’s a robot. Attack is only 10 but defense is 999. Because his metal body renders him invulnerable to attack,**

“Let’s start with an easy one!!” Mettaton says. “What’s the prize for answering correctly?”

Let’s see our options here. Money, Mercy, New Car, More Questions.

*Umm… “Mercy?” Frisk asks hopefully.*

“HAHAHA! YOU WISH! WRONG!” Mettaton gloats. He fires a laser at us, and we lose half our HP. Ouch.

“Aahh!” Frisk cries in response.

**Screaming is against the rules.**

*Well excuse me.* Mettaton brushes off the laser gun in his finger, clearing away the smoke. The quiz show continues. From the corner of my eye I see Alphys put her head in her hands.

“HERE’S YOUR TERRIFIC PRIZE!” Mettaton says. Looks like the prize was more questions.

“What’s the king’s full name?”

“Asgore Dreemurr,” I say automatically. I notice Alphys making a C symbol with her hands, and when I look at the answer screen the correct answer was C. Huh. She gives us an enthusiastic thumbs up.

**Watch Alphys, would you?** I tell Frisk. They nod.

“CORRECT! WHAT A TERRIFIC ANSWER!” Mettaton dances around while confetti falls. Frisk tries sparing him this time. It doesn’t have any effect. “ENOUGH ABOUT YOU. LET’S TALK ABOUT ME!” We exchange an amused glance with Alphys. “What are robots made of?”

**Hopes and Dreams, Metal and Magic, Snips and Snails, Sugar and Spice,** I read from the screen. We look at Alphys, since she seems to be willing to help us. She makes a B with her hands.

“Metal and magic!” Frisk says confidently.

“TOO EASY FOR YOU, HUH??????????????” If a robot can look condescending, this one is is.

“HERE’S ANOTHER EASY ONE FOR YOU. Two trains, Train A, and Train B, simultaneously depart Station A and Station B. Station A, and Station B are 252.5 miles apart from each other. Train A is moving at 124.7mph towards Station B, and Train B is moving at 253.5mph towards Station A. If both trains departed at 10:00 AM and it is now 10:08, how much longer until both trains pass each
other?” Mettaton reads rapidly, his voice going more robotic than it has been.

Frisk goes blank, head spinning. I shake their head, snapping them out of it. We look at Alphys helplessly. She gestures a D, and I don’t even bother to read the answers before we point at it.

“WONDERFUL! I’M ASTOUNDED, FOLKS!” We spare him again. “DON’T ‘COUNT’ ON YOUR VICTORY… How many flies are in this jar?” He asks. A jar rises from the ground, an immeasurable amount of flies inside. Alphys makes an A with her hands, which probably wouldn’t have been possible with human hands. We point to that answer. “CORRECT! YOU’RE SO LUCKY TODAY!!”

This is so rigged.
Agreed. Without Alphys, we’d be dead for sure.

“LET’S PLAY MEMORY GAME. What monster is this?” Mettaton asks. An image of a monster pops up on the screen behind him.

Looks like a Froggit…?

But Alphys says the right answer is Mettaton.

So what do I trust?

Well, Mettaton would make himself the right answer, wouldn’t he? And he’d cheat to make us lose, so probably go with Alphys.

Are you sure?

Nope. Frisk shrugs and points to D. The picture zooms out to reveal a picture of Mettaton wearing a shirt with a Froggit on it. That’s cheating!

“I’M SO FLATTERED YOU REMEMBERED! BUT CAN YOU GET THIS ONE???” Would you smooch a ghost?”

UM.

“ Heck yeah!” Frisk yells, smiling.

Frisk, do we need to talk?

Any time!

...You know I’m a ghost, right?

Of course!

“GREAT ANSWER! I LOVE IT!!!!!!! ...HERE’S A SIMPLE ONE. How many letters in the name Mettaton?” The screen extends the n, making it an infinite ‘mettatonnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn…’ I glare at the robot, and see Alphys gesturing a C. The answers are all changing, too, the numbers going up as the word gets longer. But we pick C anyways. “OF COURSE THAT WAS EASY FOR YOU! TIME TO BREAK OUT THE BIG GUNS!! In the dating simulation video game “Mew Mew Kissy Cutie” what is Mew Mew’s favorite food?” We look at him blankly, not having any idea. We look to Alphys, who seems very excited, raising her hand in the air and jumping up and down.
“OH! OH! I KNOW THIS ONE!!! IT’S SNAIL ICE CREAM!!!!!!! IN THE FOURTH CHAPTER EVERYONE GOES TO THE BEACH!!! AND SHE BUYS ICE CREAM FOR ALL OF HER FRIENDS!!!! BUT IT’S SNAIL FLAVOR AND SHE’S THE ONLY ONE WHO WANTS IT!!!!!! IT’S ONE OF MY FAVORITE PARTS OF THE GAME BECAUSE IT’S ACTUALLY A VERY POWERFUL message about friendship and…” She trails off, noticing us and Mettaton staring at her. I’m so confused.

“ALPHYS, ALPHYS, ALPHYS. YOU AREN’T HELPING OUR CONTESTANT, ARE YOU? OOOOOOH!!! YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME. I’LL ASK A QUESTION… YOU’LL BE SURE TO KNOW THE ANSWER TO! Who does Dr. Alphys have a crush on?”

Undyne, Asgore, The human, Don’t know.

Um… What do you think?

Well… Not Asgore, hopefully. Go with Undyne. Who doesn’t like Undyne?

“Undyne?” Frisk says. Alphys hides her bright red face in her hands.


Wow.

“Awwww!” Frisk hums. That’s adorable!

Hmm…

“WELL WELL WELL. WITH DR. ALPHYS HELPING YOU… THE SHOW HAS NO DRAMATIC TENSION! WE CAN’T GO ON LIKE THIS! BUT. BUT!!! THIS WAS JUST THE PILOT EPISODE!! NEXT UP, MORE DRAMA! MORE ROMANCE!!! MORE BLOODSHED!!! UNTIL NEXT TIME, DARLINGS...!!” Mettaton retracts his arms into his square body and blasts off through the roof of the lab.

“…” Alphys shrugs. “Well that was certainly something.” Frisk nods. “…Th-that last question… he wasn’t s-supposed to ask that one…”

Supposed to?

What?

What does she mean supposed to? Did she know what he was going to ask?

It’s just a phrase, Chara.

Hmm… We walk over to the wall, to investigate a picture of a lizard on the wall next to a door. It looks like a bathroom sign.

“W-wait!” Alphys says, running over. “Let me give you my phone number! Th-then… maybe… If you need help, I could…”

“Here,” Frisk says, handing Alphys the phone they got from Toriel. Her eyes widen in shock.
“Wh… where’d you get that phone!? It’s ANCIENT! It doesn’t even have texting. W-wait a second, please!” Alphys disappears into the wall, and we hear sounds of science. Such as hammers clanking, saws buzzing, some Tems, some screaming. You know, normal stuff. “Here, I upgraded it for you! It can do texting, items, it’s got a keychain… I even signed you up for the underground’s No. 1 social network! Now we’re officially friends! Ehehehe! Hehe… Heh…” She trails off and looks around anxiously. A few moments pass, then she blurts out, “I’m going to the bathroom.” She goes behind the door next to us, and locks it. We can see her feet fidgeting through the bottom of the door.

Let’s take the… thing that goes upstairs. I’m not really sure what it is, but it looks kind of like stairs and it’s moving on its own. Some kind of advanced science tech, probably.

Escalator?

Maybe? The first thing we see in Alphys’s upstairs room is five multi-colored bookcases. The first one is a light green color. Scientific books. They seem very dusty. The next one is filled with darker green colored books. All these books are labelled ‘Human History.’

Read one?

I look inside a book. It’s just a comic of a giant robot fighting a beautiful alien princess. This doesn’t strike me as very accurate… The next bookcase, a yellow one, holds VHSes and DVDs of various cartoons. They are all labelled ‘Human History.’ It’s the same with the blue bookcase, but with more comics. We open one up. Two scantily clad chefs are flinging energy pancakes at each other. Still not very accurate…

You know what this means, right?

What?

Alphys is a weeaboo.

A what?

These are all anime.

Oh, yeah, anime. Of course.

A weeaboo is a person who’s obsessed with anime.

Oh, neat. The next comic we find features a hideous android running to school with toast in its mouth. Seems like it’s late. But this is definitely not actual human history, right? Or have I been dead way longer than I thought?

No, we don’t have robots or aliens yet, sadly. Next to the bookcases is a strange machine dripping pink goop into a bucket. And to the left of that appears to be Alphys’s work table. It seems dusty. The wardrobe is full of dirty lab coats… And a single clean dress. On a nightstand there are letters from many monsters… Froggit, Snowy, Doggo… They’re all unopened.

You should open them.

No, Chara, that’s rude and illegal.

But she’s obviously not going to, so what’s the harm?
I’m not going to invade her privacy like that!

Ok, but I really want to know what they say. At the end of the room, there’s an incredible invention. When not in use, this bed folds in an extremely-easy-to-draw box. On the wall next to that, there’s a promo poster for Mettaton’s TV premiere. On the flap it says ‘Thank you for making my dreams come true.’ We go back down to the main lab.

Now we can see everything, so tell me about everything.

Oh jeez. That’s a lot. Well, then. This is a video feed of your location. Over here’s a garbage can. But it’s pretty cute. This seem like the notes to something, but it’s all written in chicken scratch. It seem like the walkthrough to a game, or…!? I don’t know. Here’s a computer. It’s accessing some kind of puzzle in Snowdin. And that’s a beat-up figurine of a female human with cat ears.

See? Weeaboo.

Save questions and comments for the end, please.

Oh, sorry. Please, continue.

Thank you. The fridge is filled with instant noodles and soda. Take a package of noodles?

Sure. We got the instant noodles. We leave out the back door of the lab, and back into the stifling heat of Hotland. The phone buzzes, and Frisk pulls it out of their pocket.

Alphys updated status. It says ‘just realized i didn’t watch undyne fight the human v.v’ I send the thought to Frisk through the mindscape, and they probably get it. We walk about another ten steps when we hear it buzz again. Alphys. ‘well i know she’s unbeatable i’ll ask her abt it later ^.^’ And ten steps later, it happens again. ‘for now i gotta call up the human and guide them =^.^=’

I like the little faces she’s using, Frisk thinks.

They’re kind of cool, I guess. We enter the next room, with two moving sidewalks over a chasm. We hop onto the one going in the direction we want, and speed across. We’re almost to the end when we’re attacked by a monster and enter a FIGHT. Vulkin strolls in.

“Check!” Frisk says.

Attack 8 defense 10. Mistakenly believes its lava can heal people.

“Thunder! Helpful speed up!!!” Vulkin says, blushing happily. Its bullets take form in a happy thunder cloud, sending out little lightning bolts. Frisk weaves between them, only getting hit once and losing 3 HP.

Vulkin is making coffee in its crater.

“Hug!” They give Vulkin a hug. It warms our heart… and our whole body! “Ouch!” Our defense drops.

“Ahh… So… LOVEY!” Vulkin launches fire balls at us, and lands a hit. Since our defense is dropped, we lose 4 HP. Its cheeks glow with a bright heat.

“Encourage! Vulkin, you’re doing a great job!” Frisk smiles. Thinking its helping, its attacks become

**Hey, Frisk, eat something.**

*Kay.* Frisk pulls out that monster candy we somehow still have from the Ruins, and eats it. We get back 10 HP. Vulkin attacks again, but Frisk manages to avoid it all this time. They spare it, and we continue to speed along the moving path, earning 40 gold in the process.

The phone buzzes. **Alphys updated her status again.** ‘gonna call them in a minute!!! =^.^=.’ We ignore it for the time being. Hotland is pretty cool to look at, with all the fire and metal and gears everywhere. And these cool moving sidewalks. We hop onto one that goes in zig zag motions, and I’m kind of afraid that we’ll be flung off the edge. It doesn’t happen, though.

*I never liked these, or escalators. I always thought I would get caught in it and die.*

**Interesting.** I can see how they’d think that. It does look like a shoe could get trapped between the panels making it. The next part of the path holds a sparkling SAVE point. **The wooshing sound of steam and cogs... It fills you with determination.** Our health goes back up to full, and I can’t help but feel we wasted some food. Alphys updates her status again. ‘I HATE USING THE PHONE I DON’T WANT TO DO THIS LMAO ^.^.’

Aww, Alphys! I get that.

**You do?**

Well, yeah, I don’t think anyone I know really likes calling people on the phone.

**Huh. It never really came up for me.**

*Weird.* The path branches off a little here, with one path ahead and one to the left. The one straight ahead has a steam vent that will launch us over a gap in the way. The other doesn’t, so we go forward. Frisk does a spin in midair, and I can’t help but give them style points. As soon as we land, we’re pulled into a FIGHT. Hey, I know this monster, it’s pretty cool! Reminds me of myself.

**Tsunderplane gets in the way! Not on purpose or anything.**

“Check!”

**Attack 8, defense 6. Seems mean, but does it secretly like you?**

“No way! Why would I ever like YOU?” Its attacks come in miniature planes, leaving behind fiery clouds of gas behind them. Miraculously, we don’t get hit. Tsunderplane looks over, then turns up its nose.

“...Approach?” Frisk acts hesitantly. They get close to Tsunderplane. But not too close.

“Eeeeh!? H-human?” Tsunderplane blushes a little. Its attacks show up with a green aura, which means healing. Frisk brushes the tips of its wing, giving them 1 HP with every tap. Not only that, but Tsunderplanes blush grows deeper each time.

**Not to be weird, but... This seems a little... Suggestive?**
Eh. I don’t mean it that way, so it’s not. Frisk shrugs. Then Tsunderplane ‘accidentally’ bumps us with its wing.

Spare it now, please. Frisk laughs at me, and does as I request. We earn 60 gold. Not bad. Hey, we’re almost halfway to getting the Temmie Armour.

Maybe we should hang out here and get more gold?

It’s not that important. We should keep moving. We jump the next air vent, landing gently on the warm ground. It’s really hot here, making me wonder how Frisk can stand wearing a sweater. Of course, Frisk hears my thoughts.

I wear shorts, remember? Nice and cool! Frisk happily pats their jean shorts, and jumps when the phone buzzes again. It says, ‘omg ive had my claw over the last digit for five minutes. omg i’m just gonna do it! i’m just gonna call!!!’ We hop into the next air vent, and then the phone rings. Frisk picks back up the phone, but whoever was calling hung up before they answered it. We shrug and move on.

Yay, lasers. Actually, let’s explore elsewhere before we go in here. I suggest. Frisk agrees, and we go back down. Jumping the paths of air vents again, we arrive at a new path going down. We walk, and see a frying pan lying abandoned on the ground. See, it paid off! Grab that!

Of course! Frisk moves to go, but we’re stopped by another monster attacking.

Pyrope bounds towards you!

“Check!”

Attack 29, defense 14. This mischievous monster is never warm enough. Its attack starts, which is ropes that are on fire in the middle. The fire is orange. Frisk, move through the orange and you won’t get hurt!

The orange being the hotter magic, I’d assume. They dart through the attacks when there’s an opening, and emerge spotless.

Good job.

So it likes heat, right? So I should turn up the heat! They crank up the thermostat that appears out of thin air. Pyrope begins to be exited, and the room gets hazy with the heat waves coming off the ground.

“Hot!! HOT!! Hotter!! HOTTER!!” The Pyrope says excitedly. The fire ropes come again, and Frisk dodges them all except for the last one. 3 HP lost.

Pyrope wants more heat. I advise. They crank up the thermostat. It's super hot! Pyrope looks satisfied. After one final attack, we spare it and earn 45 gold. Easy-peasy.

Yep. Frisk grabs the burnt pan, tying the handle to the belt loop on their shorts, effectively equipping it. It’ll be a useful weapon. We slide across the moving sidewalk below, and back onto the middle platform.

You have to be more careful on this platform, the vent switches directions every couple of seconds. It can and will launch you into lava if you’re not careful.
Noted. Frisk pauses, and asks, Where do you think this came from? They gesture at the frying pan, which looks old, dusty, and burnt.

Um, I don’t know, some monster dropped it?

I don’t think monsters really use frying pans? And there’s a logo here, right? What does it say?

It says ‘Betty Crocker.’ Oh, that’s a human brand, right?

Yeah. They pause for a second, then use the vent to propel themselves back the way we came. Which means this came from a human.

Well, that’s weird, because there hasn’t ever been a human besides us down here before.

We’ve seen evidence that would say otherwise, I think. Like all the other items we’ve picked up?

Like?

The manly bandanna and the boxer gloves, for one.

Fair point, but I think I would have known if there were other humans here.

Undyne literally said that I’m the seventh human to fall down here.

So you think all the items we’ve picked up were from the other humans?

I don’t know, maybe? Probably?

But there’s one problem with that. They would have had to enter the same way you did, and surely I would’ve woken up, like I did with you. So why didn’t I?

Haven’t you mentioned before that your Soul was red, like mine?

I did, didn’t I?

And didn’t you also have that theory that what was left of you latched onto my Soul? It probably only could have happened with a red Soul, even if the shades were slightly different.

Yeah, that makes sense. And that’s probably why I’m able to possess you, too. I use one of their hands to tug at their hair, making them laugh a little. With their other hand they take it down and put it into their lap. I give them back control of it.

This in itself is really weird, huh?

It really is. You’re lucky, you know, that I’m such a nice ghost demon.

Oh? How so?

Well, I could have done anything I wanted with this body. I could have made you not do the stupid things you do. I could have played this my way.

In my opinion, everything I’ve done so far has turned out really well. But thanks for not doing that, I guess.

Yeah, you’d better be grateful. I could’ve made you eat pure cinnamon!
You feind!

Heheh. You’re right, though, this is really weird. Especially the thought sharing.

I kind of think it’s convenient, to be honest. I’d get a lot more weird looks if I had kept talking to myself all the time.

And you wouldn’t be able to see.

Yeah, that too, I guess.

We should still eventually learn sign language, though. I don’t think we should stay like this forever.

Yes, I’d agree. As much fun as it is...

It kind of feels like your thoughts aren’t your own anymore?

Exactly. But we’ll stay together, for now.

Okay. We travel back up through the room, and back into the laser room.

I’m assuming the same rules apply here, moving through the orange and stopping for the blue?

You’d be correct. Then the phone rings again, and Frisk answers it before Alphys can hang up.

“Uhh! H-hi, so, the blue lasers… Uhh! I mean, Alphys here! The blue lasers won’t hurt you if you don’t move! O-orange ones, um… Y-you have to be moving, and they… Um, they won’t, um… Move through those ones! ...Uhh, bye!” Alphys hangs up with a click, leaving us to stare bewildered at the phone.

Well, I could have told you that!

She didn’t know that, it’s ok.

But you already knew anyways! Alphys updates her status. ‘OMG I DID IT!!! claws haven’t shook like that since undyne called me to ask about the weather… v.v’ Alright, Frisk, sprint through the orange!

Ok! They dash through the first two orange lasers, and, like Alphys said, they don’t get hurt at all. Speak of the devil, she updates her status again. ‘WAIT THERE’S NO WEATHER DOWN HERE WHY DID SHE CALL ME!?’ Frisk snickers at that, and examines the next laser, a blue one. It’s moving on it’s own, so Frisk steps forwards, lets it go over them while they stand still, then they dash forward when it’s safe. After that, there’s an orange laser, another blue, another orange, two more blues, and one final orange.

Look, a switch. Press that. They comply, and all the lasers are deactivated. We walk only a little further when Alphys posts something again. ‘Oh My God i Forgot to Tell THem Where To Go!’ And a couple feet later, ‘CUte PIC OF ME RIGHT NOW ^.^.’ It’s a photo of a garbage can with several pink, glittery filters over it. ...Alright, Alphys.

The phone rings again. “A-A-Alphys here!!!! Th… the northern door will stay locked until you… S-solve the puzzles on the right and the left! I… I think you sh-should g-g-go to the right first!” The vents here are the ones that spin again, so I warn Frisk to be careful. They nod, and approach
cautiously. Once the vent is in the position they want it, they use it to hop to the right.

“Hello!” Frisk greets when they see two monsters sitting on a ledge.

“The way to work is blocked, so I had time to catch Mettaton’s show on my phone… The special effects were amazing today! That human almost looked REAL!” One says, a greenish monster wearing a suit.

**I wonder where he works?**

*Somewhere where they wear suits*, Frisk shrugs. *But I thought you’d be more focused on how he didn’t know I was a real human. Or the fact that I’m standing right here.*

**Oh, yeah, that’s interesting, too. But he’s wearing sunglasses, so maybe he can’t see very well.** Frisk nods thoughtfully and looks to the other monster, a brown one in a muscle shirt, drinking a steaming coffee.

“You watch Mettaton?” Frisk asks.

“Mettaton? Yeah, he’s the most popular star in the underground!” He responds. “His fan club probably has at least two… no, THREE dozen members!”

“Oh. I didn’t know that!” Frisk says. They turn around and see a doorway, deciding to go into it. Alphys updates her status. ‘wonder if it would be unfun if i explained the puzzle…’

**That would get us through faster, I guess.**

*She has a point, though. Puzzles aren’t as fun if you know the answer!* I sigh at their optimism, and notice an orange, cat-like monster in the corner of the new room. It has only a head, which it uses to hop around.

“The door leading through the area is closed? So I tried the puzzle? But I kept running out of ammo, and it kept restarting? And my two co-workers won’t help? It’s like they don’t even wanna go to work?”

**Umm… Are we supposed to answer any of those questions? Because they weren’t really questions…**

*Nope. Let’s look at this puzzle, shall we?* They move to look at the console, but notice a piece of paper next to it. The handwriting is similar to chicken scratch, but I can make it out fairly easily.

**Shoot the opposing ship! Move the boxes to complete your mission.** Frisk nods and looks back at the screen. They press a few buttons experimentally, and the two boxes on the larger screen move correspondingly. *You’ve got two bullets, one to shoot through a box and one to shoot the other ship.*

*Got it.* Frisk pushes the boxes randomly, and then pauses when they see only one in front of the other side. They tap the shoot button twice, and the puzzle beeps. ‘Congratulations!’ It reads.

“Wow?” The cat-head monster questions. “You solved it? I’m impressed? You must be a total nerd?”

“…Thanks,” Frisk says. We leave the room, and hop some vents to make it to the left. A blue laser blocks the path, with no seeable way around it. The phone rings.
“Alphys! Here! Th-that blue laser seems totally impassable! B-b-but! As the Royal Scientist, I h-have some tricks up my sleeve! I’ll h-hack into th-the Hotland laser database and take it out!” She hangs up.

You think she’d be more confident in herself, if she knows she can do it.

That sounded more like nervousness than self-consciousness.

Really? Huh. Wonder why. We walk over to the two girls in school uniforms. We talk to the green-fire girl first. She kind of reminds me of someone?

“Finally! Someone turned off that laser! Now that we’re free we can… Well, uh, I guess we’ll just keep standing here,” She says.

Grillby!

What?

I swear this girl is related to him somehow! That’s why I know her!

Alright. They look to the other girl, a purple monster leaning on a skateboard, chewing gum. She seems cool.

“We were hanging out when suddenly, a buncha puzzles reactivated out of nowhere. This is a huge problem… It rules! They’ve GOTTA cancel school over this!”

Power to the people!

Interesting. The puzzle on this side is a lot more complicated, with many more boxes compared to the other one. The note on the side is the same as before, so I don’t really bother to read it. Do you have a strategy?

Um, just move them around until it solves itself? Do you have a better one?

Not really. Go with your plan, then. It doesn’t take that long, but randomly pressing buttons seems to not be the most efficient way to solve it. Sadly, the two of us are too lazy to think of a better way. Eventually it’s done. We go back out into the center room, and hop up to the locked door. It flashes green, and then opens dramatically in a cloud of dust.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter... feels kinda like filler... I'm really happy we finally met Alphys and Mettaton though! And Frisk and Chara finally talked a little about how the body-sharing thing works, and Chara's kinda coming to terms with being dead and all, so only kinda filler I guess.

Also, I got a tablet, so any asks on the ask blog, which is saltychara.tumblr.com, will be answered with a drawing. Disclaimer, I'm not the best artist around... ^_^'

Next time: Baking and puzzles! Baking puzzles? Probably not.
Also I updated the summary to make it better, haha
These status updates are killing me slowly

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 19- These status updates are killing me slowly

Alphys updates her status. ‘whatever!!! i’ll just explain it!!!’

Is she talking about the puzzle we just solved?

Possibly? The phone rings. “Hello?”

“Uuu, I think… Umm… Hey! About the puzzles on the left and right...! They’re a bit difficult to explain, but…”

“I got it,” Frisk says, to spare her the awkwardness of figuring it out on her own.

“...uhhh, you already s-solved them? Awesome!” Alphys hangs up. We go up, and the ground splits into three columns, each with a vent to propel us to next one. We hop on the first vent, which sends us landing directly on the next one, and it happens again on the third one. Frisk seems very entertained with this from all the giggling.

We end up in a dark room. It’s completely pitch black in here, so I’m not overexaggerating. Frisk looks around with their Soul. I can sense lots of stuff, but I’m not sure what they are.

You’re so helpful in times of need.

You're not better! The phone rings.

“H-hey, it’s kind of dark in there, isn’t it? Don’t worry! I’ll hack into the light system and brighten it up!” She doesn’t hang up yet, but the lights flash on, hurting my eyes at first.

Looks like… Cooking stuff?

I have a bad feeling...

“Oh no,” Alphys says. A robot in a chef’s hat rises from behind the counter.

“OhHHH YES!!!” Mettaton says. “WELCOME, BEAUTIES, TO THE UNDERGROUND’S PREMIER COOKING SHOW!!!” A banner appears over our head, reading ‘Cooking with a Killer Robot’ if I crane my neck to look at it. “PRE-HEAT YOUR OVENS, BECAUSE WE’VE GOT A VERY SPECIAL RECIPE FOR YOU TODAY! WE’RE GOING TO BE MAKING… A CAKE!”

Oh, I love cakes! I thought it was going to be worse!

Don’t say that, you’ll jinx it!

“MY LOVELY ASSISTANT HERE WILL GATHER THE INGREDIENTS. EVERYONE GIVE THEM A BIG HAND!!!”

Oh, that’s me! Confetti rains down on us, just like it did in the quiz show. Recorded clapping comes out of the speaker on Mettaton’s body.
“WE’LL NEED SUGAR, MILK, AND EGGS. GO FOR IT, SWEETHEART.” Mettaton says.
We turn around to see all the ingredients sitting on the counter. Convenient. Frisk picks up the eggs.

You found the eggs.

Thanks. They hold those under one arm, and pick up the milk.

You found the milk.

Really? They use their other hand to hold the sugar, carefully balancing everything.

You found the sugar. Congratulations! You found all three!

Yay! Frisk stacks them on the counter next to Mettaton.


What did I tell you about jinxing it!?

You can’t blame this on me!

“A HUMAN SOUL!!!!” He begins advancing on us with the chainsaw, which looks painful.

This is entirely your fault.

It is not! This is no one’s fault but Mettaton’s!

You can’t just use him as a scapegoat!

He’s literally the cause and the one trying to kill us right now! He’s not scapegoating anything!
We’re interrupted from the arguing by the phone ringing. We answer it.

Mettaton doesn’t seem happy with this. “HELLO…? I’M KIND OF IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING HERE.”

“W-wait a second!!! Couldn’t you make a… Couldn’t you use a… Couldn’t you make a substitution in the recipe?!?” Alphys says. Honestly, thank whatever higher power there is for Alphys.

“...A SUBSTITUTION? YOU MEAN, USE A DIFFERENT, NON-HUMAN INGREDIENT? ...WHY?” Mettaton seems confused. I’d like to use this as an opportunity to escape, but I’m trapped here by some morbid fascination to see how this plays out.

“Uhh, what if someone’s… Vegan?” Alphys says. I don’t think that’ll work, but hey, it was worth a shot. Good work team, we can all go home now. Or in our case, just accept our fate of death by chainsaw.

“...VEGAN.”

“Uh well I mean-”

“THAT’S A BRILLIANT IDEA, ALPHYS!! ACTUALLY, I HAPPEN TO HAVE AN OPTION RIGHT HERE!!! MTT-BRAND ALWAYS-CONVENIENT HUMAN-SOUL-
FLAVOR-SUBSTITUTE! A CAN OF WHICH… IS JUST OVER ON THAT COUNTER!”
Mettaton points to a small can on a counter that is a few feet away from the rest of the kitchen set. It looks very lonely, and very suspicious. I don’t trust it. “WELL, DARLING? WHY DON’T YOU GO GET IT?”

I don’t trust it.

_I know, you were thinking it pretty strongly. We have to try it, though._ We walk over to the can, but as we reach it the counter sinks into the floor. Then it launches back into the air, rising feet and feet above us. _Hey!_

**Once again, this is so rigged against us.**

“BY THE WAY, OUT SHOW RUNS ON A STRICT SCHEDULE. IF YOU CAN’T GET THE CAN IN ONE MINUTE… WE’LL JUST HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE ORIGINAL PLAN!!!
SO… BETTER START CLIMBING, BEAUTIFUL!!!” Mettaton then proceeds to fly above us with some kind of levitation powers, probably. Alphys calls us then.

“Oh no!!! There’s not enough time to climb up! ...F-f-fortunately, I might have a plan! When I was upgrading your phone, I added a few… features. You see that huge button that says… ‘JETPACK’?”

_Do we see it?_

**Yes.**

“Watch this!” The phone lifts up probably using the same levitation powers that Mettaton has and expands into a fully-functioning jetpack. “There! You should have just enough fuel to reach the top! Now, get up there!!” We lift off, and jetpack commandeering seems to come naturally to Frisk. We fly up the mountain of counters, and Mettaton flies steadily above us. He holds a carton of eggs, and starts shaking it up and down.

_Eggs!_

**Dodge them!** Frisk then gets hit by exactly one egg, which slows us down for a second as they frantically wipe it off their eyes.

_Now my hair’s a mess!_

**Now? When’s the last time you used a hairbrush? Have you even cleaned your hair since Undyne’s tomato incident?**

..._You would know if I did…_

**Ugh. We need a shower.** As if to add to our problems, Mettaton starts emptying a bag of sugar over us. He creates lines with clouds of sugar, leaving only the smallest gaps. Luckily we manage to get through all of them without getting a face full of sugar, because at this point that’s the last thing we need. But after the sugar comes milk, which falls in huge drops. Somehow we manage to avoid those too. Then the cycle repeats itself.

_Almost there… Ah ha! Did it!_

**Just in time.**
“MY MY. IT SEEMS YOU’VE BESTED ME. BUT ONLY BECAUSE YOU HAD THE HELP OF THE BRILLIANT DOCTOR ALPHYS! OH, I LOATHE TO THINK OF WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU WITHOUT HER!!! WELL, TOODLES!!” Mettaton retracts his limbs into his body and flies off. Then he comes back for one last word. “OH YES! ABOUT THE SUBSTITUTION… HAVEN’T YOU EVER SEEN A COOKING SHOW BEFORE? I ALREADY BAKED THE CAKE AHEAD OF TIME!!!!! SO FORGET IT!!!” He flies off for real this time.

Uh oh. Running low on fuel?

Yeah. We slowly descend towards the ground. Alphys calls us again.

“Wow! We… we did it!! We… we really did it!! Great job out there, team! W-well, uh, anyway, let’s keep heading forward!” She says, then hangs up. The next room holds a SAVE point, luckily. I would hate to relive any of that.

An ominous structure looms in the distance… You’re filled with determination. That’s the core, you know. It powers the entire underground.

Wow, that’s really cool!

Actually, it’s really really hot. If you touched the actual machine, you’d probably melt into a weird gooey blob and die.

You know what I meant! We walk on the path, cliffs falling into lava on both sides. The phone rings. “S-see that building in the distance? That’s the core. The source of all power for the underground.”

I literally JUST said that!

It’s ok, Chara!

“It converts geothermal energy into magical electricity, by… Uhh, anyway, that’s where we’re going to go. In the core is an elevator directly to Asgore’s castle. And from there… You can go home.”

Yay, home…

You enjoying your trip through the underground?

Yeah. Maybe too much.

You could stay here. Asgore himself would probably take you in. Or Toriel, if we could figure out a way back there. And I’d rather not but Sans, Papyrus, or Undyne probably wouldn’t mind either.

No, I have things to do. I have to free everyone!

We could be happy here.

But we could also all be happy on the surface, together.

Fair point, fair point. Counterpoint, it’d be easier to not do that.

Too bad. I’ll do things the hard way. The next thing we see is an elevator, with the label ‘R1’ above it. We go in, and look over the button options. Neither of us know what to pick, so Frisk randomly
presses ‘Right floor 2.’ The elevator shakes a lot, then stops. The doors open to a new section of Hotland. There’s a little guy made of fire standing outside.

“Hi!” Frisk says.

“Heh. I’m Heats Flamesman. Remember my name!”

“Alright! I will!” Frisk promises, and we walk further. “Sans!” They say.

*Oh, yeah, before he says anything, we talked while you were asleep again. We’re cool with each other now.*

*Oh, ok. Good to know. Good to hear!*

“thinking to yourself, kid?” Sans asks. We had stopped walking while we talked internally, and apparently Sans knew why. Him and his double meanings, I swear.

“Oh, yeah,” Frisk says. But they don’t want to ignore the other monsters here, that’d be rude. So they walk over to a bird and say hello.

“I love hot dogs!” It says in a scratchy voice. “Hey… isn’t it weird there’s SNOW on that guy’s roof? …guess he’s just too lazy to clean it off.”

...That can’t be the same sentry station from Snowdin, can it?

*Maybe?*

“Toasty bun!” A nearby Vulkin says. And that’s all it says. Alright, time to talk to Sans.

“hey buddy, what’s up? wanna buy a hot dog? it’s only 30g,” Sans says. I think that’s overpriced.

*I’m getting two. We can share! “Yes, please.” Frisk hands over the money, taking away from Temmie’s college fund.*

“thanks, kid. here’s your ‘dog. yeah. ‘dog. apostrophe-dog. it’s short for hot-dog.” Sans hands us the hot dog. Frisk puts another 30 gold on the counter. “another h’dog? here you go… you’re holding too much. …guess i’ll just put it on your head.” He balances it on top of Frisk’s increasingly messy hair, Frisk standing as still as they can. Sans pushes the gold back to us, in some kind of act of goodwill. “it’s on the house. well, no. it’s on you.” Frisk giggles.

“Another?” They ask. Sans stacks it on top of the first one.

“here. have fun,” He grins.

“Thanks!” Frisk says, and skips away, the hot dogs falling from their head. Alphys posts a picture. ‘dinner with the girlfriend ;’). It’s a picture of a catgirl figurine next to a bowl of instant noodles.

**Alphys, you’re kind of weird.** As I think this, somebody else posts a picture. It’s CoolSkeleton95. **Well, wonder who that could be. ‘ARE WE POSTING HOT ‘PICS??’ HERE IS ME AND MY COOL FRIEND!’** The picture is of Papyrus flexing in front of a mirror. He is wearing sunglasses. Giant muscular biceps are pasted onto his arms. The biceps are also wearing sunglasses. **What a rad dude.**

**Agreed!** Alphys updates her status again.
I’m starting to get sick of those. ‘LOL CoolSkeleton95! ...that’s a joke, right?’

I think it’s kinda fun! CoolSkeleton95 updates his status. ‘THE ONLY JOKE HERE, IS HOW STRONG MY MUSCLES ARE.’

Seriously, just have this conversation in person or in private messaging! We go on a path leading down, into a little empty space. Well, empty except for an apron lying on the ground. Before we can grab it, the phone buzzes again. Napstablook22 has sent us a friend request. Accept the request!

Of course! Sadly, it seems to have already rejected itself.

Aww, Napstablook! ...Well, grab the apron, I guess.

I can’t, I’m carrying too much.

Oh. Then look at your phone to see what you can throw out. They pull out the phone again and look at its options. It keeps a record of all the things we have, of which we can only have eight. Wait, what’s that?

What’s what?

That. ‘Dimension Box A.’ Frisk taps that, and it shows all the items we’ve put in the box. Wait, really? We can use the box from here? That’s great!

I can put the ballet shoes and the tutu in there so that I can wear the apron! And so it was. But now the box is full. They take the stained apron and tie it on. Combined with the burnt pan, they look like an amateur chef.

A good look.

Yeah. I wonder who these belonged to.

Maybe we’ll find out someday. For now, all we can do is keep going. We go back the way we came and continue down the original path. As we approach some more conveyor belts, the phone rings instead of buzzes.

“H...hi…! It’s Dr. Alphys. This p-puzzle is kinda... um... timing-based. Y-you see those switches over there? Y-you’ll have to press all three of them within three seconds. I’ll t-try to help you with the rhythm!” Alphys says, and then hangs up.

Alright, Frisk, you ready?

I was born ready!

Ok, go! Frisk jumps onto the conveyor belt, and presses the first button as they pass. This conveyor belt is very fast. They press the second button, and then the phone rings. It surprises Frisk, who had put all their focus on the buttons, and they jump and don’t press it in time. When they’re pushed off the conveyor belt they angrily answer the phone.

“OK! Now press the third one!!!” Frisk doesn’t respond, just glares a little at the phone. “………… H-h-hey! Looks like you!! Only needed to press! Two of them!!!” Sure enough, the laser blocking our path has disappeared.
Oh, Alphys. Never change. Or do change, it would make our journey a little easier.

Chara, don’t be rude!

I do what I want. You can’t control me! Frisk sighs. The next room makes me want to turn around and go back the way we came. It’s a bit much.

There’s nine square platforms in a grid pattern, all separated by lava on all sides, and all with vents and button combinations on top. It looks like we have to navigate and press the right buttons and make it to the other side. It also looks really complicated.

To save me from thinking about it too hard, Alphys updates her status. One annoyance avoided with another annoyance. ‘that’s the last time i try to help with a puzzle lmao.’

Wait Alphys no we might need your help with this one… To my relief she calls us. ...Never thought I’d think that.

“Uh, h-h-hey! I’m going to the bathroom, so I’ll be MIA for a bit. I’m… I’m sure you can handle this puzzle yourself!” Alphys hangs up.

We’re screwed. Just looking at this makes my head hurt.

Chara, you’re over exaggerating. We can do this no problem!

Are you sure?

Yep! We’re puzzle-solving experts!

No we aren’t.

We are!

...Ok. What first?

We’ll just hop around and see what happens. We walk to the first vent, and step on a button in the process. As we look around it seems like the button switched the direction of some vents. Interesting. We hop the vent, and land on another button. That switches the vents back to where they were. However, now the vents we can reach only go up, which looks pretty pointless, or back to where we came from. We’ll go up. And then we’ll go back down, and press the button again. Frisk’s plan ends up only switching the vent directions again, which opens up more paths. We go down and land on another button. The vents on this platform don’t change because they’re already opposite each other, but the vents on all the other platforms switch around.

This is a bit too complicated for me… Frisk shrugs and goes down again. There’s no button this time. They hop to the left, where there’s also no button. We go up, and land on a button, but that switched the vent away from the exit. Which is unfortunate. So we need to make it so that that vent goes left. Which means we need it to be right when we hop onto it, and that landing will make it go left, which is what we need. Right?

Exactly. And I think I have a plan. We go to the right and down again, and then left again. We go up.

Well now we need to make that arrow go left. How do you plan on doing that?

Easy. Frisk hops up.
But now if you go up again it'll be the wrong way.

*Just watch.* Frisk hops back down.

**What?**

*Shh.* They go up again, switching the vent to the right. *See? Now when we hop up, it'll swing the way we need it to.*

...*Oh. I feel stupid.*

*You’re not stupid, you just don’t think that way. You’ve done plenty of the other puzzles!*

**Yeah, but this is the complicated one. I should have been able to figure it out.**

*You would have, with more time! But you seem to like progressing more than exploring, so I just did it for us.*

**Yeah, thanks, I guess. Alphys probably could’ve been more help, though. Monsters don’t even need the bathroom, she was obviously just avoiding helping us.**

*Well, that’s ok. She can take some time off if she needs.*

**Time off from stealing my job? Why don’t I get time off?**

*I mean, you could just stop helping, but I feel like you enjoy it too much.*

...*Whatever, let’s just go.* Before we can do that, Alphys updates her status. ‘OMG? ppl think Mew Mew 2 is better than Mew Mew 1? LOLLLLL that’s a joke right…’ *Are you serious? We have to listen to this now? This is oficially the ‘Bad Opinion Zone.’*

*Do you have an opinion on Mew Mew?*

**Yes. Both of them are terrible!**

*Have you played them?*

...*No, but it sounds like it’s for nerds, so…*

*You can’t have an opinion on something you’ve never tried!*

I can and I will. *Look at this microwave. I already don’t like it, and I don’t even know what’s inside. What’s its deal? ...It’s not even a microwave, it’s a safe!*

*Oh, another mouse hole!*

**Oh. Mice again. I see.**

*See what?*

Knowing the mouse might one day hack the computerized safe and get the cheese… It fills you with determination.

*You’ve got me!*
Yep. Look inside the safe. They do as I ask, revealing a piece of cheese locked away in there. The lasers have melted the edges of the cheese. ...It’s stuck to the table. Alphys updates her status. ‘omg... DONT THEY GET IT RUINS Mew Mew’s ENTIRE CHARACTER ARC?’ Someone’s still upset…

She’s passionate!

Passionately annoying! And then she updates her status again. ‘My Mew Mew 2 Review: Mew Mew Kissy Cutie 2 Is Neither Kissy Nor Cutie. It’s Trash. 0 stars. Calm down maybe!

Says you.

What?

You’re never calm. You’re the least calm person I’ve ever met!

Please. I’m as chill as a cu-

“Hey! You! Stop!”

What now? To answer my question, two guards appear from somewhere behind us. Whaddya know, it’s the same two guards that were guarding the elevator by Alphys’s lab.

“We’ve, like, received an anonymous tip about a human wearing a striped shirt.” The first knight says. “They told us they were wandering around Hotland right now…”

We’re caught. It was nice knowing you, Chara.

This isn’t over yet, let’s just wait and see.

“I know, sounds scary, huh? Well, just stay chill. We’ll bring you someplace safe, OK?” The guard says.

“Oh, ok,” Frisk sighs in relief. The guards lead the way back where we came, but stop suddenly. Frisk has to skid on the ground to avoid bumping into one of them. The second guard says something, but it’s too quiet for us to hear.

“...Huh? What is it, bro? The shirt they’re wearing? ...like, what about it?” He turns around and looks at us closer. Frisk tries to look as innocent as they can, which is pretty good. “Bro… Are you thinkin… What I’m thinkin? Bummer. This is like… mega embarrassing. We, like, actually totally have to kill you and stuff.”

The Royal Guard attacks!

“Um, check!” Frisk says uncertainly.

Which one?

Uh, number 2?

RG 02 has 8 attack and 4 defence. A Royal Guard member with stuffy armor.

Why is his armor so dirty?

Probably to keep cool, since it blocks the heat?
“Like, team attack!” The first guard says, the second echoing him with less enthusiasm. Their attacks come in stars of light reflecting off of their armor. A creative attack, I like it. The second one seems to watch our movements carefully.

“Check 01!” Frisk says.

**Also has 8 attack and 4 defense. A Royal Guard member with shining, polished armor.**

*So how is this one not dying of heat, since his armor is clean?*

**Well, the polish might cool it down some, maybe.**

“Like, give us the soul, brah,” 01 says, making the other laugh the tiniest bit. Their combined magic bounces around the ground, Frisk frantically hopping around to avoid being hit. 01 polishes the armor covering his face between turns.

*Could I say something to make them not fight?*

**Like what?** Frisk considers the guards, and how they steal glances at each other while the other’s not looking.

_Hmmm…_ Frisk creeps over to 01 and whispers to him. “Just be honest with your feelings!”

“Like, what? I don’t get it.” 01 says.

“…hmph.” 02 grunts. He seems… disappointed? 01’s armor shines enough to hurt, and we lose 4 HP.

*…Maybe if I clean 02’s armor.*

**With?**

_Um…_ 01’s polish! “Clean!” As Frisk says this, they jump over to 01 and steal the polishing rag from his hand, and in one fluid motion they swipe at 02’s armor. The cooling dirt begins to wash away.

“Like, prepare to die, right?” 01 says.

“...getting... warmer…” 02 says.

*It seems to be working. At least, something’s happening.*

*Yeah, I’ll just keep doing that._* While they dodge the magic attacks, Frisk also uses every opportunity to swipe at 02’s armor. And since Frisk is the dodge master, it doesn’t take long.

“...can’t… take it… armor… too… HOT!!!” 02 takes off the top of his armor, revealing his very muscular, scaly chest. He must be some sort of dragon monster. 01 shuffles his feet nervously, trying and failing to keep his eyes away from 02. “...much better.”

“Be honest!” Frisk whispers to 01, repeating what they told him earlier.

“I… I…” 01’s shaking, making his magic sway drunkenly. “D-dude… I can’t… I can’t take this anymore! Not like this!! Like, 01… I like, LIKE you, bro! The way you fight… The way you talk… I love doing team attacks with you. I love standing here with you, bouncing and waving our weapons in sync… 02… I, like, want to stay like this forever…”
02 doesn’t respond at first. 01 starts shaking nervously again, scared his feelings won’t be reciprocated.

“Uh… I mean, uh… Psych! Gotcha, bro!!! Haha!” 01 laughs anxiously.

“...01,” 02 says.

“Y-yeah, bro??”

“...do you want to… get some ice cream… after this?” 02 asks. 01 seems to light up.

“Sure, dude! Haha!” The two guards look at each other happily.

And my work here is done. Frisk spares the guards, and earns 100 gold.

Wait, you knew that would happen?

Yeah, it was obvious 01 liked 02! Did you not see it?

...Um, no, I guess not.

Wow. And I thought I was blind!

Pfft. Alphys updates her status. ‘oopswait how’s the human doing?’ Yeah, Alphys, stop ignoring us. She updates it again moments later. ‘Top Ten Shows That Make You Forget To Do Your Frickin Job.’

Let me guess: Mew Mew?

Probably. We make our way through the rest of the room, admiring the puffs of steam coming out of some of the mechanisms. Hotland’s pretty cool, in a warm way. After that room is total darkness, again. I smell Mettaton.

Alphys calls. “Okay, I’m back! A-another dark room, huh? Don’t worry! M-my hacking skills have got things covered!” The room lights up, but not all of it. There’s a little square of light where we’re standing, and from what I can tell, a cardboard wall in front of us. Through the hole we can see a camera pointed at us.

Hold on, I’ll see what’s going on. I tug, and with much more force than I was expecting I’d need, I separate and poke my head around the corner. I call back to Frisk, “It looks like a news show. Mettaton’s sitting right here, and it looks like the set can move if it wants.” I merge with them, and share my memory of what it looks like. They hum.

“Are you serious?” Alphys asks.

“OHHHHHH YESSS!!!” Mettaton says with gusto. “GOOD EVENING, BEAUTIES AND GENTLEBEAUTIES! THIS IS METTATON, REPORTING LIVE FROM MTT NEWS! AN INTERESTING SITUATION HAS ARISEN IN EASTERN HOTLAND! FORTUNATELY, OUR CORRESPONDENT IS OUT THERE, REPORTING LIVE!” He turns to address us.

“BRAVE CORRESPONDENT! PLEASE FIND SOMETHING NEWSWORTHY TO REPORT! OUR TEN WONDERFUL VIEWERS ARE WAITING FOR YOU!!”

This might be a little difficult with only a couple square feet of viewing space.

Should we just grab the first thing that we see?
No, that’s no fun. Besides, I smell a dog.

Wow, strong nose.

I know, right? It’s a blessing and a curse. Frisk makes a beeline for where they ‘smell’ the dog, and the cardboard news set follows us, always keeping us centered in the square of vision.

“What a sensational opportunity for a story! I can see the headline now: ‘A dog exists somewhere.’ Frankly, I’m blown away.” Mettaton gushes.

We’re reporting this one? Not even looking at the other things?

Yes. The dog is very important. Frisk turns back to the camera, and gestures dramatically at the dog, throwing their arms towards it.

“Attention, viewers! Our correspondent has found… a dog!” Through the hole, we can see a sign facing Mettaton beyond the camera that says, ‘cue audience awws’.

“That’s right, folks! It’s the feel-good story of the year! Look at its little ears, tiny paws, fluffy tail… wait a second.”

What now?

Probably something stupid.

Or something cool?

“THAT’S NOT A TAIL! THAT’S… a fuse!” Mettaton exclaims.

Nope, it’s stupid.

“THAT’S RIGHT… THAT DOG… IS A BOMB!!!” The dog’s tail lights on fire, and burns down at a slow pace.

I really hope that’s not hurting it!

I highly doubt that, I’ve seen this dog before. You know, when I was alive. I’m pretty sure it’s indestructible.

“But don’t panic! You haven’t even seen the rest of the room yet!!!” The cardboard set falls apart, and Mettaton jetpacks above us. The lights flare on, revealing the other objects that we could have ‘reported.’ “Oh my! It seems everything in this area is actually a bomb! That present’s a bomb! That basketball’s a bomb! Even my words are…” Frisk sense his voice travel through the air with their bat powers, then hit the ground and explode. “Brave correspondent… if you don’t defuse all the bombs…” He flies to the left, directing our attention to a massive bomb. “This big bomb will blow you to smithereens in two minutes! Then you won’t be reporting ‘live’ any longer!”

…you know what? Even though he’s a jerk, I can appreciate that pun.

I’m glad you can still appreciate things that make you angry.

“How terrible! How disturbing! Our nine viewers are going to love watching this! Good luck, darling!”
Dog first! Frisk reaches for the dog, but pauses to answer the phone.

“D-don’t worry! I installed a bomb-diffusing program on your phone!”

Why did she think to do that?

It’s a useful thing to have, I guess. I think it’s reasonable.

“Use the ‘defuse’ option when the bomb is in the defuse zone! N-now, go get ‘em!” Alphys says.

Frisk makes a beeline for the dog, who is now laying on its side. “Hang on, I got you!” They say gently. They pull out their cell phone, and open up an app called ‘bomb defuser.’ It looks like a camera, and scans the dog.

Wait for it… The scanner’s wobbly, and they wait for the opportune moment to press the button, which then shines a green beam of light on the dog. Dog defused!

“Nice job!” Alphys praises. “Keep heading around the room! Try to go for the one in the bottom-left next!” We follow her advice and go for the one in the bottom left. To get there we surpass a couple lasers, two orange ones and a blue one, and find a CD with a skull on it.

Defuse the game! They scan it with the app with pretty good timing, and the game is defused. We go right, and see a script sliding back and forth across a moving sidewalk. We chase it down, and defuse it. There’s a vent leading up to a present, so we hop up there next. Defuse the present!

How are we doing on time? Frisk asks as they scan the present, which somehow looks familiar. The type of bomb is slightly different than the others, and the scanner scans it vertically instead of horizontally. It still works, though, luckily.

50 seconds. That’s plenty, right?

Maybe. How do we get that water? It’s going to fast!

I don’t know. We’ll cross that bridge when we get there. We go to the left instead, and intercept a basketball as it bounces through the air. Basket bomb!

Are you proud of that one?

A little.

“Great job! Head for the center! I’m using, uh, EM fields to trap the glass of water there!” Alphys says, and hangs up.

Oh, that’s how. There you go.

Thanks, you’re very helpful.

What can I say? It’s what I live for. Frisk laughs, and points the phone at the glass. It zooms back and forth, on the verge of being too fast to see. That’s an extremely agile glass of water. Also, you have 24 seconds left. Frisk watches the glass zoom around for a bit, then jabs the button.

Whew! Got it! Mettaton flies back over.

“WELL DONE, DARLING! YOU’VE DEACTIVATED ALL OF THE BOMBS! IF YOU DIDN’T DEACTIVATE THEM, THEN THE BIG BOMB WOULD HAVE EXPLODED IN
TWO MINUTES. NOW IT WON’T EXPLODE IN TWO MINUTES! INSTEAD IT’LL EXPLODE IN TWO SECONDS! GOODBYE, DARLING!”

Frisk flinches and covers their face, and holds that position. A couple moments pass, and they cautiously lower their arms. “...Nothing happened?”

“AH. IT SEEMS THE BOMB ISN’T GOING OFF.” Mettaton says. The phone rings.

“That’s b-because!!! While you were monologuing … I…!!! I f… fix… Um… I ch-change…” Alphys stutters.

“Oh no. You deactivated the bomb with your hacking skills.” Mettaton supplies.

“Yeah! That’s what I did!”

“CURSES! IT SEEMS I’VE BEEN FOILED AGAIN! CURSE YOU, HUMAN! CURSE YOU, DR. ALPHYS, FOR HELPING SO MUCH!” Mettaton laments.

Is it just me or… does this seem a little too cartoony? I mean, more than usual.

I haven’t been around them long enough to tell what’s weird and what’s not, so I have no clue. It might be completely normal.

“But I don’t curse my eight wonderful viewers for tuning in!!!” Mettaton continues. “Until next time, darling!”

“W-wow… W-we really showed him, huh? ...H-he, I know I was kind of weird at first… But I really think I’m getting more… Uh, more… M-more confident about guiding you! S-so don’t worry about that b-big d-dumb robot… I-I’ll protect you from him! A-and if it really c-came down to it, we could just t-turn… Um, nevermind. Later!”

Turn what!?

Probably nothing. Turn and run? I’d follow that advice if it got too bad.

...I don’t think it’s that. But hey, the exit’s opened up now, so let’s go.

The next trail shows an impressive view of the Core, and we stop to look at it for a second.

We’re going there?

Yeah. Slowly but surely, we’ll get there.

Chapter End Notes

A/N: Chara is me with facebook. I just don’t care about what any of these people have to say! Also, I couldn’t, for the life of me, figure out the vent puzzle on my own. Well, even with like three other people (who weren’t really helping that much anyway) we couldn’t do it! So I looked it up, found it was super simple, and felt like an idiot. So… yeah.
So someone needs to tell me to stop writing one-shots based on this and make me actually finish the story before even worrying about that stuff! Ahhhhhhhhh!

Anyways, please tell me what you think! I love the feedback! And check out the askblog while you're at it, now with kinda-ok drawings! saltychara.tumblr.com
Chapter Notes

Things to listen to while reading this:
Spider dance fanlyrics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HW-Jr4M4w90
Oh! One true love (female cover): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgtpcjwCPf4

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chapter 20: Got your marionette strings in my hands~

The phone rings. “Um… I noticed you’ve been kind of quiet… Are you w-worried about meeting Asgore…?” Alphys asks.

“…Kinda?” Frisk says hesitantly.

“W-well, don’t worry, okay? Th-the king is a really nice guy… I’m sure you can talk to him, and… W-with your human soul, you can pass through the barrier! S-so no worrying, OK? J-just forget about it and smile.” Alphys hangs up.

You’re worried?

_I mean, yeah, he’s the king of all monsters. There’s no reason not to be worried._

Well, for one, he’s actually really nice, like Alphys said. He’ll definitely want to talk before fight.

_But he’s the king! Everyone says I’ll have to fight him before I can leave!_

_I mean, yeah, probably, but it won’t be that bad. Trust me?_

…I guess. Let’s just keep going for now, ok?

Yeah. We continue on the path, and find the next elevator. Where do you want to go?

_Um… Left floor 3?_ They press the button, and outside that the area looks different. It’s a little darker, and more purple colors than red, which is a little unusual for Hotland. And it’s dirtier than I remember, cobwebs everywhere…

Oh. Frisk, be careful, I think I know who lives here. Frisk nods, a little on edge now, and walks forwards, revealing a confections table manned by a well dressed spider lady.

_Huh?_ Frisk looks at something on the table.

It’s a spider donut. It looks more… Rubbery than usual. And this looks like some sort of powerful bracelet… Wait. It’s just a croissant. Frisk finally waves hello to the spider lady.

“Welcome to our parlor, dearie~ Interested in some spider pastries? All proceeds go to real spiders~” She asks. The sign next to her says the same.
“Um, yes.” Frisk says. The lady gestures with one of her many arms to the webs by the table. Frisk looks at the smaller one, and their eyes widen. “9,999 gold for a donut!? They whisper in disbelief, to avoid offending the spiders. The bigger web demands the same for Spider Cider. They walk over to a monster holding a donut in despair. “You bought one?” They ask.

“I… I ended up buying a donut… I… I didn’t want to, but that girl… even though I told her no, she… she kept staring at me in this creepy way and licking her lips. N… now I’m outta cash.”

“That’s rough, buddy.” Frisk says, then giggles for some reason. We keep walking. The next room holds a maze of arrows, vents, and platforms, the goal presumably to get to the other side. The phone rings,

“Hi, Alphys here! This room is like the room we saw before. There are two puzzles to the north and south… You’ll have to solve them both to proceed! …A-also… I’d like to say! I don’t really… Like giving away puzzle solutions. But if you need help, just call me, ok? Actually, wait, I have an idea! Let’s be friends on UnderNet! Then you can just ping me when you need help! …Wait, we’re already friends, aren’t we?” Alphys asks.

“Yes,” I say. I silently add, And you’re really annoying!

“I signed you up, didn’t I?”

“Yes,” Frisk says.

“You’ve been reading my posts the whole time… Well! I hope! You agree with me! About Mew Mew 2!”

I agree that it’s garbage! But so’s the first one, soo…

For the last time, there’s no need to be rude!

Let’s just do the puzzle. We navigate our way to the south, where the first puzzle lies. Getting there’s tricky, though, as it involves conveyor belts and lasers. The blue ones are moving, but so are we on the conveyor. In order to stay still for the lasers, we have to walk backwards to stay in place. It works, surprisingly enough. We do get hit once, though, and lose some health.

The phone rings. “Hey! This um, doesn’t have anything to do with guiding you… but… Uhh, hey, would you want to watch a human TV show together??? Sometime??? It’s called, um, M… Mew Mew Kissy Cutie…” Alphys asks.

“Sure!” Frisk says.

“R-really!? It’s so good! It’s um, my favorite show! It’s all about this human girl named Mew Mew who has cat ears! Which humans don’t have! S- so she’s all sensitive about them! But like… Eventually! She realizes that her ears don’t matter! That her friends like her despite the ears! It’s really moving! Whoops, spoilers. Also, this sounds weird, but she has the power! To control the minds of anyone she kisses! She kisses people and controls them to fix her problems!! They don’t remember anything after the kiss I mean!! BUT IF SHE MISSES THE KISS!!! THEN!! Then, uhh, and, uh, also I mean, of course. Eventually, she realizes that controlling people- OKAY WELL I almost spoiled the whole show, but, uhhhh, I think you’d really like it!!! We should watch it! After you get through all this!” She hangs up.

Does she ever pause to breathe?
Do monsters need to breathe?

Well, their bodies are made of magic, so… I don’t know? Huh.

Weird.

We finally reach the puzzle. It's the same shooter one from before, but a little more complicated. There’s only one shot. After some finagling, we manage to line it up and take out the opposing ship. The screen congratulates us. We go out of the puzzle, and back onto a conveyor belt.

Wait! There’s a cactus! Frisk runs in place to look at the cactus, which is kind of weird in my opinion.

Sometimes you have to stop to smell the flowers, I guess. Frisk smiles. We go back through the vent room, and up to the north and the next puzzle. But wait! Tsundereplane attacks! Not because it’s jealous Vulkin is paying attention to you!

Oh no!

Also, our health is in bad shape. Yeesh. Heal, please.

Can do. Frisk eats an Astronaut food, bringing us up to 16 HP.

“You’re hurt! I’ll help you!” Vulkin says, and throws burning lava at us.

“Its not like I care or anything!” Tsundereplane says. We manage to dodge all of their combined attacks, luckily, and then Vulkin makes a smoke hoop and jumps through it.

Uh oh, I forgot how to beat Vulkins. Was it criticize?

That sounds mean, but also possibly right? I’ll try… “Vulkin, your attacks aren’t… helping…”

“Not helping… ok…” Vulkin says sadly, and stands in the corner. Only Tsundereplane attacks this turn. We approach Tsundereplane, and brush its wing. We spare Tsundereplane.

It wasn’t criticize?

Guess not. Try encourage, then. This seems to work.

“Ahh! Ahh! Does my best!” It perks up, and it’s attacks become extreme. We lose 4 HP as Vulkin parades around us proudly. We spare Vulkin and earn 100 gold.

Only 300 away from Temmie’s college.

We’ll get there. But first, we go solve the next shooter puzzle. We just mess around with it until the path is clear, shoot, and then we’re done. When we leave there’s two kids standing outside the door. I can tell they’re kids because they’re wearing striped shirts.

“Hi!” Frisk greets. The kids don’t seem very interested. “Um… So, Mettaton?” Frisk struggles for conversation topics.

“My fave Mettaton Moment (™)? Right when everything looks the baddest, he poses dramatically. Like when he’s on a cooking show and the eggs don’t turn out right,” The kid says. Frisk shrugs and asks the other kid what they have to say about Mettaton.
“My fave Mettaton Moment (TM) is when he beats up the heel-turning villains! Even if it’s during what’s supposed to be a quiz show,” The kid says. Frisk shrugs.

We hop around the vents so that we’re at the exit door. It opens for us dramatically, and find a SAVE point. It’s much colder here, considering it’s Hotland. It puts both of us on edge.

The smell of cobwebs fills the air… You’re filled with determination. But be careful, okay? This looks like a spider entrance. Probably belongs to Muffet.

Muffet?

Yeah, the creepy spider girl. She used to live in the Ruins, but I guess she moved? She runs a pastry parlor. Kind of snooty, if I remember right. Only cares about money.

Oh. Yeah, we bought a donut from her, remember?

And some cider. We still have one of those, right?

Yeah, I think so. Let me check. They look at the dimensional pockets in their phone, which shouldn’t really be scientifically possible, and see that we do indeed still have some Spider Cider.

Keep that on hand, we might need it.

Kay. We walk forwards, into the purple abyss. The next room holds darkness and spiderwebs, two of my least favorite things. Frisk accidentally steps on one, and then freezes as they hear a laugh over their head. “Ah!” They exclaim in surprise.

“Ahuhuhuhu… Did you hear what they just said?” We tentatively go forward, only to pause again as the voice speaks again. “They said a human wearing a striped shirt will come through. I heard that they hate spiders.” Frisk steps onto a path of pure webbing, slowing their movements as they pull each foot out of it. “I heard that they love to stomp on them.”

I really hope I’m not squishing spiders by standing in these webs…

You’re probably not? They’d make a bigger deal out of it.

“I heard that they like to tear their legs off. ...I heard…” Frisk’s trapped to their waist in web, and they struggle to move. “that they’re awfully stingy with their money.” Muffet reveals herself in a spotlight, smiling at us like we’re an interesting new kind of food. “Ahuhuhuhu… You think your taste is too refined for our pastries, don’t you, deary?”

Frisk tries to protest, but some of the webs had fallen from the roof and gotten caught in their mouth. It tastes gross.

“Ahuhuhuhu… I disagree with that notion. I think your taste… Is exactly what this next batch needs!” She giggles, and brings us into a FIGHT.

Muffet’s trapped you!

“Mmm…” Um, c-check!

Muffet- Attack 38.8 defense 18.8. If she invites you to her parlor, excuse yourself.

“Don’t look so blue, deary!” Muffet pours some purple stuff onto Frisk’s Soul, wrapping it up tightly. “I think purple’s a good look on you, ahuhuhu~”
You’re trapped in a strange purple web! The Soul is attached to many strings of web, all controlled by Muffet. There’s three strings that we can maneuver between, but that’s it. A sign pops up that says, “Up next, spiders.”

W-what can I do?

You could… Struggle? Or pay her, she likes money. We have 706 gold at the moment.

I suppose I could spare… 10 gold? Frisk uses a free hand to dig in their pockets for the money.

“Why so pale? You should be proud~” Muffet says. She does a synchronized dance with the other spiders, never stopping grinning.

You okay?

I really don’t like spiders.

You’re scared of them?

...Yeah, I am. But Muffet’s also very scary! More scary than spiders, I think.

She is a spider, though.

She’s a humanoid spider, which is worse!

I guess. She’s also kinda French looking, and that’s kinda scary. Do you want to give her more money?

I shouldn’t, Temmie’s college!

Ok, then, struggle. They do as I suggest.

“Proud that you’re going to make a delicious cake! Ahuhuhu~” Muffet giggles at us.

Also she wants to eat me! Not cool!

You’re right. Hey, do you think drinking the spider cider would work?

It might offend her, to be honest. Maybe in a while, I’ll just… ask for mercy?

Go for it?

“Um, Miss Muffet, you wouldn’t want to let me go, would you?” Frisk stutters.

“Let you go? Don’t be silly~” Muffet replies, tidying the web around, making a little tighter. “Your Soul is going to make every spider very happy~~~” On this attack there’s donuts, and we get hit twice. HP at 12, up next cupcakes. I think. Muffet pours us a cup of spiders, and offers it to us. Frisk shakes their head.

One more, then we’ll try the Cider, ok?

Sure.

“Oh, how rude of me! I almost forgot to introduce you to my pet~ It’s breakfast time, isn’t it? Have fun, you two~” Muffet laughs. A huge cupcake monster, more than twice our size, comes out of
nowhere to try and eat our Soul. Meanwhile, spiders and donuts are hitting us left and right, until suddenly-

GAME OVER

~~~
You cannot give up just yet! Chara, stay determined!
~~~

We wake up at our last SAVE, right in front of Muffet’s domain.

Hey, Chara?

Yeah?

Who’s the voice that talks whenever we die?

Oh. Um. My, my dad.

What was he talking about?

The, ah, last time I died. When I died for real and became a ghost, I mean.

Oh yeah. I’ve been meaning to ask. If you have SAVE points and Determination, how did you end up dying for real?

Well… I… kinda did it on purpose? For a reason, I mean. My death accomplished something. Or, at least, it was supposed to. But by the time it didn’t work, it was too late to reload.

Oh. That’s… sorry for asking?

It’s okay, you have the right to be curious. Just don’t, like, pry through my memories or anything. Please just ask first, okay?

Yeah, sure! I don’t want to invade your privacy, even though at this point that’s actually pretty hard, since we’re sharing brains and all.

Gotcha. We just need to keep a little distance from thought reading.

Of course. We reluctantly go through the spider webs again, listening to Muffet’s creepy laughter.

Maybe we should just start with the Cider, though, this time.

Agreed. It might not work, though…

...Fair point, but I think it might. There’s a good chance. We struggle to escape the web again as Muffet reveals herself, finishes her speech, threatens to eat us, and pulls us into battle. Muffet traps you! Our turn is first.

Guess I’ll just… Frisk takes out the Spider Cider and drinks it, not helping anything because we’re already at full health.

“Huh?” Muffet says in confusion. “Where did you get that…? Did you steal it? Oh, my pet– It’s time to show them what we do with thieves~” She grins wickedly.
Oh no. A spider crawls up to Muffet and whispers something urgent, waving a piece of paper at her.

“Huh? A telegram from the spiders in the Ruins? What? They’re saying that they saw you, and... you helped donate to their cause! Oh my, this has all been a big misunderstanding~ I thought you were someone who hated spiders~ The person who asked for that Soul... They must have meant a DIFFERENT human in a striped shirt~ Sorry for all the trouble~ Ahuhuhuhu~ I’ll make it up to you~ You can come back here anytime... And, for no charge at all... I’ll wrap you up and let you play with my pet again! Ahuhuhuhuhuhuhu~ Just kidding~ I’ll Spare you now~”

We spare Muffet in return, and thank her for the fun. Even though I wasn’t sure if ‘fun’ is how I’d describe dying via cupcake monster.

The next room is Ruins-purple, also differing from the normal reds and oranges of Hotland. There’s a poster on the wall, advertising a Mettaton show.

**Looks like it’s almost time for the performance.**

*That doesn’t bode well...*

**Nope.** We continue into a room that looks like the set of a Romeo and Juliet play of some kind. There’s a balcony, and vines.

“OH? THAT HUMAN?” A voice calls from above.

“Aaand here we go.”

“COULD IT BE...?” Mettaton asks. We look up as he emerges from the balcony, wearing a blue, sparkling dress over his square robot body. “...MY ONE TRUE LOVE?” He holds his dress up in his satin-gloved hands and rolls down the stairs, thumping loudly on each one. We awkwardly wait for him to get to the bottom. Finally he rolls to us, and starts to sing.

**Really? Are we serious right now?**

“Oh my love... Please run away... Monster King... Forbids your stay... Humans must... Live far apart...” He dances slowly around us as he sings.

**Frisk’s life: The Musical**

*This is cool, though! Stop being so sarcastic all the time!*

**Never.**

“Even if... It breaks my heart...” Mettaton continues. Cherry blossoms rain down from somewhere, and the music swells. “They’ll put you... In the dungeon... It’ll suck... And then you’ll die a lot... Really sad... You’re gonna die... Cry cry cry... So sad it’s happening.” He finishes the song, laying his hand on Frisk’s head. A shooting star goes off in the distance.

**Something tells me you’re not sorry...**

“So SAD.” Mettaton switches to his regular voice. “SO SAD THAT YOU ARE GOING TO THE DUNGEON.” He pulls out a pad with several buttons on it. “WELL, TOODLES!” A trapdoor opens beneath us, sending us falling into darkness. We land on a regular Hotland™ platform attached to a conveyor belt. “OH NO! WHATEVER SHALL I DO? MY LOVE HAS BEEN CAST AWAY INTO THE DUNGEON. A DUNGEON WITH A PUZZLE SO DASTARDLY, MY PARAMOUR WILL SURELY PARISH!” He directs our attention to the right, where
spotlights suddenly appear.

Oh, it’s the puzzle from Snowdin again!

Is it? That’s what it looked like?

Yep. Pretty neat, huh?

It’s a lot more complicated than you made it seem.

Yep.

...Like, a lot. And this time if we fail, we die.

Good thing there’s two of us, isn’t it?

“O, HEAVENS HAVE MERCY! THE HORRIBLE COLORED TILE MAZE! EACH COLORED TILE HAS ITS OWN SADISTIC FUNCTION. FOR EXAMPLE, A GREEN ONE SOUNDS A NOISE, AND THEN YOU MUST FIGHT A MONSTER. RED TILES WILL… ACTUALLY, WAIT A SECOND. DIDN’T WE SEE THIS PUZZLE ABOUT A HUNDRED ROOMS AGO?” Mettaton pauses.

I wonder if it was exactly 100 rooms ago. That'd be cool.

Yeah.

“THAT’S RIGHT. YOU REMEMBER ALL THE RULES, DON’T YOU?” He doesn’t give us time to answer. “GREAT… THEN I WON’T WASTE YOUR TIME REPEATING THEM!! ...OH, AND YOU’D BETTER HURRY. BECAUSE IF YOU DON’T GET THROUGH IN 30 SECONDS… YOU’LL BE INCINERATED BY THESE JETS OF FIRE!!” A wall of flames ignites behind us, casting heat into the already warm air. “AHAAHAHAHAHAA! AHAHA...HA… HA! MY POOR LOVE! I’M SO FILLED WITH GRIEF, I CAN’T STOP LAUGHING! GOOD LUCK, DARLING!”

Mettaton starts singing again, but we can’t focus on that right now. Frisk slides across the conveyor belt, and into the colored tiles. We scramble around frantically, getting shocked, stepping into water, sliding across into other tiles, smelling like lemons, and smelling like soap, and just generally just not getting anywhere. We do get about halfway, though.

“OOOOOH, I’M SO SORRY! LOOKS LIKE YOU’RE OUT OF TIME!!!” Mettaton says. The firewalls close in, only a few feet away from us now. “HERE COME THE FLAMES, DARLING!” They creep closer. “THEY’RE CLOSING IN!” They get so close that Frisk has to tuck their arms in front of themself to keep from getting burned. “GETTING! CLOSER! OH MY! ANY MINUTE NOW!!” But they don’t get any closer, luckily. Mettaton ‘discreetly’ coughs into his hand.

And then, the phone rings. “Watch out!! I’ll save you!! I’m hacking into the firewall right now!” Frisk laughs quietly.

What?

She’s hacking into the firewall!

Yeah?

Wow, I thought you’d be all over that pun!
Pun? What pun?

Really? Huh. The firewall! It's a computer think, you know? And there’s a wall of fire right there that she’s hacking into. It's pretty clever, to be honest.

Interesting.

“OH NO!! HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN??? FOILED AGAIN BY THE BRILLIANT DOCTOR ALPHYS!!” There’s an awkward silence. “THA-”

“That’s right! Come on, Mettaton, give up already! You’ll never be able to defeat us… Not as long as we work together! Your puzzle’s over… Now go home and leave us alone!”

“PUZZLE? OVER? ALPHYS, DARLING, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT…? DID YOU FORGET WHAT THE GREEN TILES DO? THEY MAKE A SOUND, AND THEN YOU HAVE TO FIGHT A MONSTER. WELL, DARLING… THAT MONSTER… IS ME!!” He descends upon us, dress billowing in the wind. Luckily he’s a robot.

Mettaton attacks!

Sigh. Spare!

“THIS IS IT, DARLING! SAY GOODBYE!” Mettaton taunts. Our phone rings. “IS THAT YOUR PHONE? YOU’D BETTER ANSWER IT!”

What a considerate robot…

Yeah, kinda weird.

“H-hey!” Alphys says. “Th-this seems bad, but don’t worry!! Th-there’s one last thing I installed on your phone…! You see that yellow button…? Go for this phone’s Act menu and press it!!!”

We press the yellow button. The phone is resonating with Mettaton’s presence…!

“THIS IS IT, DARLING! SAY GOODBYE!”

I swear he just said that…

Yeah, kinda weird.

Don’t you start! Frisk’s Soul hovers in front of Mettaton, and then starts to turn of its own accord.

WOAH that feels really weird! Not sure I like it! Their Soul turns completely upside down, making Frisk a little dizzy and disoriented. Then it turns bright yellow. Don’t think I like that very much… It’s all buzzy and static-y!

“Now shoot!” Says Alphys.

Um… Frisk puts their concentration into their Soul, and a little beam of energy shoots out. They keep doing that, and Mettaton starts shaking, tiny dents appearing.

“OOOH! OOOOOOH! YOU’VE DEFEATED ME! HOW CAN THIS BE, YOU WERE STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT, ETC.” Mettaton slides away, waving to some kind of audience probably. We leave the battle.
“L-looks like you beat him!” Alphys says. “Y-you did a really great job out there.”

“All thanks to you!” Frisk says, smiling.

“What? Oh no, I mean… You were the one doing everything cool! I just wrote some silly programs for your phone. …um, h-hey, this might sound strange, but… c-can I tell you something?”

“Go ahead!”

“B-before I met you, I d-didn’t really… I didn’t really like myself very much.” Alphys admits.

**Oh, no, feelings. I’m gonna sit this one out.**

*Rude! Be sensitive!*

**Eh.**

“For a long time, I f-felt like a total screwup.” Alphys continues. Frisk hums in sympathy. “L-like I couldn’t do a-anything w-without… W-without letting everyone down. B-but…! Guiding you has made me feel… A lot better about myself. So… thanks for letting me help you.”

“Aw, Alphys! You’re the best!” Frisk says. I can almost hear Alphys blushing.

“…Uhhh, anyway, we’re almost to the Core. It’s just past MTT Resort. Come on! Let’s finish this!”

“Yeah!” Frisk pumps their fist in the air, and continues down the deactivated tile puzzle grinning. They skip up the stairs, extra encouraged to keep going.

**Sounds like I should give more motivational speeches.**

*No, if you hear them too often they lose their effect!*

**But you’re so happy!**

*Aren’t you?*

**I don’t really see why you’re so excited.**

*We’re so close, Chara! Didn’t you hear Alphys? We’re almost to the Core, which means we’re almost to the Capital, which means we’re close to freeing everyone!*

**Weird logic you have there.**

*Not really! They see the Nice Cream guy, and 01 and 02 standing nearby. “Hi! Do you have any Nice Cream?” Frisk asks.*

“Hey! It’s you again!” He says. “Business is excellent here! These two fellas bought ALL my ice cream! I’ve actually sold out of everything!!! …sorry.”

“That’s ok!” Frisk says. They’re just happy that everyone else is happy, too.

“Wait! I’ve still got something for you!” Frisk stops mid-turn to look at Nice Cream guy curiously. “…A big smile! How about that!”

“Wonderful!” Frisk smiles back. They go over to the Royal Guards, and greet them.
“Oh, hey. We’re, like, taking a rain check on that whole killing-you thing. Like, don’t tell Undyne about this, OK?” 01 says. 02 is too busy making heart eyes at 01 to really take notice of us. He seems happy.

**We can go up or forwards. Which one first?**

...*Onwards!* Frisk strides forwards. They see the little fire dude again. He sees us first.

“Hey, hey! Did you remember my name?” He asks.

**Well, did you?**

*Of course!* “Yes, Heats Flamesman!” Frisk says. His jaw drops.

“Wh-WHAT!? You REMEMBER!? How could I be so easily defeateeeeeeeded!?” Sadly we have to leave him there like that, eyes popping and jaw gaping.

**Up?**

*Guess so.* We do that and see a note lying on the ground. Sans is also there, but somehow I manage to convince Frisk that the note is more important. Sans can wait.

**The note says, ‘Hey! Go up the creepy alleyway on the right for some great deals!’**

...*Seems legit.*

**Agreed. Let’s go.**

*But Sans?*

He can wait! I want to go into the creepy alleyway! He’d probably drag us into something stupid anyway, and then we might never go in!

...*Fair point, I guess.*

**It’s not like he’s gonna be gone when we get back! We’ll be right around the corner!**

...*Fiimmneeee.* They know they can’t win against me. If I had a face I know I’d be smirking. We go into the alleyway.

“Hey! Check it out!” Says a girl who is also a crocodile.

“Yeah! Check it out!” Says a similar girl that is a cat.

“Hi! Um… What can I buy here? I heard about great deals?” Frisk asks.

“You should buy ALL our stuff!” Says one of them, passing us a list of things for sale.

*Empty gun and cowboy hat? Those sound like human things. I should buy them.*

**You can barely afford them! And then you won’t have money left for Temmie!**

*It’s not that bad…*

Frisk, if you bought both of those you’d have literally 6 gold left. I don’t think it’s worth it.
Well… I think it is! From what I’ve seen, nobody cares about any of the humans that were here before me. I’m going to make sure they’re not forgotten!

That’s not your job, though.

Well, I’m making it my job. “I’ll take the gun and the hat,” Frisk says, sliding the money over the counter.

“Bullets NOT included.” The cat girl says, handing Frisk the stuff.

“Neat. So, tell me about yourselves.” Frisk leans one elbow on the counter.

“I’m Bratty, and this is my best friend, Catty.” They both speak at the same time, each saying the inverse of each other. They pause, look at each other, and start laughing. Frisk giggles.

“Tell me about your wares.” Frisk says.

“The stuff inside is, like…” Bratty starts.

“TOTALLY wicked expensive,” Catty finishes.

“But, like, this stuff we found is like…”

“TOTALLY wicked cheap.”

“You should like…”

“TOTALLY wicked buy all of it?”

“So… Where do you get the stuff?” I ask. For some reason I feel like it’s kinda shady.

“I mean, like, where does anyone get guns, or food, or…” Bratty says.

“We found it in the garbage!” Catty blurts out. She covers her mouth in shock. Bratty looks at her disappointedly. Then they both go back to being preppy.

“It’s GOOD garbage!” Bratty defends.

“It’s like, really good garbage.”

“And where does the garbage come from?” Frisk asks in confusion.

“Where do we get the garbage? Like, the garbage store, duh!!” Bratty says. Frisk gives them a blank look. “……Waterfall mostly.”

“I found a gun in a dumpster!” Catty exclaims happily.

“Fair enough. And what do you know about Mettaton?” Frisk asks.

“Oh my God. Mettaton.” Bratty says dreamily.

“Oh my GOD, METTATON.” Catty says.

“He’s like… My robot husband.”

“Actually he’s like… MY robot husband!”
“I think we’re like… both going to marry him.”

“We’re both like, ALREADY married to him! He just, like, doesn’t know it yet.”

“And do either of you know the origin of Mettaton?” I ask.

“So, like, Dr. Alphys built Mettaton, right?” Bratty asks.

“That’s, like, what they TELL you.” Catty adds.

“But like… Mettaton always acts like…”

“Being built was HIS idea somehow.”

“And even right after he was built…”

“He acted like Alphys was an old friend.”

“But they’re like… Not friends anymore.”

“Yeah!!! Unlike me and Bratty!! Best friends for-EVER!!!”

“You guys know Alphys?” Frisk asks. I’m actually starting to get kind of impatient, to be honest. Even though this was my idea. Frisk can talk to people for HOURS.

“Oh my God. Alphys.” Says Bratty.

“Oh my god, ALPHYS.” Says Catty.

“She used to live on our street.”

“She was like a big sister.”

“I mean, like, if your big sister…”

“Takes you on trips to the dump.”

“She showed us the coolest places to find trash.”

“She was always collecting these weird cartoons.”

“Then she became the Royal Scientist…”

“Yeah, we haven’t seen her in forever…”

“How long has she been the Royal Scientist?” Frisk asks.

“So Alphys has always, like…” Bratty confesses.

“Thought Asgore is a SUPER cutie.”

**Gross! Ah! No!**

“So, like, I’m pretty sure she…”

“Made Mettaton to, like, totally impress him.”
Stop! I don’t wanna hear this!

“A robot with a Soul…”

“That’s, like, SUPER relevant to his hobbies!”

...Wait what? What hobbies are they talking about?

_Hush, I’m chatting up a storm! We’ll talk in a bit!

“So after seeing Mettaton, Asgore…”

“Asked her to do all this science stuff for him! But nobody’s, like, seen anything from her yet.”

“Or… her at all…”

“She must, like, just stay in her lab all day.”

“Like, live a little, girl.”

“Yeah!!! Like us!!!”

“Alright, what were you saying about Asgore?” I butt in, tired of hearing about him in only vague terms.

“Oh my God. He’s a total goober.” Bratty says.

“He’s a big, fuzzy goofball!!” Catty says.

“Like, I LOVE that guy.”

“He’s, like, SO nice.”

“God, we’re like, SO hyped for the destruction of humanity.” The two say in unison.

_Aaand that’s our cue to leave._

_Yeah, I think we’re done. Now we talk to Sans?

_Sure, I guess. It has to happen eventually.

_Yeah, what could go wrong?

_End of Part 4_

Chapter End Notes

_A/N: ...Can you tell that I didn't feel like writing the Muffet fight? My motivation jumped out a window :(

Fun fact: Catty and Bratty alone took up 5 whole pages. That seems like a lot. But I guess that's good since this ended up being shorter than usual anyway. That's what I get for wanting to save Sans for next chapter ;)
Next time: Intermission!

EDIT: Ah! Also! Askblog! saltychara.tumblr.com ...It's mostly just fan art and theory posts right now, but asks will have drawn answers and the theory posts are all pretty interesting! There's good Papyrus meta going around right now, so...
Chapter 21- Money for Cool Leg

Intermission

Sans time?

Sans time. We walk back down the alley to where Sans is still standing outside the hotel. He’s grinning, as per usual.

“hey. i heard you’re going to the core. how about grabbing some dinner with me first?” Sans asks.

“Yeah!” Frisk says.

“great, thanks for treating me.”

...With what money? We’re flat broke, mister.

“over here. i know a shortcut.” He takes Frisk’s hand, and with a pop we’re inside the Resort. There’s lively music playing.

Well this place has seen some changes. Namely Mettaton changes.

You’ve been here?

Of course. Lots of monsters lived here.

“well, here we are,” Sans says. We’re sitting across from each other at a table in the middle of the room, and no nearby tables are occupied. “so. your journey’s almost over, huh? you must really wanna go home.”

Frisk makes a face, feeling conflicted about that issue.

“hey. i know the feeling, buddo. though… maybe sometimes it’s better to take what’s given to you. down here you’ve already got food, drink, friends…”

Isn’t that what you were saying, Chara?

Yeah, but since Sans is saying it, I feel inclined to disagree.

That’s the pettiest thing I ever heard. Plus I thought you two made up?

We’ve agreed not to be openly hostile. I think.

...Sounds complicated?

Probably, yeah.

“is what you have to do…” Sans continues. “really worth it?” He turns away, looking thoughtfully into the distance. “…ah, forget it. i’m rootin’ for ya, kid.” Frisk smiles really big. “hey. let me tell you a story. so i’m a sentry in snowdin forest, right? i sit out there and watch for humans. it’s kind of
boring. fortunately, deep in the forest… there’s this HUGE locked door.”

...Would that be the door to the Ruins, by any chance? Frisk shrugs the tiniest bit.

“and it’s perfect for practicing knock knock jokes. so one day, i’m knocking ‘em out, like usual. i knock on the door and say ‘knock knock.’ and suddenly, from the other side… i hear a woman’s voice. ‘who is there?’” He says, making his voice higher pitched. It’s actually a pretty good impression of…

Toriel?

What!? Really!?

Keep listening…

“so, naturally, I respond: ‘dishes.’ ‘dishes who?’ ‘dishes a very bad joke.’” He winks at us, and Frisk giggles. “then she just howls with laughter. like it’s the best joke she’s heard in a hundred years.”

...A hundred years… I wonder if that’s just a random number he threw out?

Should we investigate that later?

Definitely.

“so I keep ‘em coming, and she keeps laughing. She’s the best audience i’ve ever had. then, after a dozen of ‘em, SHE knocks and says… ‘Knock knock!’ i say ‘whos there?’ ‘old lady!’ ‘old lady who?’ ‘oh! I did not know you could yodel!’” He winks again, even though it’s not his joke. “wow. Needless to say, this woman was extremely good. we kept telling each other jokes for hours. eventually, i had to leave. papyrus gets kind of cranky without his bedtime story. but she told me to come by again, and so i did. then i did again. and again. it’s a thing now. telling bad jokes through the door. it rules. one day, though, i noticed she wasn’t laughing very much. i asked her what was up. then she told me something strange. ‘if a human ever comes through this door… could you please, please promise something? watch over them, and protect them, will you not?’”

...It was YOU!

What?

The one talking to Toriel when she thought we were asleep! It was Sans!

Really? That’s crazy!

It actually makes so much sense. He’s-

Let’s let him finish, first, Chara.

“now, i hate making promises.” Sans continues, oblivious (probably) to our secret conversation. “and this woman, i don’t even know her name. but… someone who sincerely likes bad jokes… has an integrity you can’t say ‘no’ to.” He turns away, and then looks back at us. His face is somehow… colder. It puts me on edge. “do you get what i’m saying?” He asks.

...no?” Frisk says hesitantly.

“that promise i made to her… you know what would have happened if she hadn’t said anything? buddy. …You’d be dead where you stand.” The light completely disappears from his eyes. Frisk
gulps, our eyes widening.

Is that a threat? Are you threatening us? I get tense, ready to fight or defend if I have to. I glare. Frisk tries to calm me down. I relax a little, but remain prepared to move at any time.

“...hey, lighten up, bucko! i’m just joking with you.” Sans says, the atmosphere going back to normal.

...If he thinks that he can just shrug this off… I hope he doesn’t think I’ll forget that. Because I won’t.

It’s ok, he’s gotten to know us now, and I’m sure he doesn’t harbor any malicious intent. He’s a nice guy, remember?

Just keep your guard up, Frisk.

“besides... haven’t i done a great job protecting you? i mean, look at yourself. you haven’t died a single time.” I start to laugh, but Frisk struggles to keep a neutral expression. “hey, what’s that look supposed to mean? am i wrong…? heh.” Sans gets up, and walks away. He’s a couple tables from us when he turns back and says, “well, that’s all. take care of yourself, kid. ‘Cause someone really cares about you.”

...Aw!

Don’t ‘aw’! He just threatened to kill you! I’m not going to lie, I’m pretty mad right now. I know that we made an uneasy… ‘alliance’, but he possibly just broke it. Possibly. Why else would he tell us that?

It’s okay now. We’re friends. We’re all friends here. He just wanted us to know, that’s all. He’s even been protecting us!

He’s been doing a terrible job of it.

...Hey, maybe you interpreted that wrong. When he said that without the promise, we’d be dead, maybe he just meant that he was protecting us, and that without his help we would have died.

So he’s insulting us?

No, that’s not what I meant! I just mean, maybe he meant it in good will, and not as a threat.

I don’t know, that sounded pretty threatening to me. Can we talk about this later? I think that guy in the corner there is staring.

Oh! Frisk walks over to the aforementioned guy in the corner, and asks what he’s doing. He hasn’t really moved a muscle since we came in.

“As I came in, I realized I forgot to make a reservation. But I didn’t want to look like I messed up. So I kept walkin’ in anyway. Now I’m just... kinda... Consuming dew off this ficus.”

“...Good for you!” Frisk awkwardly walks away. Looking around there’s a T.V. on the wall with Mettaton on it, and a bunch more potted plants. Frisk asks me to read them what a bulletin board says.

It’s a Wall of Fame full of quotes and photos from visiting celebrities. ‘The food is to die for!’
‘Gorgeous style and fragrance!’ ‘My face tastes beautiful!’ ...these are all Mettaton.

...Wow. Can you read the other board?

Sure. It’s a performance schedule. Comedians, dancers, Sans... Seems there’s a break now. We go over to talk to a burly monster who looks like he could be a construction worker.

“Originally, we dug mazes with puzzles in order to foil human attacks. But now, building things winding and confusing... It’s some awful tradition. You can’t go (ugh) two feet without being up to your armpits in puzzles,” The monster explains. We look at the other, smaller, rodent-like monster sitting at the table across from him.

“I work at the Core. The inside is a maze made of swappable parts... That means we can shuffle the layout at will. Boy, was today a FUN day! I sure love PUZZLE!!!”

“Me too!” Frisk says, trying to match enthusiasm. They’re just a little less excited. Oh, hey, that monster looks like he’s from Snowdin! He looks like Snowdrake, I wonder if they’re related.

Yeah, pretty sure they are. Ugh.

Do you have something against that family?

...Maybe. Tell you later.

It’s always ‘we’ll talk about that later’ with you. When is later?

When we have time, okay? Just go talk to the stupid bird.

I will. “Hi! What’s your job here?” Frisk asks.

“I’m the resort comedian. I’m very funny. People laugh at my jokes. Now, my son. He wants to be a comedian like his fathah. But his jokes. Aren’t funny. He tells these awful puns. He’s an embarrassment to our family. Ha ha ha ha... That’s not funny. Since his mothah passed on, he couldn’t stand. Living at home anymore. So he ran away. I haven’t seen him since.”

Snowy’s mom’s gone? I wonder in surprise. I knew her when I was alive. I really didn’t like her. Of course when I knew her, Snowy was pretty young then, and they were a young couple. But monsters age very weirdly, some slower than others, so in human years they weren’t that young. I wonder how old they’d be in human years now. Probably close to 200.

“So he ran away. I haven’t seen him since. I’m a terrible fathah. Ha ha ha ha... That’s not funny.”

No, it’s not.

Yeah, Sans is funnier.

...Hey, speaking of Sans, I just remembered something he told me.

And what’s that?

He told me how to get the money for Temmie’s college. He said we needed to see Gerson, and keep buying and selling stuff to the Tems until we make a profit and send her to college.

Oh! We should do that!
Yeah, later. Let’s finish checking out the hotel and then we’ll go see Riverperson, I agree. We move on to talk to the fish monster manning the reception desk.

“Blub blub… You’ll have to reserve a table to eat here. You’ll also need to reserve your chair, your silverware, your food, your…” We walk away before it finishes.

We didn’t even eat with Sans.

...You’re right. That freeloader. We leave the restaurant area, and see a fountain with a Mettaton statue in the middle, but it’s broken and is spewing water all over the floor. This fills me with anger.

...What did he do to the fountain!? I can’t believe this!

The fountain was important to you?

Yeah, me and my brother used to play in it all the time. It was one of our favorite spots.

...Well, there’s a SAVE point in front of it.

Right. Ahem. The relaxing atmosphere of this hotel… it fills you with determination. Can I go back to being mad?

Sure.

Alright. Let’s get a closer look at the statue. Oh, hey, an inscription. What did Mettaton graffiti on it now? … ‘Royal Memorial Fountain. Built 201X. Mettaton added last week.’

...Oh. I can’t help it, I start to shake a little.

...You okay?

Um… maybe.

Let’s just sit for a little bit, then.

Yeah. We slide down next to the fountain, watching the water fall onto the carpet. Frisk yawns.

You think we can get a room here?

Probably.

...Do you wanna go see Gerson? The hotel’s probably too expensive for us right now, anyways.

Sure.

Ok. Frisk gets up and leaves the Resort. They pass the Nice Cream man and the Royal Guards and Heats Flamesman, and go into the elevator. They press Left Floor 1. They end up by Alphys’s lab, and where the Riverperson is found. They talk to the Riverperson, and request to go to Waterfall.

“Tra la la. Humans, monsters… Flowers.” The Riverperson muses thoughtfully. Frisk doesn’t question it. Frisk gets off the boat and goes to the east, towards Temmie Village. They cross the glowing stones in the ground, and arrive to the annoying Tems. They look into the box.

What should I sell?

Don’t know.
Hmm… I’ll sell some nice cream? And the bisicle? And put the other clothes we have in the box, since we have two now. So how about we put all the clothes in B and all the food in A?

Sure.

Alright, I'll do that. What about the Hot Dog?

You could sell that.

Then I will. Frisk goes into the Tem Shop.

“hOi! welcom to… TEM SHOP!!!” Greets Temmie. Frisk offers her a Nice Cream. “WOA!! u gota… nice cream!!! hnnn... I gota hav dat nice cream… but i gota pay for colleg, hnnnnn…!! tem always wanna nice cream!!!!...!” She says. She offers us 2 gold for it, which Frisk takes, and sells another one for the same price. Then they sell the bicycle for 5 gold, and the Hot Dog…? for 10 gold. Now we have 25.

Sell the… All we have left are the instant noodles.

I want to keep those…

Do you want to send Tem to college? Or get a hotel room? Or buy Gerson’s stuff?

Yeah…

Then do it.

...Fine… The InstaNoods get us 50 gold, luckily. Now that we have money we go over to Gerson’s.

“Whoa there! I’ve got some neat junk for sale! What are you looking for?” Gerson asks.

Oh, cloudy glasses! And the torn notebook! Those have to be from humans, why didn’t I get them before?

Money?

...Probably. When Frisk buys the Cloudy Glasses, they don’t have enough money for the Torn Notebook. But they notice that Gerson seems to have an infinite amount of Cloudy Glasses, so they buy another one of those. They leave Gerson’s shop.

“Be careful out there, kid!” Gerson says. Frisk waves back, and yawns again. They put one of the Cloudy Glasses in the box, and head back to Tem Village.

“hOi!” Temmie greets. Frisk sells her the Cloudy Glasses for 50 gold. They go back to Gerson’s and buy two more Cloudy Glasses. They come back to the Tem shop, and get 100 gold. They go back to Gerson’s and buy three Cloudy Glasses. They go back to Tem shop and get 150 gold. At Gerson’s again, they buy 5 Cloudy Glasses. They come back and bring our total amount of money to 265.

Frisk keeps doing that, going back and forth, five more times until finally we have a total of 1,225 gold. It’s time to pay for Temmie’s college.

“WOA!! thas ALOT o muns… can tem realy accepts… OKs!!!! tem go to colleg and make u prouds!!!!” She says excitedly.

“Go Tem!” Frisk encourages. Tem slides away, box and all, leaving an afterimage of only her face.
She slides back, reconnecting with her face, wearing a graduation cap and holding a coffee mug. Or was she always holding that...? I don’t know.

“tem bak from cool leg, tem learn MANY THINs, learn to sell new ITEM! yayA!!!” Tem all but yells.

“...What item?” Frisk looks at the list of items and sees ‘temy ARMOR!!!’ for 2,800 gold.

...No.

But please!

No!

Pretty please? It ‘makes battles too easy!’

No, we’re done here. Let’s just go make one more run to Gerson to make sure we’ll always have enough money, and then we’ll go sleep in the hotel.

But I’m not… tired…

Yeah, you are. Let’s go. We go back to Gerson’s and buy the Torn Notebook first, putting it in the box. We only have the money for 5 Cloudy Glasses, so we redeem that at Tem Shop. Now we’re at 271 gold in total.

We go back to the Riverperson, and ride in their boat.

“Tra la la. Don’t snoop behind people’s houses. You might be mistaken for a trash can.” They say.

Sounds to me like we should snoop behind people’s houses.

Who’s house could we go behind?

...Lots of people’s. But let’s focus on the hotel for now. We get off at Hotland and take the elevator back up to Right Floor 3. Back in the hotel Frisk makes a beeline for the reception desk, intent on getting some sleep. The lady running it is just a hand. She’s wearing lovely red nailpolish.

“Yes, we know. The elevator to the city is NOT working.” She says. “Because of this incident, rooms are running at a special rate! 200 gold a room. Interested?”

“Yes, thank you!” Frisk says, passing her the gold. It’s kinda a lot, but it’s within our funds thankfully.

“Fabulous! We’ll escort you to your room!” She says. A person in a uniform appears, and leads us down the hallway, and into the second door on the left. Most of the room is taken up by a huge bed, with some walking space around it. Five people could probably fit in there, and I’m talking adult humans. It was a big bed.

“Yessss!” Frisk hisses, and jumps under the covers. I decide to separate, since I don’t want to sleep if I don’t need to. They’re immediately asleep, just a little lump in the middle of the bed.

I don’t know what to do now. I’m bored.

~~~Later, when Frisk wakes up~~~
“Chara?” Frisk asks, speaking out loud since we’re separated and there’s no one around. They’re still under the covers.

“Yeah?” I ask.

“This is like a slumber party! We haven’t ever just hung out before.” Frisk pops their head out, and smiles at me.

“There’s always stuff to do. Even right now, we still need to go through the Core, and then we’ll be…” I remember that our goal is the Capital. Suddenly I don’t want to move as fast. I don’t think I’m ready to go Home yet.

“But can’t we just take a minute to relax?” Frisk asks. They uncurl themselves and flop on top of the covers, spreading out and stretching.

“I mean, I guess, but there’s really not much to do here.”

“We could have… A dance party?” Frisk’s eyes light up and they sit upright, looking at me eagerly.

“A dance party?” I echo flatly.

“Yeah, we can jump on the bed and stuff. Like on T.V.” Frisk says, and stands on the bed. They almost lose their balance, but catch themselves and look back at me, grinning.

“...You have fun with that.” Honestly, how can they have this much energy just after waking up?

“No, you have to do it too!” Frisk starts hopping up and down, without any fear of falling off the edge because the bed’s so massive. They reach over and grab my hand mid-jump, and pull me up onto the bed with them. I hover a few inches above it, to avoid falling over from the turbulence Frisk is causing.

“I don’t know…” I say, eyeing it warily. I hadn’t ever really done that before. I guess I’ve never had a full sized bed. Frisk grabs my arm again and tugs me down, so that my feet are on the unsteady surface. I circle my arms to stay balanced.

“It’s fun!” Frisk says, still jumping. I start to cautiously jump, too, and the buoyancy of the bed sends me higher than I thought it would. The pillow gets bounced onto the floor.

Pretty soon I’m laughing, and Frisk is too. They go back under the covers while I’m still jumping, and move around trying to trip me. It works, even though I try to dodge it. I’m terrible at dodging. I fall on the floor, but of course it doesn’t hurt at all. I can hear Frisk’s muffled laughter from under the blankets, and then they slide out and fall onto the floor next to me.

“Nice one,” I say. Their hair is really messed up, but they fix it absentmindedly with one hand, looking around contently.

“Thanks,” Frisk says. “What’s on the thing over there?”

“It’s a lamp,” I tell them, stepping over their legs to look on the nightstand. “There’s no lightswitch. It says that stars make their own light…”

“Just in case you forgot who’s hotel you’re staying at,” Frisk laughs. “Anything else in here? Besides the bed?”

“Yeah, there’s some sort of giant bottle of perfume. Eau de Ractangle. The cap is so comically large,
you probably can’t even open it,” I tell them. Both the lamp and the perfume bottle are Mettaton-shaped.

“...Should we leave now? I want to explore the hotel more. And maybe talk to some people.” Frisk asks.

“But can you even call this a hotel? I didn’t receive a mint on my pillow or anything.” I say. They laugh, and then hug me, causing us to merge back together. We leave the room.

The hallway we enter has three other doors beside the one we came out of, and there’s a janitor cleaning up its own messes at the end of the hall. We knock on the first door.

“Oooooaaah! Room service! Got my ‘Sea Tea’?” A voice behind the door asks. Sadly, we’re completely out of items and thus don’t have the Sea Tea. We tell the voice that. “Then…!?” It doesn’t say anything else. We knock on the next door by ours.

“Oooooaaah! Room service! Got my ‘Cinnamon Bun’?” Another voice, identical to the first, asks. We say that we don’t. “Then…!?” Frisk shrugs, and knocks on the last door. We hear shuffling.

Seems like you could put something under the door. But we don’t have anything appealing. Or anything at all.

Aw… Do you think we could go get some stuff to give to these people?

I don’t think it’s worth our time or money.

...That’s fair, I guess. We think about talking to the janitor, but it seems busy dripping goop everywhere and then immediately mopping it up in a vicious cycle. We go back into the lobby, having exhausted all the options in here. First we decide to talk to the monsters gathered by the elevator.

“This elevator goes straight to the capital. But it stopped working,” Says the first monster, a chimera-esc lady wearing bright red high heels and glasses. “The hotel’s doing its best to accommodate everybody stuck here.”

“That’s nice of them,” Frisk nods. The next monster, a green dragon, is talking on the phone, so we don’t bother it. But we listen to its conversation for a second.

“Yeah, I’m not gonna be home tonight… um… I think there’s some cold pizza in my treasure horde you can heat up…”

“As a slime, I’m outraged,” Says a black slime girl with a bright red bow on her chest, complimenting her dark lipstick. We decide to go into the little shop next to the broken elevator.

“Welcome to MTT-Brand Burger Emporium, home of the Glamburger. Sparkle up your day (™).” Says the employee, a teenage-looking cat monster wearing a hotel uniform. “How can I help you, O customer?”

We look at the list of things we can buy, but we’re back to being poor. We only have 71 gold left, and the cheapest item on the menu is 60.

I think we need more money. Shall we head back to Gerson’s?

...If we must. I don’t want to keep dying because we have no food. I mean, we still have the snowpiece, and the pie, which would probably help a lot.
No, we can’t eat those. I want something to remember Toriel by, and since monster food doesn’t spoil… And the snowman’s request was to take the piece to the ends of the earth! I’m not just going to eat it!

**Fair enough.** We leave the little shop, and reluctantly go back to Gerson’s.

~~~Several monotonous trips between Gerson’s and Tem Shop later~~~

Finally, we have 811 gold, but we buy a Sea Tea for that one hotel guest and end up with 793. We both agreed it’d be a good idea to get as much gold as we could so that we’d always have some. We go back to the MTT Resort, glad to be free of Temmie Village hopefully forever. As we go in, we stop to greet a star-shaped monster that we hadn’t talked to before.

“Welcome to MTT Resort- Hotland’s biggest apartment-building-turned-hotel! Whether you’re here for a night or still live here, MTT Resort prides itself on a great stay!”

“Oh, we-I’m just passing through right now!” Frisk says.

“Just passing through…? Nice! MTT Resort prides itself on being passed through!”

“Thanks!” We go back over to the shop runned by the hyper-expressive teenager and ask to buy a Glamburger. It heals more than a Starfait, even though that sounds really good.

“Thanksy! Have a FABU-FUL day!!!” He says, grin stretching to places it probably shouldn’t. We also buy a Legendary Hero, whatever that is, and another Glamburger. I hate having to be careful with our funds… That being said, we give in and buy two Starfaits. Our inventory isn’t even full, and we only have 133 gold left. This is a travesty.

We decide to talk to the employee. “So how’s your day been? Frisk asks.

“What?” Asks the employee. “Why do you keep trying to talk to me? I’ll get in trouble if I get chummy with the customers. Sorry.”

“Oh, that’s alright. I understand,” Frisk smiles.

“…SO, I wanted to be an ACTOR,” He tells us, making an expression that can’t be described with words. Frisk is taken by surprise, but listens eagerly to what he has to say anyway.

“Sounds like you have some life advice,” Frisk comments.

“I’m getting on in years, so let me give you some advice, little buddy. You’ve still got time. Don’t live like me. I’m 19 years old and I’ve already wasted my entire life.” He pulls out a cigarette and smokes it. Frisk coughs a little, but tries not to be impolite.

“Any romance advice?” Frisk asks curiously.

“Listen. I like you, little buddy. So I’m gonna save you a lot of trouble. Never interact with attractive people. Unless you’re ‘one of them,’ they’re just gonna take advantage of you. Like that time those two chicks asked me to sneak them some glamburgers. And I, naive teenager that I was, said yes to them. Bad idea.”

“Oh? Tell me the glamburger story!” Frisk says.

“So I went out to the alley to see those two ladies, and uh… you know, see what’d happen next. …Then my boss, uh, saw me and asked what I was doing. I was so startled, the hamburgers in my
pockets tumbled out onto the ground. Not wanting to lose face, I scrambled to pick them up! But, as I was leaning over, the weight of the remaining hamburgers… caused my pants to fall down. Then the girls laughed at me. Everyone calls me Burgerpants now.”

“You mentioned your boss. That’s Mettaton, right?” Frisk asks the now-named Burgerpants.

“Yeah. When I first came to Hotland, it was my dream to work with Mettaton. …Well, be careful what you wish for, little buddy!”

“Reakky? Why is Mettaton bad?”

“God, have you even looked around? This place is a labyrinth of bad choices. And every time we try to change something for the better, he vetoes it and says ‘that’s not how they do it on the surface.’ Oh! Right! Humans are always eating hamburgers made of SEQUINS AND GLUE,” Burgerpants says sarcastically.

“Why else is he bad?” Frisk asks, wanting to hear all the gossip apparently.

“Why do people find him so attractive? He’s literally just a freaking rectangle.”

Agreed. It’s weird, right?

You can like people for their personality, too! You guys are so shallow!

“…You know, one time, I bought one of those, uh, kits online… to… Uh, make yourself more rectangular. …They don’t work.”

“So what is your plan for the future?” Frisk asks.

What is this, a job interview?

I’m just making conversation! I’m curious!

“Future?” Burgerpants asks. “WHAT future? Nothing down here EVER changes. I’ll probably be trapped at this stupid job forever.” He looks down, and seems to re-think his entire life in the span of a couple seconds. Then he perks up again, and keeps twitching. “But wait! There’s one thing that keeps me going! If Asgore gets just one more Soul, we’ll finally get to go to the surface! It’ll be a brand new world! There’s gotta be a second chance out there for me! For everyone! So stay strong, little buddy. When I make it big, I’ll keep you in mind.”

“Thanks!”

“Any time, little buddy.” We leave Burgerpants, and step outside through the door labeled, ‘CORE’.

Um, can we stall on that for a little while?

It does look pretty intimidating… Frisk and I seem to be in agreement, for once. They want to go through there about as much as I do at this point. What else can we do, though?

He mentioned Bratty and Catty, what if we talked to them?

Sure, I guess. We go back into the alleyway, and greet Catty and Bratty again. “I’m not here to buy anything, sorry. But I was wondering, what do you guys know about Burgerpants?” Frisk asks.

“Oh, that guy from the store?” Says Bratty. “Yuck, what a creep.”
“Yeah, He’s a creep!” Catty adds. “But he’s kind of cute, too…”

“C’mon, Catty, don’t you have ANY standards?”

“Nope!!!”

“Hmmm… What else do you know about him?” Frisk asks. I can tell that these two frustrate them a tiny bit, since they’re so shallow.

“OK, like, the annoying thing is…” Bratty starts.

“He’d be OK if he just treated us with some respect.” Catty finishes.

“But he just acts… Really weird.”

“And then acts like it’s OUR fault he acts that way!”

“Like, when we asked him to get those Glamburgers…”

“He dropped them and ran away before we could even say anything!”

“We were, like, going to share them.”

“Really? I wasn’t.”

“Catty!!” Frisk looks at both of them in concern for a second, and then decides there isn’t anything more to get out of them.

What if we… Gave them a Glamburger? Surely we can spare one?

Do you think they’ll share one? Because I think they’ll each want one.

We can give it a shot…

Ok. Frisk holds out a Glamburger.

“Oh my God. Is that a glamburger?” Bratty asks.

“OH MY GOD!!! GIMME!!!” Catty shouts.

“God, Catty. Try to have some self-control.”

“Sorry…”

“Cause they OBVIOUSLY brought that Glamburger for ME.”

“NOOO WAYYY!!!!!” Neither of them moves to take the burger. Frisk slowly slides it back into their pocket.

I guess we’re done here?

Yeah, I guess so. We never gave that hotel guest a Sea Tea.

We should do that. We go back into the hotel and knock on the first door.

“Oooooaaah! Room service! Got my ‘Sea Tea’?”
“Yes!” Frisk says, pouring the Sea Tea under the door.

Yeah, that’s the way to do it. Could have just asked for them to open the door, but no…

“HUH!?!?!??! That’s just the way I want! Here’s a tip.” We get 99 gold.

What? Nice!

We could probably make a profit out of that…

But we aren’t are we? I’ve had enough Temmie Village-esq shenanigans for one day.

Fair enough. Do you think we could follow up with Burgerpants about Bratty and Catty?

I doubt he has anything new to say. But you can try.

I will, then. We go back to Burgerpants.

“What can I do for you, little buddy?” He asks.

I like that nickname. It’s nice.

It suits you?

Yep! “So, w- I went to see Bratty and Catty just now.” Frisk says. “I asked them about you. They said you should stop acting like they owe you.”

Way to let him in easy.

“The girls were… Talking about me…? They said I should stop acting like they owe me…” He echoes. He sounds very sad. “…and if I want to be FRIENDS with them, I should just… uh, try to see things from their perspective?” He asks.

“Yeah!” Frisk says, feeling a little proud that he came to that conclusion himself.

“Wow. Poor, naive little buddy. They’ve brainwashed you.” He pulls out another cigarette. Frisk’s smile drops. “‘Friendship’ is just a hot person’s way of making you their slave.”

Frisk! Is that true? Is that why you’re befriending everyone instead of fighting?

No! …Did you just imply that I’m hot…? Because, I’m only 11, you know.

Well, I’m only 12.

Wow, I thought you were like 16 or something.

Why?!

You use a lot of big words.

…Huh.

“So, uh, what time would they wanna hang out?” Burgerpants asks, distracting us from our silent conversation.

“I don’t know, I’ll go ask!” Frisk says, happy to be given a purpose in platonic match-making.
For some reason, I’m fine with this. We head back into the alleyway.

“So, Burgerpants wants to hang out.” Frisk says, right off the bat.

“Oh, uh…” Bratty says uncertainly.

“Yeah!!” Catty says enthusiastically. “He should come look for junk with us!”

“But like, if we let him hang out with us… I just worry it’ll…”

“...be really super fun!”

I think I like Catty better than Bratty.

I don’t really care for either of them.

“Um, that was NOT what I was gonna say.”

“But I was close, right!?”

“You’d hang out with that kind of guy?” I ask. Frisk disapproves,

“Well, that kind of guy…” Bratty says. “You hang out with him once, then he wants to hang out… All. The. Time.”

“But don’t you feel bad for him, Bratty? Poor Burgerpants… Think about how cool we are compared to him!!! We’d be saving his LIFE with our friendship!! His LIFE, Bratty!!”

“Oh, so?”

“...Think of all the glamburgers he could get for us!!”

“...so is he free after work?” Bratty asks, suddenly interested. Frisk sighs.

“I’ll go ask.” We go back to Burgerpants. This is much more complicated than I thought it’d be. “So, Catty wants to hang out. Bratty wants to know if you’re free after work.”

“They wanna hang out after work? Ha! Ahahaha!! Yes!!! I won’t let you down!! Little buddy… thank you. You’ve brought a tear to the eye of this old man. So, uh, where do they want to go?”

“The dump!”

“...They want to hang out at the garbage dump. ...Well, nowhere to go but up, right, little buddy?” Burgerpants smiles.

And with that, I think we’re done here. Good job, team.

I should go into this professionally, and get paid.

You should, it’s a valid career option. Probably.

...I guess we have to go to the Core, now, huh. I sigh, and nod.

Chapter End Notes
Do you know how close I was to forgetting to upload? ...Yeah...

Where did all this fluff come from? I don't know! But it's here! Hope you liked that... It's just, these kids are procrastinating moving on. Neither of them want to face Asgore, if for different reasons. Both want to avoid killing him at all costs. Chara doesn't know how they'll cope with being home again after all these years, and Frisk doesn't know what crossing the barrier takes. It's kind of a mess. Not to mention, while I've written up to the big Mettaton fight already, I'm also procrastinating writing in New Home. It's scary, guys. I don't know how to write emotions! Help!

Ask blog: saltychara.tumblr.com

Edit: Would it be weird if I wrote the New Home stuff from Frisk's pov instead of Chara's? Would that take away from the story or add to it? Everyone (and the readers) know the story anyways, but Frisk doesn't, so would it be good to be closer to the reactions of someone who doesn't know? But I don't want Chara to be in their head, so Frisk would probably be blind for most of it. Which presents another problem, because I don't feel Chara's up to narrating during that. But the visuals have powerful affects, too. Thoughts?
So apparently there's a shortcut through the Core.

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 22- So apparently there’s a shortcut through the Core.
Part 5- The Core

We exit the Resort. Two shadowed figures appear in front of us, but quickly retreat. The phone rings.

“Huh? Who are they? N-nobody else is s-supposed to be here… Oh well! We can’t worry about that now!” Alphys hangs up. We continue on, and enter the Core. The area, not the actual machine. That’d be a bad idea. The phone rings again. “Ready? This is it! Take the elevator up to the top of the Core!” Alphys says.

Oh, we can bypass the whole area? Nice! It’d be really tedious anyway.

...I kinda wanted to explore a little...

But now we don’t have to! We can go straight to the… uh… oh.

Yeah, I’m putting that off.

I don’t think Burgerpants can give us any more distractions for now. We have to face the facts at this point, Frisk. They reluctantly go over to the elevator and press the up button. They press it again. The elevator… isn’t working. We both let out a guilty sigh of relief.

So, left or right?

Let’s try left. Alphys calls again.

“What? The elevator should be working… W-well then! Go to the right and keep heading up!” Alphys advises.

I guess we’ll go right then, nevermind. We go right, and enter a room that doesn’t really… make sense. It drops off into the void on all sides, and there’s fire floating out there. The phone rings.

“Alright, now just keep heading up! … … That pit… Isn’t on my map. Forget it! Let’s try the left side!” I sigh in frustration.

I guess we’re going back to the original plan?

...Useless scientist… Yeah, go left. The phone rings again, and I groan.

“Okay, you should be able to make it through here... “A pair of darkened figures approach us. “W-watch out!”

Madjick pops out of its hat! I say.

“Check,” Frisk says routinely.

ATK 29 DEF 24. This magical mercenary only says magic words.
“Please and thank you,” Says the Madjick. It’s attacks are orbs and crosses zooming at us through the air, making the room smell like magic.

“I’ll talk to-” Frisk starts. Madjick interrupts them by saying magic words. It seems to cast a spell on Frisk, and their Soul goes all wavy, out of control. They lose 8 HP, and still feel confused. “Spare!” Frisk says when that’s over. We earn 60 gold.

Wasn’t there two?

...I don’t know… Frisk sways a little, the spell not completely gone yet. Alphys calls.

“Th-that was close… Wh… why are there so many monsters here? I mean… It’s no problem, r-r-right? W-w-we’ve just got to keep heading forward! …” She hangs up, downhearted.

*She normally has the answer to everything… I wonder if something’s wrong?*

*It’s probably fine. One person can’t control everything that happens, anyway, so this was bound to happen sooner or later. I’d watch how much I trusted her, if I were you.*

*I still trust her!* We continue down the hallway to be met by a laser-blocked exit and a button on the wall. Alphys calls again.

“Looks like you can’t proceed until you hit the switch. B-but, those lasers will activate when you do. Ummm… Looks like they’ll come in this order: Orange. Orange. Blue.” She sounds more confident than her last call, even if she’s still obviously stressed. “G-got it? Move until the third one!”

Frisk attempts to do as she says, but the first two lasers turn out to be blue, and the third one is orange. We lose 4 HP.

**That… Didn’t work.**

*I’m not sure I could have done that even if Alphys was right.* The phone rings.

“Oh my god… Are you hurt? I… I’m so sorry, I… I gave you the wrong order. ...Everything’s going to be fine, okay? L-let’s just keep heading to the right.”

*I’m really worried for her! She doesn’t seem like she’s okay!*

*She shouldn’t make us suffer just because she’s suffering, though. We’d have better luck on our own.*

*Chara! Please be nicer! I want to help her in any way I can!*

*And that’s why we’re different. You care too much.*

*Well look where not caring got you.*

**Oh, nice burn!**

*I’m sorry! Frisk thinks sincerely. I’m not going to lie, making fun of someone’s state of mortality was kind of a low blow. But hey, it’s what I’d be doing if our situations were reversed. I can tell Frisk heard that thought because they seem to glare at me. We come to a fork in the road, and get another phone call.***

“A crossroads… Uhh… Uhhh… Tr… try heading forward!”
“Okay!” Frisk says out loud, and goes to forward. But Alphys calls again moments later.

“W-wait! No, I think you should head up!” We take her advice and go up, and meet another two shadowed figures, that turn out to be only one when we’re actually FIGHTing.

**Knight Knight blocks the way!**

“Check!” Frisk says.

**ATK 36 DEF 36. This megaton mercenary wields the Good Morningstar.**

*Nice puns, but is it just me or are these enemies getting a lot harder?*

“Fare well,” Knight Knight says, smashing her morningstar. It rains magic in the shape of… small fires, I think, but we manage to weave through them alright.

**The difficulty has increased, you’re right.**

*Um, her name is Knight Knight, should I sing to her? Like a lullaby?*

**Go for it.**

*Ok… Frisk sings an old lullaby that I can faintly remember from when I was really little.*

“Goodnight,” Knight Knight says. We get hit once, losing 4 HP. That attack did a lot of damage.

**Eat.**

*Yeah. Frisk eats a Glamburger, maxing out our HP. The next attack hits us again, bringing us down to 16. I’ll try singing more. They sing the next verse of the lullaby, and she closes her eyes a bit. We get hit again, so Frisk finishes the song. She falls asleep, and doesn’t attack this turn, so we spare her and earn 70 gold. Alphys calls.*

“Sorry, I… I… I thought that… Let’s try the other path instead.” We go back down, and continue down the main hallway. We come to a bridge over the void, with blue lasers moving back and forth across it. We step to the edge, and Alphys calls again. “M… more lasers… Okay, I… I won’t mess around this time. I’ll just deactivate the lasers and let you through. …They’re… They’re not turning off… I can’t turn them off, I… I-it’s okay! I have this under control! I’m going to turn off the power for that whole node. Then you can walk across. …Okay, go!” The area goes dark, and Frisk confidently walks out onto the bridge.

**Be careful!**

*I’m a bat, remember? The phone rings, and I make us freeze in our place, knowing it can’t be good.*

“W-WAIT! STOP!” Alphys yells. The lasers come back to life, and there’s a huge row of them above our head, tightly packed into a line. They’re all blue, and if we moved an inch we’d probably just die. “Th-the power… It’s turning itself back on. D-damn it… Th-this isn’t supposed to… I… I’m gonna turn it off again. When it turns off, move a little, and the STOP. OK? Y-you won’t get h-h-hurt.”

*Ok. The lights go off, and we walk forwards, then freeze as they flicker back on. They turn off again, and we move a little, but stumble when they turn on again. We get hit once. Alphys calls in distress.*
“Oh my god, are you okay!? I-I c-couldn’t keep the power off long enough… No, no, we’ve got this, it’s just a little further!” She hangs up before Frisk can say it’s not her fault. We even get hit one more time, just because Frisk is a little clumsy. But eventually we make it off. “S-see? I’ve got everything under control. Everything’s under control!”

...Are you trying to convince us, or yourself, Alphys?

Both? We keep walking. We see a SAVE point.

FINALLY! Alphys calls, and we can’t get it quite yet.

“OK! Y-you should… you should… I don’t know? This doesn’t look like my map at all… I’m sorry… I… I… I have to go.”

We’re going and checking on her in person when we can, alright?

That’s fine.

Good. Let’s SAVE, now.

Right. The air is filled with the smell of ozone… it fills you with determination.

What do these signs say?

‘North, the warrior’s path. West, the sage’s path. Any path leads to The End.’ And the other one: ‘East… The End.’

So… Which way do we go? We aren’t going the ‘Warrior’s path’, but does the east just lead directly to the castle?

I have no idea. Let’s try that one first, though. I don’t want to get lost.

Fine with me. We go to the east, and find a path going over the white hot magma of the Core. We reach another crossroads, with signs, and the eastern path is blocked off by lasers.

‘To the East! This is The End.’ The laser disappears, letting us go through to the East. But there’s still another sign to read. ‘I cannot fight. I cannot think. But, with patience, I will make my way through.’

Let’s keep going east, then. We reach a wide bridge over the magma and steam, and carefully go across it. Then we’re attacked.

Astigmatism drew near.

Check?

ATK 32 DEF 26. That’s a lot. This relentless bully ALWAYS gets its way.

“...Don’t pick on me,” Astigmatism says, gazing through our soul. Its attacks are bubbles, and we get hit once, losing 4 HP.

Don’t pick on it? Frisk thinks hesitantly. “You… look nice?” They say.

“Finally, someone gets it.” We get hit once more, and lose 4 more HP. But Astigmatism doesn’t care about fighting anymore. We spare it and earn 50 gold.
Maybe we should put on the stained apron. Doesn’t it heal us slowly?

Yeah, that’s probably a good idea. We change, and put the cowboy hat back in the box. We continue down the bridge without incident, and arrive at two doors. One is for an elevator.

Oh, hey I know where we are now. That’s the elevator that was at the beginning of the Core. Behind this door must be the elevator to the King’s castle. ...You’re filled with determination.

Yay! For some reason, I thought there’d be more monsters in the Core.

Yeah, me too. That’s actually really weird.

There probably would have been if we hadn’t gone east. See, my need to check everything is paying off!

You’re right, I guess. Let’s go through the door.

Okay. We walk into a dark room, but not too dark so that we can’t see. We do see Mettaton standing in the middle of the room.

“OH YES. THERE YOU ARE, DARLING.” Mettaton says. “IT’S TIME TO HAVE OUR LITTLE SHOWDOWN. IT’S TIME TO FINALLY STOP THE ‘MALFUNCTIONING’ ROBOT. ...NOT!!! MALFUNCTION? REPROGRAMMING? GET REAL. THIS WAS ALL JUST A BIG SHOW AN ACT.”

...What is he talking about?

Not sure?

“ALPHYS HAS BEEN PLAYING YOU FOR A FOOL THE WHOLE TIME.”

What?

“AS SHE WATCHED YOU ON THE SCREEN, SHE GREW ATTACHED TO YOUR ADVENTURE. SHE DESPERATELY WANTED TO BE A PART OF IT. SO SHE DECIDED TO INSERT HERSELF INTO YOUR STORY. SHE REACTIVATED PUZZLES. SHE DISABLED ELEVATORS. SHE ENLISTED ME TO TORMENT YOU. ALL SO SHE COULD SAVE YOU FROM DANGERS THAT DIDN’T EXIST. ALL SO YOU WOULD THINK SHE’S THE GREAT PERSON… THAT SHE’S NOT.”

I KNEW there was something shady going on! No wonder they both acted like cartoon characters all the time! Ugh, when we see Alphys again, will you let me yell at her?

Absolutely not! She probably had a good reason...

“And now, it’s time for her finest hour. At this very moment, Alphys is waiting outside the room. During our ‘battle,’ she will interrupt. She will pretend to ‘deactivate’ me, ‘saving’ you one final time. Finally, she’ll be the heroine of your adventure. You’ll regard her so highly she’ll even be able to convince you not to leave. ...Or not. You see, I’ve had enough of this predictable charade. I have no desire to harm humans. Far from it, actually. My only desire is to entertain. After all, the audience deserves a good show, don’t they? And what’s a good show… without a plot twist?”
The door closes and locks behind us. Frisk glances anxiously over their shoulder, unsettled being locked in. There’s a loud knock on the door.

“H-hey!!” Alphys’s voice calls from the other side. “Wh-wh-what’s going on!? Th-th-the door just locked itself!” the floor lights up, resembling a dance floor.

“SORRY, FOLKS! THE OLD PROGRAM’S BEEN CANCELLED!!! BUT WE’VE GOT A FINALE THAT WILL DRIVE YOU WILD!!” The floor rises rapidly through the air, and music begins to play. “REAL DRAMA!! REAL ACTION!! REAL BLOODSHED!! ON OUR NEW SHOW… ‘ATTACK OF THE KILLER ROBOT!’”

Mettaton attacks!

“Check!”

ATK 30, DEF 255. Seriously, his metal body is invulnerable! I’ve told you this before!

“YES, I WAS THE ONE THAT RE-ARRANGED THE CORE! I WAS THE ONE THAT HIRED EVERYONE TO KILL YOU! THAT, HOWEVER, WAS A SHORT-SIGHTED PLAN. YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD BE A HUNDRED TIMES BETTER? KILLING YOU MYSELF!” Mettaton explains. It’s our turn, and we start rapidly shooting him with our yellow Soul, but it doesn’t seem to do anything. “THAT WORTHLESS PEA-SHOOTER WON’T WORK ON ME, DARLING. DON’T YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT ACTING IS?!” Mettaton taunts.


“LISTEN, DARLING, I’VE SEEN YOU FIGHT. YOU’RE WEAK. IF YOU CONTINUE FORWARD, ASGORE WILL TAKE YOUR SOUL. AND WITH YOUR SOUL, ASGORE WILL DESTROY HUMANITY.” Mettaton says. Boxes rain down, and we shoot them, not moving, and clear the path to not getting hit.

“Spare…”

“BUT IF I GET YOUR SOUL, I CAN STOP ASGORE’S PLAN! I CAN SAVE HUMANITY FROM DESTRUCTION!” Boxes come down in lines, we shoot through a couple but slip up and lose some health. We spare him again. “THEN, USING YOUR SOUL, I’LL CROSS THROUGH THE BARRIER… AND BECOME THE STAR I’VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF BEING! HUNDREDS, THOUSANDS… NO! MILLIONS OF HUMANS WILL WATCH ME!” The lines of magic come down again, and Frisk shoots a yellow part and they go away. They almost hit a bomb later, but miss it.

“Spare.”

“GLITZ! GLAMOUR! I’LL FINALLY HAVE IT ALL! SO WHAT IF A FEW PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE? THAT’S SHOW BUSINESS, BABY!” Our phone rings, and we answer it, looking anxiously at Mettaton.

“U..uh… I can’t see what’s going on in there, but… D-d-don’t give up, okay!?” Alphys says. I narrow my eyes. “Th… there’s o-one l-l-last way to beat Mettaton… It’s… um… it’s… This is a work in-progress, so don’t judge it too hard… But, you know how Mettaton always faces f-f-forward? That’s because there’s a switch on his backside. S-s-so if y-y-you c-c-can turn him around… um… And, umm… press th-th-th-the switch… He’ll be… um… He’ll be… Vulnerable. Well, g-g-gotta go!”
Seems like a good time to turn Mettaton around.

“Mettaton, there’s a mirror behind you!” Frisk says.

“Oh??? A MIRROR???” Mettaton asks. “Right, I have to look perfect for our grand finale! Hmm… I don’t see it… Where is it…?” Mettaton turns, and Frisk slides the switch. He goes still.

Uh oh, I think you made him mad…

“Did you. Just flip. My switch?” Mettaton starts to glitch out, and then explodes in a burst of light. A voice comes through the fog, deeper and more human than his normal robot voice. “Oh yes.” Through the fog, we see a silhouette. “Ohhh my. If you flipped my switch, that can only mean one thing. You’re desperate for the premiere of my new body. How rude… Lucky for you, I’ve been aching to show this off for a long time. So… as thanks, I’ll give you a handsome reward. I’ll make your last living moments…” The lights come to the front of him, revealing a new Mettaton. He’s got legs that could kill. “Absolutely beautiful!”

Oh my god.

That… sums it up.

Wow.

He’s gorgeous!

He’s terrifying. If he’s going for a human look, that is. Wrists don’t bend that way!

Mettaton EX makes his premiere!

Hey, don’t steal my narration. Here, I’ll check him for you, see how you like your thing being stolen. ATK 47 DEF 47. His weak point is his heart-shaped core.

“Lights! Camera! Action!” Mettaton says. His magic takes form in huge legs, and if Frisk shoots them they move back and forth, giving us opportunities to move through and in between them.

I’ll pose with him! Frisk stands on one leg, and kicks it in the air, arms out. An audience that I hadn’t noticed before applauds.

You’re more flexible than I thought.

Yep. I did ballet, remember?

Right. Despite being hurt, you’re posing dramatically. The board up there is for ratings, by the way. They’re at 3,251 right now.

Let’s get them up, shall we? We get hit a little, and when we pose again, we get hit a little more. HP at 3.

Eat. Frisk eats a Starfait, and the ratings go up, with cheers from the audience. We get hit a little on the next turn, but the ratings go up from the violence.

I’m gonna boast. “I’m not going to be hit at all,” Frisk tells the audience.

“I hope you brought your keyboard, because this one’s an essay question! What do you like most
about Mettaton?” He asks. A keyboard slides over to us from off stage, and I start typing with help from Frisk.

**Legs! Hair! Eyes! Heart!** Frisk says, and I frantically type them in.

“My hair? Yes, I use metal hairgel,” Mettaton says. The ratings have gone up, and Frisk poses again. “Your essay really showed us your heart. Why don’t I show you mine?” His heart, presumably his Soul, comes out of his outfit and hovers, sending out bolts of electric magic. Frisk frantically shoots the heart, which makes mechanical noises whenever it’s hit.

**Eat again,** I tell Frisk as we’re down to 5 HP.

**We’re going to run out of food!** They eat a Glamburger anyways, restoring our full health.

“But how are you on the dancefloor?” Mettaton asks. A magic disco ball appears, shining beams of magic down at us. They’re mostly blue. We stand still, and shoot it, making the blue beams turn white and vice versa. We turn them back to blue, stand still and let them pass through us unharmed.

**That wasn’t that bad. How about you boast again?**

**Sure!** Frisk boasts again, and then Mettaton challenges us.

“But can you keep up the pace?” He asks. The disco ball spins faster, and we have to pay attention and shoot carefully. But, we manage to get through without getting hit, and the ratings go up. “Lights! Camera! Bombs!” We shoot some bombs, and have to dart out of the way of the blast. We get hit twice, but we’re still kinda fine. The same thing happens on the next turn, and this time we don’t get hit at all. The ratings are pretty high now, at 6,189.

“I’m not going to get hit!” Frisk proclaims.

“I hope you’re ready! Time for our union-regulated break!” There’s no attack this turn. Lucky us! Frisk turns on their heel and scoffs at the audience.

**They’re rooting for your destruction this turn!**

“How about another heart-to-heart?” Mettaton says. We get hit by a couple lightning bolts, and the audience cheers for the ‘justice.’ We shoot Mettaton’s heart, and then his arms fall off.

*I really hope that doesn’t actually hurt him!*

**He’s a robot!** The ratings go up more, but now we’re at 5 HP again. We eat another Starfait, and now all we have left is the Legendary Hero.

“Arms? Who needs arms with legs like these? I’m still going to win,” Mettaton boasts. Frisk tries boasting again, but the ratings go down a little bit when they’re hit by a bomb. They go up again for violence, though. “The show must go on!” We lose a lot of HP, and we need to eat again. We eat the Legendary Hero, and that’s our last food item. On the bright side, the audience loves the brand, and the ratings are now at 8,144. Pretty good, if I say so myself.

**Be careful, we’re out of food.**

*I know!* Frisk turns and scoffs at the audience. And then our HP goes down to 2.

Frisk! What did I just tell you!?
**We need to be really careful now.** And careful we are. Mettaton exposes his heart again, and after shooting it and carefully dodging everything else, his legs fall off. **Oh my god, we’re alive!**

**Still might die!** His heart comes out again, and shoots lightning bolts directly at us. It feels like it goes on for hours, but we come out unscathed. We pose again, and the ratings go up to 11,114.

“LOOK AT THOSE RATINGS! THIS IS THE MOST VIEWERS I’VE EVER HAD!!! WE’VE REACHED THE VIEWER CALL-IN MILESTONE!”

**I cannot BELIEVE we’re alive.**

*My heart is still pounding! But I think it’s over.*

“ONE LUCKY VIEWER WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO TALK TO ME… BEFORE I LEAVE THE UNDERGROUND FOREVER!! LET’S SEE WHO CALLS IN FIRST! ...HI, YOU’RE ON TV! WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ON THIS, OUR LAST SHOW???”

“..... oh…… hi... mettaton… i really like watching your show… my life is pretty boring… but… seeing you on the screen… brought excitement to my life… vicariously. i can’t tell, but… i guess this is the last episode…? i’ll miss you… mettaton……. oh…. i didn’t mean to talk so long… oh…….”

The caller says.

**Is that… Napstablook?**

“NO, WAIT! WAIT, BL… H… THEY ALREADY HUNG UP.” Mettaton looks sad for a moment. “...I’LL TAKE ANOTHER CALLER!!!”

“Mettaton, your show made us so happy!”

“Mettaton, I don’t know what I’ll watch without you.”

“Mettaton, there’s a Mettaton-shaped hole in my Mettaton-shaped heart.”

“AH… I…” Mettaton starts. He looks really sad, now. “I SEE… EVERYONE… THANK YOU SO MUCH, ...DARLING. PERHAPS… IT MIGHT BE BETTER IF I STAY FOR A WHILE. HUMANS ALREADY HAVE STARS AND IDOLS, BUT MONSTERS… THEY ONLY HAVE ME. IF I LEFT… THE UNDERGROUND WOULD LOSE ITS SPARK. I’D LEAVE AN ACHING VOID THAT CAN NEVER BE FILLED. SO… I THINK I’LL HAVE TO DELAY MY BIG DEBUT. BESIDES. YOU’VE PROven TO BE VERY STRONG. PERHAPS… EVEN STRONG ENOUGH TO GET PAST ASGORE. I’M SURE YOU’LL BE ABLE TO PROTECT HUMANITY. HA, HA… IT’S ALL FOR THE BEST, ANYWAY. THE TRUTH IS, THIS FORM’S ENERGY CONSUMPTION IS… INEFFICIENT. IN A FEW MOMENTS, I’LL RUN OUT OF BATTERY POWER, AND… WELL. I’LL BE ALRIGHT. KNOCK ‘EM DEAD, DARLING. AND EVERYONE… THANK YOU. YOU’VE BEEN A GREAT AUDIENCE!” Mettaton’s eyes go dark, and he seems to shut down. The door opens behind us.

“I… I managed to open the lock! Are you two…” Alphys enter the room and looks shocked at Mettaton’s inactive body. She runs to him. “Oh my god. Mettaton! Mettaton, are you… ...thank GOD, it’s just the batteries. Mettaton, if you were gone, I would have… I would have… I m-m-mean, h-hey, it’s n-no problem, you know? He’s just a robot, if you messed it up, I c-could always… J-just build another. ...Why don’t you go on ahead?”
“...Alphys?” Frisk asks.

“I… I just need a moment.”

“Alright,” Frisk says, and pats her shoulder.

Don’t do that! I’ve got words with her.

Chara, not now. Maybe later, but not now. We’ll sort it out. We walk out the room in silence. Then, we hear footsteps behind us.

“S… Sorry about that!” We turn and see Alphys. “L-let’s k-keep going!”

Oh, she’s coming with us!

Yep.

That’s cool, nobody’s really walked with us before. Except Monster Kid.

“S-so you’re about to meet Asgore, h-huh?” Alphys asks. “You must be… Y-you must be… Pr… pretty excited about all that, huh?”

“...A little. I don’t know how I feel.” Frisk answers honestly.

“You’ll f-finally… You’ll finally get to go home!”

“Yeah…” Frisk stops at the elevator, and reaches for the button.

“W… Wait! I mean, um… I… I was just going to… um… Say goodbye, and…” Her face falls. “I can’t take this anymore. I… I lied to you.”

Yeah, yeah, we already heard about this from Mettaton.

“A human Soul isn’t strong enough to cross the barrier alone. It takes at least a human soul… And a monster soul.”

...What?

“...If you want to go home… You’ll have to take his soul.”

That doesn’t necessarily mean-

“You’ll have to kill Asgore.” Alphys begins to walk away. “I’m sorry.” And with that, she leaves us.

What!? 

What, did you not know that?

Chara, did you know about this?!

...Oops?

You knew and you didn’t tell me!?

It never came up!
That’s a pretty important detail! How would I have known!? Now I’m going to have to kill somebody! They hop into the elevator, their arms crossed. They press the only button there is.

...Yeah…

Whatever. I’m sure there’s another way.

...I don’t think so.

There must be! I’m not going to kill anyone!

You might have to.

Well, I won’t!

...Frisk?

Yeah, Chara?

...I hope you can find a way out of it.

We exit the elevator.

End of Part 5
¯\_(ツ)_/¯

Chapter End Notes

So since about... since we entered Hotland I think? I've been playing Undertale in a small window and writing in another window, and writing and playing at the same time. So if something happens in the story, chances are very high that it happened to me. And if I miss a little bit of dialogue, especially in fights, then I just didn't write it in time or had to focus.

SO I wondered what all of the signs said, and where all the paths led, so I checked everything. Also that's what Frisk does. And surprisingly enough, I found a shortcut through the Core. I'm always kinda scared of the Core, because it's really hard and the first time I played I died there a lot. So, yeah.

And with the Mettaton fight, I had 1 HP and somehow lasted without any food. I was freaking out, like hyperventilating. So yeah, that's where that came from.

Anyways, next chapter is New Home. I've written about half of it now, so I have a pretty good idea of what I'm doing. but if anyone has tips on how to write emotions without it feeling like pointless angst should share them with me pretty please!!!
None pizza with left FEELS

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 23- None pizza with left FEELS
Part 6- New Home

Frisk P.O.V.

The familiar grey walls of the Capital greet you as you step out of the elevator. Wait, familiar? ...You decide to assume it’s one of Chara’s memories. You take a deep breath.

I’m not sure I can do this. Maybe we should separate, Chara thinks. You scrunch up your nose. After everything? You’re pretty sure that the two of you can manage anything together, at this point.

It’ll be okay, Chara. We’ll both be fine, You reassure them. You pat one of your own hands comfortably. It was weird sharing a body at first, but at this point it’s like second nature.

But-

Well we’ve come this far, haven’t we? You march down the hallway, and Chara subconsciously alerts you to a SAVE point. You’re not sure if Chara meant to do that or not, but you take it as it is. You can’t really see them yourself, but if you peer into Chara’s mind you can catch a glimpse of what they look like. They’re just little glowing stars, shimmering with an internal power.

I’m not sure what you’re determined about, here, Chara thinks. That gives you pause. Normally they know exactly why the SAVE point is there, and you never really know until they tell you. If they don’t know, then you don’t really stand a chance either.

That’s okay! We’ll keep going anyway! ...You can kind of sense Chara’s fear and restlessness upon entering… The capital, did they call it? You shrug it off and keep walking. Coming to an elevator, you catch your first glimpse of the city.

The elevator’s in use.

Right, I can hear the humming, You think absentmindedly. The buildings stretch into the distance in monotone. Some scrape the roof of the cavern, some are shorter, some have domed tops. As you continue down the path you can’t seem to tear your(Chara’s) eyes off them. You wonder who lives there. You come to a bend in the road, where the buildings thin out as the castle grows in the distance.

You take a step forward, and enter a clearing. A courtyard, perhaps. There’s some leaves on the ground in front of you. You look down, careful not to trip, and don’t look up until you see a shadow covering the ground.

Th-there’s a SAVE point here, too. Chara’s voice is shaky, and you can feel your fists clenching and unclenching out of your control. You wrap an arm around yourself. You’re not sure what’s causing their distress, but you want to help.

This seems familiar…
Yeah, it… it looks just like Toriel’s house. You blink in surprise, since you knew you recognized
the building from somewhere. But that was when you couldn’t see. You step inside curiously.
There’s the same stairs you remember going down twice, but they’re sealed off by a locked chain.
You rest a hand on it, feeling the cool metal.

*Will you read the note for me?*

‘Howdy. I’m in the garden. If you have anything you need to get off your chest, please don’t
hesitate to come. The keys are in the kitchen and the hallway.’ Chara reads the note without any
emotion at all. You can’t help but feel concerned for them, even if you’re a little confused. Not only
that, but their emotions and feelings are affecting you, too. Your hands feel shaky, and you’re
clutching an arm around yourself tightly, still. Your stomach hurts.

*That was from the king wasn’t it?*

Yeah.

*Oh.* You decide to go to the kitchen first, and enter the living room. The chair that Toriel sat in is
there, along with the fireplace and the bookshelf. The only difference is that there’s four chairs
instead of three, and there’s a golden flower on the table. Suddenly, it seems you’re attacked! A
Froggit appears.

“A long time ago, a human fell into the Ruins.” A Froggit says. You can’t remember being able to
speak Froggit, but since Chara can, perhaps they’re automatically translating.

“Injured by its fall, the human called out for help.” Your body stiffens, and your hand clenches
tighter. For some reason, this story feels familiar. You get the feeling it might be about you? The
Froggits fade away. You wonder if they were there at all. You continue into the kitchen.

“Ah, there’s the key,” You mutter to yourself. You take the key and put it on your phone’s key-
chain. Nothing in here is different, except for a trashcan. Curious, you peer inside it.

*It’s full of crumpled-up recipes for butterscotch pie,* Chara informs you.

*No cinnamon?* You joke.

**No,** Chara feels a little more cold, and distant. You get the feeling they didn’t like your joke very
much. As you pass through the living room, another pair of monsters appear.

“Asriel, the king’s son, heard the human’s call.” A Whimsum says. You involuntarily take a step
back. Wait, that wasn’t you.

“He brought the human back to the castle.” The second Whimsum says. You take a deep, shaky
breath, and cross into the hallway. You’re pretty sure that the human in the story isn’t you, now. You
stop outside the room that Toriel had given you, and admire the flowers. They’re golden. It looks like
whoever lives here really likes them. You have to force your hand to open the door, since it seems to
resist you.

*Chara?* You ask. They relax their hold on your hand and let you go inside.

*Frisk?*

...*Who lives here?*
Lived’ would be more appropriate. You’ll find out soon enough. Chara seems bitter, but doesn’t try to stop you from looking in one of the gift-wrapped boxes. There’s a heart-shaped locket inside the box. Will you take it? Chara asks. They hold the locket tightly, as if afraid it’ll disappear forever.

Of course! You take the locket and put it around your neck. What does it say?

It says, ‘Best Friends Forever.’ Chara hasn’t let go of the locket. They don’t seem to want to open it, though. You go to the other box. There’s a worn dagger inside. You take it and attach it to one of your belt loops. Perfect for cutting plants and vines. One of Chara’s memories, you assume, slips through. It’s an image of a flower being cut from a stem. You aren’t sure what it means.

This looks comfortable, You muse as you lay a hand on one of the beds. Chara seems to agree.

If you laid down here, you might not ever get up, They whisper. Your body shakes again. You take a difficult step away from the strange pull of the bed, and look at a drawing of a golden flower on the wall instead. These flowers seem to be pretty common, since before you fell your whole town was covered in them. You wonder if there’s a reason for that. Next to that is a small bookshelf, with a picture frame on top of it.

I wish it wasn’t so dusty. I want to see who’s in the picture! The only thing you can make out is that there’s four people in it, and everyone is smiling.

Don’t touch it, Chara says urgently, pulling your hand away. ...I mean, the king wouldn’t want you to mess with his things. They add. You look into the armoire, seeing a lot of striped shirts inside. They’re mostly green and yellow, with some variety in shades and patterns. You look at the other bed. Chara doesn’t seem to hold much information about this one. The other bed seems to hold more significance in their opinion. You leave the room, and hear Chara sigh in relief, and your arm relaxes from where it was holding your sleeve.

This was Toriel’s room, yeah?

Yes. The sign says, ‘Room under renovations.’

Like the sign on the third door in Toriel’s house. You notice a key sitting on a table. As you move towards it, a line of Moldsmals appear in the air.

“Over time, Asriel and the human became like siblings,” One Moldsmal says.

“The King and Queen treated the human child as their own.”

“The underground was full of hope,” The last one says.

I have a feeling this story isn’t going to turn out well... You think in concern.

You’d be right. You wonder what Chara means by that, but the waves of bitterness in their mind stop you from asking. You take the key and put it on your phone’s key-chain.

This room was the one that was under renovations in Toriel’s house, right?

Yes. It looks like a bedroom of some sort, but it’s different from Toriel’s. Of course it’s different. That’s a king-sized bed. Chara laughs, but there’s not really any joy in it. They tried to joke, though. Even if you don’t get the joke, it’s something. You look into the armoire. It’s a bureau, not an armoire. There’s a Santa Claus outfit inside.
If this is the king’s house, then he seems like a really nice guy.

Yes. You look into the clothes drawer next to it. There are robes, button-up shirts… And a pink, hand-knit sweater that says ‘Mr. Dad Guy.’ I didn’t think he’d keep something like this. Chara thinks in wonder. You agree with that, from what you’ve heard the King doesn’t seem the type to wear it. According to Undyne, at least, he’s a warrior. And yet, she also said that he’s the nicest guy she knows, if you’re to paraphrase a little. And everyone else thinks the same. So you wonder why Chara thinks that.

Well, maybe it was a gift from someone he cares about? You guess. Chara doesn’t answer. You’re not sure what to make of this, since normally Chara’s a chatty, sarcastic, joke-making ghost. Not the melancholy, quiet, serious type. Something must be wrong. You think this part loudly, but not directly at them, so they know you’re wondering. They seem to take the hint, but apparently don’t want to share. They just huff and ignore you.

You notice another golden flower next to the bed, but this one’s made of macaroni. What’s it say? You ask.

‘For King Dad.’ Chara responds hollowly.

Thanks. You frown, and walk across the room. This must be his diary. What does it say?

All the current page says is ‘Nice day today!’ You tap the page, and find that the ink is still almost wet. You move to leave, but notice a trophy that you almost forgot about.

What’s this?

It’s a trophy. Number 1 Nose-Nuzzle Champs ‘98.

Aw, that’s cute.

It is. You’d think a couple like that would never split up, right?

Yeah. The Whimsum did mention a Queen, though, so maybe they didn’t. Chara doesn’t respond. You’re not sure why they said that, there’s been no reason to believe that the Queen isn’t around. No monsters mention her, but that doesn’t mean she doesn’t exist. Maybe she’s just shy. You leave the room. There’s a mirror at the end of the hallway, just like in Toriel’s house. You can remember Chara surprising you with ‘It’s you!’ You hadn’t known what they meant by that before they explained. You smile a little at the memory, and see your reflection smile as well.

Despite everything, it’s still you. Your smile grows, and you wrap both arms around yourself. …I don’t think I want to leave.

You have to.

I miss Toriel.

Me too. You sit there for a moment, hugging yourself and your ghostly counterpart, and then straighten back up.

You’re right, though. I have to finish what I’ve started.

One way or another. You frown as you remember what you’re doing here, and catch your own eye
in the mirror again. Your reflection smiles at you. You smile for real, and go to unlock the chain. You walk down the stairs, resigned to your own fate, knowing it’s also the entire underground’s. A pair of Migosps intercept you.

“Then… One day…” The Migosp hesitates.

“The human became very ill.” The other one finishes. You keep walking in silence, and find three Vegetoids.

“The sick human had only one request,” A vegetoid says.

“To see the flowers from their village.”

“But there was nothing we could do.” You’re filled with not determination, but dread.

“The next day.” A Lux says.

“The next day… The human died.” You gasp as the Luxes fade away.

“Asriel, wracked with grief, absorbed the human’s Soul,” A snowdrake says.

“He transformed into a being with incredible power.”

“With the human Soul, Asriel crossed through the barrier,” Says an Icecap.

“He carried the human’s body into the sunset.”

“Back to the village of the humans.”

Oh no… You think. You know what humans are like, and can’t picture this ending well. Your grip on your arms tightens. You hadn’t even realized you were holding yourself before now. It was almost as if Chara was looking for support. Pieces start to float together in your mind, but you’re scared of what they could mean. Your breathing feels weird.

“Asriel reached the center of the village,” Says a Woshua.

“There, he found a bed of golden flowers.”

“He carried the human onto it.” You walk out onto a ledge stretching over the city, and you can’t help but admire the Capital once more. It seems empty, and that makes you sad. The weight of your actions, and future actions, weighs heavily on you.

“Suddenly, screams rang out,” A shyren says.

“The villagers saw Asriel holding the human’s body.”

“They thought that he had killed the child.” You gasp and cover your mouth. You have a feeling you know exactly where this story is going. Chara seems to have withdrawn into your subconscious completely, and you can’t tell if they’re even listening anymore.

“The humans attacked him with everything they had.” A training dummy says.

“He was struck with blow after blow.”

“Asriel had the power to destroy them all.”
“But…” A Knight Knight says. Floating next to it is a Madjick.

“Asriel did not fight back,” The Madjick says.

“Clutching the human…”

“Asriel smiled, and walked away.”

“Wounded, Asriel stumbled home.” A… A Final Froggit says. You wonder if these monsters lived in the Core.

“He entered the castle and collapsed.”

“His dust spread across the garden.”

“The kingdom fell into despair.” A Whimsalot says.

“The king and queen had lost two children in one night.”

“The humans had once again taken everything from us.” That’s the line that makes your heart feel like it’s shattering. You crouch down on your knees, breathing heavy, and take a moment to wipe your eyes. You catch your breath again, and shakily walk forwards.

“The King decided it was time to end our suffering.” An Astigmatism says.

“Every human who falls down here must die.”

“With enough souls, we can shatter the barrier forever.”

“It’s not long now,” Says a Lux. A Moldsmal and a Whimsum speak with it in unison. “King Asgore will give us hope.”

“King Asgore will let us go.”

“King Asgore will save us all.”

“You should be smiling, too,” A Pyrope says.

“Aren’t you excited?” A Vulkin says.

“Aren’t you happy?” Another one says.

“You’re going to be free.” A Froggit says. Then it fades away, like dust. You can feel your breathing getting difficult again, and part of you chastises yourself for being weak. Big kids don’t cry, right? That’s the saying. And yet, you can’t help it. You feel too alone here, even though you shouldn’t have to.

Chara, this is awful!

I know.

You haven’t even been listening! You’re making me deal with this on my own! You kind of regret saying that, but you can’t help but feel a little abandoned. Chara’s soft waves of consciousness grow into anger.

You don’t think I know this story already!? You don’t think that I already know every little
detail? You don’t think I’ve relived it enough? I don’t need to hear it again! The pieces come together and connect in your mind.

You… You’re… It was about you? You struggle to organize your thoughts.

Yes, all of it. I’m the tragic human who fell down and got the prince killed. It’s my own personal legend, a record of how I screwed up!

But Chara, it’s not-

Oh, it’s not my fault, right? Getting sick? Getting Asriel, the only person who ever cared about me, killed. He’s dead now, and I’m dead now, and it’s all my fault.

But how can you blame yourself for getting sick?

You don’t even know the full story, Frisk. And I’m not going to torment myself anymore, so if you want to know it, you’re going to have to find another source of information.

So all this time, you were the first human? You were that important to everyone?

Yeah, I guess so. It was hard, you know, being put on a pedestal that high. I was responsible for the fate of all monsterkind, I was supposed to represent hope. Even Asriel thought I was some kind of saint. You know the prophecy?

The one with the Angel?

Yeah, everyone was convinced it was about me. But in the end, I failed everyone. It wasn’t me, and everyone’s hopes and dreams died along with me. And then you have the nerve to drag me back!

You know I didn’t mean to!

It’s still your fault I’m here, isn’t it?

We don’t know that for sure, it could have been someone else.

You and I both know that’s not true. There is one good thing about you being here, though.

...What’s that?

Now you’re the Angel of the prophecy, and not me. Now if you’ll excuse me, I’m going back to barely being conscious.

...Chara, you know I like you, right? There’s no answer. You continue anyway. If you hadn’t been here, I would have died way more than I already have. And if you weren’t here, I wouldn’t have been able to come back. You’ve saved my life so many times.

...So what? You smile at getting a response, and continue.

So, even if you couldn’t save your brother… or yourself… You got to save me. And if all goes well, we’ll save all of monsterkind, too. Together.

...I think that’s the cheesiest thing anyone’s ever said to me. You hear Chara laugh, and that makes you happy.
So that sweater… You made that? You ask. This seems to surprise Chara, which was your intent. You’d prefer to not think about the sad or difficult things right now.

What makes you think I made it?

I doubt the king’s biological son would call him Mr. Dad Guy. It must have been you. And the macaroni flower? ‘For King dad?’ That’s also definitely yours.

I was a fan of the arts, okay? Chara huffs, and ignores you, if only to make a point. You shrug.

...So that elevator must be the one that we saw at the beginning.

Yep. I wonder who was using it?

No idea. You find a doorway going to the south. When you step inside there’s no light, save for windows lining the hall. The room’s bathed in a golden light, reminding you of the sun. But it can’t be the sun, right? You’re underground. But the feeling is unmistakable. Maybe there was a hole in the ceiling?

Other than the golden sunset’s glow, it’s dark. Chara sees a SAVE point. They don’t say anything, though. You walk down the hall slowly, your footsteps echoing in the stifling silence. A figure appears in front of you, silhouetted. A bell chimes.

“So you finally made it,” The shadowed figure says. “The end of your journey is at hand. In a few moments, you will meet the king. Together… You will determine the future of this world. That’s then. Now. You will be judged. You will be judged for your every action. You will be judged for every EXP you’ve earned.”

“EXP?” You ask.

“What’s EXP? It’s an acronym. It stands for ‘execution points’.” The figure stands in the shadow of a pillar, and you can’t see their face. Their voice sounds familiar, but not one you’ve heard in a while.

...Oh. But wasn’t Flowey telling us we needed that?

Yeah, well, he would.

“A way of quantifying the pain you have inflicted on others. When you kill someone, your EXP increases. When you have enough EXP, your LOVE increases.”

LV was the acronym for LOVE, wasn’t it?

That’s what the flower said.

“LOVE, too, is an acronym. It stands for ‘Level of Violence’. A way of measuring someone’s capacity to hurt. The more you kill, the easier it becomes to distance yourself. The more you distance yourself, the less you will hurt. The more easily you can bring yourself to hurt others.” The figure steps into the light, revealing himself.

Oh, Sans!

Oh. Sans.

...but you. you never gained any LOVE,” Sans says. His voice is back to normal, since he had been
disguising it. “‘course, that doesn’t mean you’re completely innocent or naive. just that you kept a
certain tenderness in your heart. no matter the struggles or hardships you faced… you strived to do
the right thing. you refused to hurt anyone. even when you ran away, you did it with a smile.”

I cannot believe Sans is our ‘judge.’ Who gave him that job?

“you never gained LOVE, but you gained love. does that make sense? maybe not. ...now. you’re
about to face the greatest challenge of your entire journey. your actions here… will determine the fate
of the entire world.”

...That’s a bit of pressure.

“if you refuse to fight… asgore will take your soul and destroy humanity. but if you kill asgore and
go home… monsters will remain trapped underground. what will you do?”

“I… I don’t know…” You sigh. Sans looks at least sympathetic.

“well, if i were you, i would have thrown in the towel by now. but you didn’t get this far by giving
up, did you?” You shake your head. “that’s right. you have something called ‘determination.’ so as
long as you hold on… so long as you do what’s in your heart… i believe you can do the right thing.
alright. we’re all counting on you, kid. good luck.” You glance down at the locket around your neck.
Somehow it feels like it belongs there, and it feels supportive. When you look up again, Sans is gone.

What am I going to do?

I don’t know, Frisk, what are you going to do?

I don’t want to hurt anyone!

But you might have to.

Surely I can reason with him.

...That might work… But, it might not. I haven’t seen Asgore in a long time, and I don’t know
how much he’s changed. If Asriel, Toriel, and I left him, then I can’t imagine he’s doing very
well.

So I’ll talk to him. And maybe you could talk to him, too.

No. He’s done grieving over me. I don’t want to cause him more distress.

...I guess… But I’m sure he misses you, and Toriel, and Asriel.

Probably, but they’re all gone now. Gone from his life, anyway.

Hmm… It looks like that plan isn’t going to work. You reluctantly leave the hall, and enter a grey
corridor leading to a gaping, dark entrance. There’s a sign next to it.

Throne Room. Chara spots a SAVE point, so we SAVE. There might be something at the end of
this hall. I don’t think it’s used for much, but we might as well check it out. Even at the end, the
two of you were both still avoiding facing the king. You nod and do as Chara advises. You arrive at
some stairs, presumably leading down to a basement.

This feels unsettling. You think as a shiver goes down your spine. It’s a bit colder down here. You
arrive at the bottom of the stairs, and gasp in shock.
There’s seven coffins, all lined up in a row. Each one has a different colored heart on it, the one closest to the door being red. You tentatively ask Chara what it is.

**It’s a coffin. There’s a name engraved on it. ‘Chara.’ ...It’s empty.** You step back a couple steps, and go back up the stairs. Neither of you had opened the coffin, so there’s only one way Chara could have known it was empty. And you didn’t want to think about it.

You end up back outside the Throne Room, and hesitate before going in. Finally you take a deep breath and do it.

The atmosphere in this room is peaceful. There’s light coming from holes in the ceiling, and flowers and plants carpet the ground. The flowers are mostly golden in here, just like all the flowers in the entire underground, it seems. A slight breeze blows through, ruffling your hair, and carrying the scent of wildflowers. Your feet crunch on some dried leaves.

Your gaze lands on an imposing figure with their back turned to you. They’re wearing a long purple cape with gold shoulders, and have long blonde hair with horns sticking up. This must be him. This must be Asgore.

“Dum dee dum… Oh? Is someone there? Just a moment! I have almost finished watering these flowers. ...Here we are!” He finally turns around to look at you. “Howdy! How can I…” His eyes widen and he takes a couple steps back. “Oh. ...I so badly want to say, ‘would you like a cup of tea?’”

“Then say it…” You whisper under your breath. You so badly want him to ask that.

“But… You know how it is.” He sighs deeply, and goes to look out a window. “Nice day today, huh? Birds are singing, flowers are blooming… Perfect weather for a game of catch. ...You know what we must do. When you are ready, come into the next room.” Asgore walks away, through a door on the far side of the room.

...Are we ready?

As ready as we’ll ever be. Chara’s been really quiet since you got here. You’re a little concerned for them, but you understand why they feel that way. You’d feel the same. Though it is strange for them, since normally they never shut up. That’s meant in an endearing way, though.

You examine the throne at the end of the room. It’s royal purple with a gold trim, and a delta rune embroidered into the fabric. It’s large enough for two of you to sit in. There’s another throne behind it, covered by a white sheet.

Was this the queen’s?

Yes.

Was it Toriel?

Yes.

Oh. I was wondering if it would be racist for me to assume all goat monsters are related.

Probably not.

So Asriel was a goat too?
Yes.

_Huh._ You SAVE without commentary, and enter the next room.

“How tense… Just think of it like… A visit to the dentist,” Asgore says.

_Pretty sure whenever I go to the dentist nobody ends up dead._

That’s boring.

_I’d rather it be boring than anything like this._ The room you’re in is reminiscent of the first room you ever entered in the underground, right after you fell. That’s also where you met Flowey for the first time. The little golden flower doesn’t seem to be around, though.

“Are you ready?” Asgore asks as you follow him. “If you are not, I understand. I am not ready either.”

_I guess we’re in the same boat, then._ You walk through the entrance after SAVEing. All of these SAVE points are putting you on edge a little.

“This is the barrier,” Asgore explains. Your borrowed eyes stare with open wonder. It’s pulsing, one minute black, the other white. It makes a soft humming noise, and you can almost feel the magic radiating off of it. “This is what keeps us all trapped underground. ...If… If by chance you have any unfinished business… Please do what you must. Continue or go back.”

“Continue,” You say. You don’t want to fight him. The only comfort you have is that you’re able to spare him. Without that, you can imagine that you’d have a bad time.

“...I see… This is it, then.” He turns to you, after facing only the barrier. “Ready?” You nod grimly. Seven containers arise from the ground. There’s a differently colored Soul in each of them, except one. That one’s empty.

_A strange light fills the room. Twilight is shining through the barrier. It seems your journey is finally over. You’re filled with… DETERMINATION._

“How… It was nice to meet you. Goodbye.” He thrusts off his cape, revealing polished, battle-ready armour underneath. He’s holding a trident made of red magic. Your heart is pulled out of your chest, and the trident goes through it.

It doesn’t hurt, but something doesn’t feel right… It’s cracking into pieces, but you’re not dying… The trident is magic, red magic, that you’ve never seen before. You don’t know it’s effects.

But you do know one thing.

Everything is fading. Fading, until it goes black.

Chapter End Notes

So... haha... Forgot to upload again... Oh well, summer's screwing with my schedule.
Hope you guys can understand!

Enjoy the chapter!!!
EDIT: Ok i'm in a better state of mind to write an a/n. The title of this chapter was supposed to be the working title, but I forgot to change it haha... Did I write Frisk okay? I see them as being much more observant than Chara, so I tried more descriptive writing. Since Chara's in first person and is kind of selfish, plus they're a ghost and don't have any physical sensation, they don't describe their surroundings as much as Frisk, who's also seeing it for the first time. So I hope I did okay in portraying that.

Ask blog: saltychara.tumblr.com

Also, please take this poll to see what happens next time!
http://www.strawpoll.me/10627241
I'm alone and I don't like it

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 24- I'm alone and I don't like it
Chara P.O.V.

Suddenly I was completely in control. I stumble under the sudden weight of having a body, but catch myself. I look nervously at Asgore, my dad.

...Frisk? There’s no answer. Frisk, c’mon, don’t ditch me now. There’s still no response. What, did you fall asleep? Because now is not the time! ...Seriously, don’t make me face him by myself! ...Frisk. Frǐissk. Ugh.

I eventually come to the conclusion that I’m doing this by myself. Holding the worn dagger, I prepare myself to survive this battle. Thinking about the advice I gave Frisk, about how they’d probably have to actually fight him, I’m not sure that I can do that. I mean, I only knew him for a year, but seeing as he was one of the first people to ever care about me…

The problem was that I had planned to take a backseat to this. But now here I was, alone, and in full control.

In Frisk’s spirit, I tried talking to him first. “I don’t want to fight,” I say. His hands tremble for a moment. His attacks look exactly like Toriel’s, which makes my heart ache. I miss her, too. I try talking again. “No, really, I don’t want to fight!” I say more forcefully. His breathing goes funny.

...What now? Oh, right. Frisk would check him. “Check!” I say. But… I’m the one who always tells Frisk what’s happening. I already know he has 80 ATK, and 80 DEF. There’s nothing else to say. But I’ve already used my turn, and in my distracted thoughts I lose 10 HP.

So if talking or checking doesn’t work, what else? I’m not Frisk, I’m not in the habit of sparing. In fact, I’m positive that I couldn’t if I tried. Not without Frisk here, anyway. So that’s out of the question. But that leaves…

No, I don’t want to kill him. I’ll try talking to him again, first. “STOP fighting!” I all but yell. Recollection flashes in his eyes… But it seems talking won’t do any good. And since his attacks do incredible damage, one of his fireballs hits me and kills me.

GAME OVER.

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Don’t lose hope! Chara! Stay determined…

~~~

It was kind of a cruel irony that Asgore’s words echo through my head when I die. Especially since his words were the last ones I ever heard while actually alive. Except this time, he’s the one who killed me. At least he didn’t know it was actually me. That’d be interesting, though, to see what he’d do. Would he take my Soul anyway? Or would he spare me, and wait for yet another human to fall? It’s too bad I’ll never know the answer. I’m not sure that I want to know, anyway.

When I reach the closest SAVE point, I consider things I could do differently. Looking through my
items, I don’t have a lot food-wise. ...Or anything, food-wise. In the dimensional boxes there’s a couple things, like all of the other humans’ items. In the second box, there’s the Butterscotch Pie and the Snowman Piece. I had been saving those, but at this point it’s now, or never. Maybe Frisk would have wanted to keep the Snowman Piece, but I wasn’t that sentimental.

Plus, maybe if I ate the pie in front of Asgore… It’d make him not want to kill me as much. Did he even know that Toriel was alive? How could he? She’d left, presumably shortly after I’d died, and that was probably a long time ago. What had Sans said? A hundred years? It was too bad there was no way to confirm that.

So I put the pie and the snowman piece into my pockets. Or, Frisk’s pockets. I really wish I had more food, but not bad enough to go get some. I’d probably be okay with those two. Just need to be more careful.

I enter the columns again, and listen to Asgore at the barrier again.

“Ready?” He asks. I’m a bit surprised that he didn’t make his speech again. Why was that? I try talking again.

“You’ve killed me once before,” I say. He nods sadly. ...What does that mean? Could he know? He couldn’t possibly know, right? ...Huh. Now what? I didn’t want to eat while my health was still full… Should I fight him? No, I shouldn’t. Maybe I could just get his HP kind of low, and then… Maybe he wouldn’t want to fight anymore? I mean, what other options do I have? I could keep dying, see if that changes his mind. But even though I’ll always come back, it still hurts a lot. Fire is a painful way to go, after all.

I tentatively swing the knife at him. It’s a pretty accurate hit, but my heart’s not in it. It deals 124 damage, barely a dent in his health. This could take a while. In that turn, I lose 10 HP to fireballs. I take another swing. 122 damage. But, as it turns out, I’m terrible at dodging. Which, to be fair, is understandable, right? I’m new to this body, I normally don’t fight things, and if I do I’m not really the ‘dodging’ type. Now Frisk, that kid can dodge.

GAME OVER.

~~~
Don’t lose hope! Chara! Stay determined...
~~~

Yeah, yeah. I got it the first ten times. I jump right back into fighting. For the first time I notice that the barrier’s turned purple. The first thing I do is talk to him again.

“You’ve killed me twice before,” I say. He just nods sadly again, not reacting any differently than last time. I wonder again about the idea that if he kills me enough times then he might spare me… Probably not. I dodge that attack flawlessly, since it’s one Toriel used a lot.

I swing the knife, which also happened to be mine before I died, by the way, and land a hit worth 107 damage. I’ll have to do better than that if I want to win, though. Luckily he uses another one of Toriel’s attacks and I get through without a scratch. I swing again, taking away 109 of his health. And then I get hit twice, losing 10 hp. I regretfully think back to the Temmy Armor. I deal 121 damage this time. His eyes flash, blue then orange. I stand still, but almost forget to move through the orange. I lose 5 hp. I swing the knife again, dealing 109 damage.

Thankfully this attack is another Toriel-esque attack and I can dodge it. Feeling confident, I swing again, with 123 damage. Not bad. And I dodge the concentric circles of fire.
In retrospect, I should have eaten something at this point. But, no. A couple of fireballs gets me. To be fair, though, that attack was really hard to dodge.

GAME OVER

~~~
Don’t lose hope! Chara! Stay determined…
~~~

Looks like we may be going with the ‘keep dying’ plan after all.

“You’ve killed me three times.” I swing, and get 109. Terrible. On top of that, I lose 5 hp. Next turn I get 123 and hit once. The next one I get right on target, and deal 125 damage. I also lose 5 more hp. I should probably eat, but I want to save my food for later, since the fight’s barely begun. Thankfully I don’t get hit next turn. Or the next. But the next is the fireballs again. Which hit me once, but miraculously only take 4 hp. I guess now’s the time to eat.

Snowman Piece or pie? ...I guess I’ll go with pie. I eat the pie. The smell seems to remind Asgore of someone. His attack and defense drop. My next attack doesn’t land dead center, but still does 134 damage. I get hit once, but it only does 4 damage again. With every swing I can feel myself get stronger. At this point, I guess I’m resigned to killing him if it eventually comes to that. And because of that, my attacks hurt more.

At this point, he’s almost at half health, and I’m at 8. Not bad, this time I might win. But then I get hit again and consider eating, since I’m at 4 hp. ...I think I can hold out another turn. And I do. So now I’ll eat the Snowman Piece.

The interesting thing about fighting Asgore is that the second you get hit, his attacks stop and his turn ends. I can truly believe that he doesn’t want to hurt me. It’s too bad that I have to hurt him. It’s also too bad that I’m at 4 hp again and I’m out of food. One attack later and it’s 1 hp. The next attack-

GAME OVER

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Don’t lose hope! Chara! Stay determined…
~~~

Dammit. I was so close, too. Would now be the time to get a glamburger or something? Probably. I sigh, and make my way back to the hotel. At least there’s an elevator.

It feels very weird walking around without Frisk, especially seeing Burgerpants. I feel more awkward. Anyways, I buy two Glamburgers and head back up to Asgore.

~~~

Eventually, my attacks start doing over two hundred damage. It looks like my frustration from dying so many times is fueling my attacks.

By this point I’ve eaten both glamburgers and the pie. My hp is at 8, but Asgore’s is also pretty low. I put all of my effort into the next strike, and to my pleasure does 658 damage. And then Asgore drops to his knee, and I remember what’s going on. I don’t want him to die! But it looks like he’s hanging in there…

“Ah…” Asgore says. “...So that is how it is. ...I remember the day after my son died.”
“...What?” Since when were we talking about Asriel?

“The entire underground was devoid of hope. The future had once again been taken from us by the humans. In a fit of anger, I declared war. I said that I would destroy any human that came here. I would use their souls to become godlike… and free us from this terrible prison. Then, I would destroy humanity… And let monsters rule the surface, in peace. Soon, the people’s hopes returned. My wife, however, became disgusted with my actions. She left this place, never to be seen again. Truthfully… I do not want power. I do not want to hurt anyone. I just wanted everyone to have hope… But… I cannot take this any longer. I just want to see my wife. I just want to see my child. Please… Young one… This war has gone on long enough. You have the power… Take my soul, and leave this cursed place.”

I find myself blinking back tears. He thinks that Toriel is dead. He knows that Asriel and I are dead, even if he… didn’t mention me at all. He wants me to kill him., so that he can be with his family. But… I can’t. He’s my dad, even if he might not think of me as his child anymore. And that hurts, I’ll admit. But I can’t.

I think about Frisk, and the choice they would make. The obvious one, to them. Show him mercy. I’m not the type, but I find myself putting the knife down on the ground. It’s not true mercy, but it’s almost some. A broken mercy, maybe.

Asgore looks up at me, in shock. There’s something hopeful in his eyes, though. “...After everything I have done to hurt you… You would rather stay down here and suffer… Than live happily on the surface?” I nod, not trusting myself to speak. “...Human… I promise you… For as long as you remain here… My wife and I will take care of you as best we can. We can sit in the living room, telling stories… Eating butterscotch pie… We could be like… Like a family…”

This feeling… It’s what I felt when the Dreemurrs first took me in. He may have used some of the same words, too. It’s like it’s happening all over again, and I’m getting a second chance. Asriel may be gone, but I’ll find Frisk as soon as I can, and we can go find Toriel, and we can be a family. It’s everything I could want.

A ring of seeds appears around Asgore. We lock eyes, and freeze. The seeds close in around him, and shatter him. I gasp, my breath all gone. One last pellet floats above his grey monster soul, and shatters it once and for all.

A flower with a face pops up from the ground.

“You,” I growl. So much for my happiness. It was stupid for me to think that, even for a moment, I could be happy ever again. I’m already dead, nothing’s supposed to be able to hurt me anymore. It’s not fair!

“You IDIOT.” The flower says, still smiling. What was his name? Flowery? No, Flowey. That’s it. “You haven’t learned a thing. In this world…” The six human souls begin to spin around him. “It’s KILL or BE killed.” He laughs, and I vaguely remember teaching that phrase to my brother as everything goes black.

~~~

Long ago, two races ruled over Earth: HUMANS and MONSTERS.
One day, they all disappeared without a trace.

~~~

Flowey: LV 9999
My World
Continue Restart
When I wake up, I’m disoriented. My first thought is to call for Frisk, but it doesn’t take long to realize they’re not here. Wherever ‘here’ is. Everything is black. There’s no ground, but I find myself able to walk forwards. To my relief there’s a SAVE point up ahead.

I SAVE, and- The star starts… bleeding? SAVE points can bleed? A red substance that may or may not have been blood leaks out of it. It starts to shatter, and then fades out completely. It’s been erased. I’m no expert on SAVE points or how they work, but I’m pretty sure they’re not supposed to do that.

Then, of course, I remember the flower. It pops up a couple feet away, seemingly on a TV screen. It glitches into static, then goes back to his grinning face.

“Howdy!” I wonder if he says that to mock Asgore. Oh god, he just killed Asgore. I almost forgot. “It’s me, FLOWEY.” Its voice distorts, and I cover my ears for a second reflexively. “FLOWEY the FLOWER! I owe you a HUGE thanks. You really did a number on that old fool. Without you, I NEVER could have gotten past him. But now, with YOUR help.. He’s DEAD.” My stomach feels nauseous as his face shifts to mimic Asgore’s, and then melts.

“And I’VE got the human SOULS! Boy! I’ve been empty for so long. It feels great to have a SOUL inside me again.” It figured that this thing was soulless. I should’ve guessed it sooner. “Mmmm, I can feel them wriggling… Awww, you’re feeling left out, aren’t you? Well, that’s just perfect. After all, I only have six souls. I still need one more… Before I become GOD. And then,” The flower continues, “with my newfound powers… Monsters. Humans. Everyone. I’ll show them all the REAL meaning of this world.

I debate whether or not I’m still in possession of a human soul. I think I can feel it, and it did fine during Asgore’s fight. But where’s Frisk? Are they even okay? What the hell happened to them? If I reset… Maybe they’d come back. I’d have to reset a while back, though. Before Asgore. I reach out for the familiar feeling of a SAVE file, but for some reason, I can’t seem to find it. That’s never happened before!

“Oh, and forget about escaping to your old SAVE FILE. It’s gone FOREVER.” Apologies for my language, but shit. What the hell’s going to happen to Frisk now!? Are they gone forever, too!? “But don’t worry. Your old friend FLOWEY… Has worked out a replacement for you! I’ll SAVE over your own death. So you can watch me tear you to bloody pieces… Over, and over, and over…” His face turns grotesque, kind of melty and making a horrific grinning expression.

“That’s it, you’re going down, you flower bastard,” I growl. I’ve had it with this piece of garbage.

“…what? Do you really think you can stop ME? Hee hee hee… You really ARE an idiot.”

My Soul, or Frisk’s, anyway, emerges as it's pulled into a fight. Being in the void, in a world controlled by a psychopathic flower, I get the feeling this fight won’t be following any of the normal rules. At this point, it really is kill or be killed.

The six other human souls float before me, spinning slowly until they spread out in a loose oval. I can feel my entire body tense up as the void flashes red and black. Something… not good is happening. Claws with leaves poking out of them slowly come into view, attached to a weird looking, pulsating thing. As the gigantic creature-thing slowly crawls into view, it emits an earth-shaking laugh. I crouch down and cover my ears again, but then I catch a glimpse of what it actually looks like.
The void lighting goes back to normal, meaning that I can see perfectly besides the ever-stretching darkness. But the thing my eyes take in make me wish I couldn’t see anything. Again, apologies for the language, but what the *fuck*. It’s a throbbing mass of flesh, metal, and plants. A TV screen broadcasts the grotesquely amplified face of the flower itself. That rests on a horrific combination of flesh, human teeth, and eyes growing out of metal tubes. All this is supported by vines three times as thick as my body, covered in thorns bigger than my arms, and it hangs from somewhere above on a writhing mass of more metal tubes and wires. Huge plant-like arms ending in claws extend from the thing.

If that’s what having six human Souls looks like, I’m definitely glad that Asgore didn’t do this. Just one warped Asriel almost beyond recognition. It laughs again, its entire body shaking with the force of it. My body’s shaking, too, of course.

A little HP bar appears below me, shining yellow on the nonexistent ground. I barely have time to take that in before I’m being hit with huge white X’s coming from the eyes of the creature. I frantically try to dodge, but I’m still not very good at that. Circles of seeds appear around me before closing in and taking a lot of HP. Red and yellow lines of light shoot out, but don’t hurt, marking the path of vines that shoot out seconds later. Those do hurt.

It’s barely even surprising when one of them impales me straight through the chest.

GAME OVER

~~~
This is all just a bad dream… And you’re NEVER waking up!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

~~~

I wake up in the void again.

“Hee hee hee,” The flower’s voice says. “Did you really think I was gonna be satisfied… killing you only ONE time?” And then I have to relive my best nightmare, the one with the horrifying beast slowly crawling towards me, knowing that it’s probably going to kill me in five seconds flat yet again.

We’re immediately back into the fray, bullets and vines and X’s coming at me left and right, and I’m already at less than half health. I see an opportunity in a discarded seed bullet the size of a rock, and I throw it as hard as I can at the TV screen. It makes a little ‘ow’ of pain, but otherwise doesn’t seem deterred.

Flamethrowers emerge from the sides, and alternate shooting a wave of fire. More X’s shoot out, and one impacts my side enough to make me spin while another imbeds itself in my back.

GAME OVER

~~~
This is all just a bad dream… And you’re NEVER waking up!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

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“Pathetic… Now you’re REALLY gonna die!” Flowey says as I slowly regain consciousness. Dying never hurt that much before, and never made me pass out for that long.
The next time I try to fight it, I die a minute or so in. That’s progress, I think. Flowey doesn’t even taunt me with a GAME OVER, or any laughter this time. A split second later and I’m back in the void.

“Hee hee hee. Do you even realize what will happen if you defeat me…?” It leaves its question unanswered as it attacks again. I don’t even have any time to dwell on that before I’m fighting and dodging for my life again. It’s not just my life that’s on the line, here, anymore. It’s Frisk’s, too. I have to find them, or find a way back to them. Every now and then I find an opportunity to launch some kind of projectile at the monster. I feel like calling it a monster is offensive to my family, though, so I think it’s more of a monstrosity. That’s different, after all.

The attacks pause for a second, long enough for me to catch my breath a little. I look up as the TV screen makes a noise. ‘Warning,’ it says. There’s a light blue human soul under it. What new torment could be happening now? Everything turns to static and I’m transported to a new, different void. At least there’s no flower monstrosity here, even if there’s still a TV screen. It broadcasts the same blue soul, which is a much nicer alternative.

There’s still danger here, though. A grid of knives float through the void, and I try to maneuver between them, getting hit only a few times. A little ways over a large cell phone floats through the knives. I dodge towards it as fast as I can, getting hit a few times in my haste. I reach it, but don’t know who to call.

“Help!” I call, pressing the only button on the phone. The knives tremble for a second, then warp into green bandages. Green means good, right? I bump into as many bandages as possible, and my health gradually comes to full.

[File 1 saved]

Then I’m teleported back into the section of void where the monstrosity is. Not giving me any time to adjust to new surroundings, bombs with Flowey’s face on them start dropping from the sky, or at least the top of the void. The blasts start going off continuously, and it almost knocks me off my feet. Then one of the plants opens into a venus flytrap, and huge bugs the size of my head fly over from out of nowhere, and when they propel into me it takes a lot of HP. I find a dead one and chuck it at the screen, causing five damage to the monstrosity. Still not much, but it’s still progress nonetheless.

Of course, then beams of energy start shooting from the thing’s mouth, sapping huge amounts of health away. From the sides of the void come human fingers the size of my torso, launching themselves off of human hands. Daisies appear on the tips, possibly for aesthetic purposes.

They stop, and I sag with relief when the screen reads, ‘Warning,’ again. The Soul is orange, this time. This time there’s huge gloves floating in circles, expanding and shrinking. When they expand it’s a bit harder to avoid them, so I take an opportunity to dart into the middle, where it’s presumably safer. Not for long, though, so I dart back out and into another glove circle. I see the cell phone again, and lunge to it.

“Help?” I call. For some reason, this is working, so I’ll keep calling for help. It’s not like anyone can hear me, though… And then all of the gloves turn green. I sprint in a circle to get as many as I can before I’m warped back in front of the monstrosity. And when I am, as jarring as it is, there’s vines shooting at me again.

[File 2 Saved]

After the vines come more X’s, and then more vines, and then X’s again. And then vines, again, which I can feel one of them go through my shoulder. With as low of HP as I currently have, that
I’m teleported a couple feet to the right, where I was a couple seconds ago. That’s very disorienting, but hey. At least I didn’t actually die? Even though I should have? I stumble into some vines, but luckily don’t get hit hard enough to ‘die’ again.

The warning screen pops up again, with a dark blue soul. … Are those the souls trying to fight back? Light blue, orange, dark blue… And the knives, bandages, gloves? Those are items we’ve found, aren’t they? ...Maybe Frisk was right, and they did belong to fallen humans.

The dark blue soul summons a line of stars that force me against the strange, invisible walls of the void. Giant ballet shoes like the ones we found in Waterfall tap closer, and I duck under the first one as it rises, and then dash under the second one, and so on and so forth. The cell phone floats down the line, and I grab it as it comes in reach.

“Help!” I call. The shoes slow, and then lift up and away. The line of stars turns into a line of green music notes. Then I’m back with the monstrosity at nearly full health, and it’s shooting X’s again. The claw with the venus flytrap opens again, the huge bugs leaving bruises where they hit. I feel bad for Frisk when they get back in here, since their body is pretty banged up now.

Then balls of plant matter with human teeth on the end shoot at me in lines, and bounce around for a bit. For the first time I notice that while attacking, the screen is showing a horrific face, silently screaming in black and white. It looks like it’s from a horror movie, and I have to say, I don’t like it. However, that has distracted me enough to get myself killed. There’s no GAME OVER again, and Flowey’s voice doesn’t taunt me until I wake up again.

“Don’t you get it?” It says. “There’s no such thing as happy endings. This is all that’s left…!”

The void lights up again and the monstrosity is already there, laughing again. The bouncing teeth-plant things come at me again, and I frantically do what I can to dodge them, jumping and ducking and such. Then there’s more flamethrowers, and more X’s. I grab an X and throw it back at it. It lodges in an eye, causing 14 damage. It’s still not even a dent in the monstrosity’s health. Then there’s the circles of seeds, and the screen starts to flash again. I relax, but in my moment of weakness a seed cracks over my head and I die again.

“Are you REALLY that desperate…?” Flowey asks. “Hee hee hee…” And then we’re back. Bombs fall from the sky, seeds surround everything. More X’s. Those seemed to work pretty well last time, so I pick up another and throw it. It does 14 again. And then the flamethrowers return, as do the finger gun things that I almost forgot about. Pretty soon my entire field of vision is filled with plants, seeds, fire, and vines, and I die yet again, surprise surprise.

“Are you letting me kill you… on PURPOSE? SICKO. Ha ha ha!”

“No I’m not!” I yell frantically as things immediately start attacking. I throw another X and it does 15 damage. I’m at about 1 HP when the screen flashes a warning and a purple soul. Finally!

A wall of gigantic notebooks float on either side, and words such as ‘Trapped,’ ‘Horror,’ ‘Nightmare,’ ‘Death,’ ‘Slaughter,’ ‘Despair,’ ‘Hatred,’ etc. float past. And what a surprise, the words hurt me. Probably. I do a pretty good job of avoiding these, which is lucky since I’m barely clinging to life at this point. At last the cell phone is in view.
“Help!” I call. The purple soul, if I’m right in assuming it’s them who answer my calls, obliges. The words turn green, and say things such as ‘Freedom,’ ‘Mercy,’ ‘Luck,’ ‘Happiness,’ ‘Love,’ ‘Create,’ ‘Kindness,’ etc. float by, and I grab as many as I can before being thrown back into the turmoil.

[File 2 Saved]

First it’s vines, then X’s, more vines. A couple times I’m mysteriously teleported to where I was a few seconds ago, which still confuses me. At first I thought it was when I died, but now I know that I can actually die, so it’s not that.

The warning screen pops up again, with a green soul. The mayhem between warnings seems to be growing shorter, thankfully. I’m sick of dying.

Huge frying pans float over my head, similar to the one we found in Hotland. They flip the contents inside, and infinite eggs spill out, burning skin wherever they touch. A minute later or so a cell phone flips out of a pan. This always seems to vanish when I’m with the monstrosity…

“Help!” I call again. The uncooked eggs turn into perfectly cooked, sunny side up eggs. I let them shower over me, and then we- I’m back to fighting Flowey. If it’s even really Flowey anymore. Bombs fall from the sky by the tens, bugs swarm all over, and I throw one at the screen. It hits one of the eyes, and being pretty heavy deals 26 damage. Not bad, but nowhere near good, either. A little later the warning appears again, bearing a yellow soul.

A gun bigger than myself prepares to fire, red targets showing where I need to avoid. Huge bullets shoot out, and all but one miss me. It shoots out a cell phone, which I hastily grab.

“Help,” I call, and the yellow soul starts to shoot green flowers instead of bullets. The targets turn into hearts. I pick up as many as I can, but it’s only about half my health. I brace myself for more fighting.

But, instead of going back there, the screen here shows all six souls, floating gently in a circle. They come out of the screen, and surround me. I anxiously hope that they’re here to help and not harm. They summon all of the green items that I’ve gotten thus far, and bring me up to full health. It looks like this fight is almost over, even though it seems like it’s been an eternity and will never end.

Once that’s done, I go back to face Flowey. Miraculously, his defense drops to zero! I stay relatively in one spot, waiting for something to throw. X’s shoot out and I see my opportunity. To my surprise, it does 175 damage, which is more than all of my previous attacks combined. A green music note drifts out between the X’s, and I grab it to bring my health back up. I throw another one and it does 204 damage. Yeah! Now we’re getting somewhere!

I keep attacking with the neverending X’s, grabbing a green item every now and then. It’s nearly at half health when it switches tactics, using the finger guns combined with the X’s. Then the X’s finally stop and the bugs swarm again. Each attack I throw does more and more damage, as I become more confident that I can win this thing.

Vines shoot out seeking to kill me again, but somehow I manage to dodge them. Then there’s more flamethrowers, and finger guns. Bombs fall. Seeds attack. A green bandage floats serenely to me.

My last couple hits on Flowey do over 700 damage.

“No… NO!!” The monstrosity yells. I grin, overjoyed that I’ve won, but mostly glad that it’s over. “This CAN’T be happening!!! You… YOU…”

[File 3 Loaded]
Flowey’s health goes back up, and it grins. “You IDIOT.” Its main mouth opens, and a huge beam of energy shoots out, shattering me instantly.

[File 3 Loaded]
My heart comes back together, and a million vines impale me.

[File 3 Loaded]
The energy beam shoots me again, and the cycle repeats, alternating between energy beams and vines. It hurts. A lot.

[File 6 Saved]
Now a tightly compacted circle of seeds, or ‘friendliness pellets,’ surrounds me, and there’s nothing I can do. I’m down to my last shred of health.

“Hee hee hee,” Flowey laughs. “Did you REALLY think… You could defeat ME!? I am the GOD of this world. And YOU? You’re HOPELESS. Hopeless and alone… Golly, that’s right! Your WORTHLESS friends… can’t save you now. Call for help. I dare you. Cry into the darkness! ‘Mommy! Daddy! Somebody help!’ See what good it does you!”

The cell phone appears in my hands. Based on that speech, I don’t think it will work, but it couldn’t hurt to try anyways. Not at this point. “H-help?” I call into the phone.


[Load Failed]
“Wh… Where are my powers!??” The six brightly colored Souls emerge from the monstrosity. “The souls…? What are they doing?” It begins to shake violently, rapidly changing colors. “NO!!! NO!!! YOU CAN’T DO THAT!!! YOU’RE SUPPOSED TO OBEY ME!! STOP!!! STOP IT!!!!! STOOOOPPPP!!!!!”

Everything fades to white, with Flowey’s screams echoing still.

The light dies down, and all that’s left of the monstrosity is a drooping flower, its petals and leaves torn. It hides its face, looking towards the ground. I get some kind of satisfaction from having beaten it, since it’s the one that took away my happiness. I could kill it right now if I wanted.

And yet, speaking of happiness… Frisk is still out there. They have to be. And when I find them, I can’t tell them that I ended another creature’s life. Even if this flower doesn’t have a soul, it’s still alive. I… I can’t kill it. I have to show it mercy. ...Besides, what would happen if it was gone? It got me here, and if it’s dead it won’t be able to get me out. I don’t know if it will let me leave if I don’t kill it, but I’m not going to ensure my stay in the void.

I have to show it mercy.

“What are you doing?” It asks when I make no move. “Do you really think I’ve learned anything from this? No.” While it brings up a good point, I’m still not going to kill it. “Sparing me won’t change anything. Killing me is the only way to end this.”

“It’s definitely tempting, but no,” I tell it.
“If you let me live… I’ll come back.” It shows its face now, bruised and leaking plant fluid. “I’ll kill you.” That argument’s weak, I already know that I can beat it. “I’ll kill everyone.” I already know that I can stop it. “I’ll kill everyone you love.” It already did that. “…? …why? …why are you being… so nice to me?”

“Hey, I don’t believe it either, pal,” I say, frowning. It’s making it really hard to not kill it.

“I can’t understand. I can’t understand! I just can’t understand…” With that, Flowey runs away.

~~~

Next thing I know I’m in a new part of the void, where a patch of grass illuminated by an unknown light source lays. Some columns lay ahead, so I walk through them.

I walk for… A long time. The void is a terrible place to be. At one point I thought I saw something in the darkness, but when I moved closer it vanished. I wondered if it was Frisk. It seems likely that they’re here, too. But where? My mission becomes finding Frisk.

Eventually, I find a cell phone, floating through the void. I take the cell phone and keep walking. There’s nothing else to do. I shout, but it doesn’t even echo. The sound just fades into crushing silence.

An immeasurable amount of time later, the phone rings. It’s a loud, jarring noise in the silence, but I scramble to fish it out of a pocket and answer it.

“heya.” Sans’s voice says. It feels loud against the silence. I don’t say anything, knowing that if I talk there’s a chance that he’ll realize that it’s not Frisk. “is anyone there…? well, i’ll just leave a message… so… it’s been a while.”

Has it? Time in the void feels very… iffy. I almost wish for that flower to come back just so that I can make him get me out of here.

“the queen returned, and is now ruling over the underground. she’s instated a new policy. all the humans who fall here will be treated not as enemies… but as friends. it’s probably for the best, anyway. the human souls the king gathered… seem to have disappeared.”

I wonder where they went. Were they still in the void? How come I hadn’t come across any of them? Did they fade out of existence? Did they make it past the barrier?

“So, uh, that plan ain’t happening any time soon. but even though the people are heartbroken over the king…and things are looking grim for our freedom… the queen’s trying her best not to let us give up hope. so, uh, hey. if we’re not giving up down here… don’t give up wherever you are, ok? who knows how long it will take… but we will get out of here.”

“SANS!!! WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO???” Papyrus’s voice calls. I smile sadly. I wonder if I will ever see him again. Or anyone.

“oh, nobody.”

“WHAT!?! NOBODY!? CAN I TALK TO THEM TOO???”

“here, knock yourself out.”

“WAIT A SECOND… I RECOGNIZE THIS NUMBER!!! ATTENTION, HUMAN! I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS… AM NOW CAPTAIN OF THE ROYAL GUARD! IT’S EVERYTHING
I’VE EVER DREAMED OF… EXCEPT, INSTEAD OF FIGHTING, WE JUST WATER FLOWERS. SO THAT’S EVER-SO-SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT. AND, WE’RE HELPING DR. ALPHYS WITH HER RESEARCH! SHE’S GONNA FIND A WAY TO GET US OUT OF HERE. UNDYNE IS HELPING HER TOO! THOUGH, TO BE HONEST, HER METHOD OF HELPING… SEEMS KIND OF… EXPLOSION-INDUCING. BUT I THINK ALPHYS LIKES HAVING HER AROUND. UH OH!!!"

“Hey! What are you up to, punk!?” My smile grows as I recognize Undyne’s voice. “Ngahhhh!”

“PLEASE DON’T NOOGIE THE PHONE,” Papyrus says calmly.

“Hey! Who’s in charge here!?” Undyne asks. I wonder if her cooking’s got any better. Has she learned any new recipes? Has she gotten together with Alphys yet? That’s got to happen soon, right?

“ME!” Papyrus says.

“Oh… yeah, that’s right! I quit my job as leader of the Royal Guard. Actually, since we won’t be fighting anymore… The Royal Guard totally disbanded. There’s, uh, only one member now.”

“But he’s extremely good.”

“Yeah!! He is!! C’mere!!”

“PLEASE DON’T NOOGIE THE SKELETON.”

“Anyways, now I’m working as Alphy’s lab assistant… We’re gonna find a way out of this dump once and for all!! Oh, yeah, and I’m a gym teacher at the queen’s new school. Did you know I can bench-press seven children!? Awesome, right? …Hey. I’m sorry about what happened with Asgore. You were just doing what you had to. It’s not your fault he… Ah, darn it. I miss the big guy. …Come on, Undyne! Snap out of it! Uh, I guess I’ll tell you how Alphys is doing. Well, she’s the same as ever. Maybe a little more reclusive than normal. Seems like something’s really bothering her…”

I remember that I was mad at Alphys, for things I can barely even remember at this point. But that all seems tiny and irrelevant now. There’s bigger problems than what she did. Enough that, I’m not even mad at her anymore. Thinking back, I’m actually a little concerned for her.

“But she can get through it! I’m there supporting her!! That’s what friends are for, right? …Hey, where-ever you are… I hope it’s better than here.”

I look around at the void, and the nothingness. I don’t think it’s better here.

“It took a lot of sacrifice for you to get there… So, where-ever you are… You have to try to be happy, okay!! For our sakes! We’ll feel better knowing our trouble was worth it. We’re all with you! Everyone is! Even the queen! …HEYYY! WAIT a second! TORIEL! TORIEL! Do you wanna…? …Heh, she says she’s busy.”

“But if she knew who we were talking to…”

“we wouldn’t get the phone back for at least a few hours.”

“We have the mercy to spare you from her!!”

“But call back any time, ok?! She’d love to talk!”

Some part of me really wants Toriel to pick up the phone. Another part of me is relieved. I don’t
think I could handle that right now, I’m almost crying as it is. I can’t help but feel I’ve let everyone down. I’m not anywhere good, Frisk is nowhere to be found… Maybe they’re somewhere else. Maybe they’re somewhere better than here, and better than the underground. I hope so. Where else could they have gone?

“oh, whoops. this thing’s almost outta batteries. so, hate to cut this short, but… be seeing you, ok, buddy?”

“BYE BYE FOR NOW!”

“See ya, punk!” The phone hangs up. I sit on the ground, and hold the cell phone tightly. What now? I can’t wander around here forever. I could call back, and ask for help. They would understand, wouldn’t they…? Maybe not.

Flowey pops out from the ground. I reflexively growl and glare at the flower, the cause of everything.

“Why…?” It asks. “Why did you let me go? Don’t you realize that being nice… just makes you get hurt? Look at yourself. You made all these great friends… But now, you’ll probably never see them again. Not to mention how much they’ve been set back by you. Hurts, doesn’t it? If you had just gone through without caring about anyone… You wouldn’t have to feel bad now.”

The flower… has a point. A valid point. That’s what I tried to tell Frisk, anyway, back at the beginning. But now that I have gotten to know everyone… Even if I’m not friends with them, or even have really met them… I still care about them. I guess that’s the burden I’ve chosen. I could have ignored that, ignored Frisk. Not cared about them, either. But I didn’t, and here we are now.

“So I don’t get it. If you really did everything the right way… Why did things still end up like this? Why…? Is life really that unfair?”

“...Maybe…” I mumble. It’s not like there’s anything to do about it, at this point.

“...Say. What if I told you… I knew some way to get you a better ending?” I look up sharply at the flower. I can’t help but feel it’s tricking me again. “You’ll have to load your SAVE file, and… Well, in the meantime, why don’t you go see Dr. Alphys? It seems like you could have been better friends. Who knows… maybe she’s got the key to your happiness…? See you soon.” Flowey disappears from the void.

Reaching out, I find that I can feel my SAVE file again. I hadn’t been able to until now, unfortunately. But if I set it back to before I fought Asgore… Before I lost Frisk, and everyone else that I cared about...

This could work.

End of Part 6

Chapter End Notes

This = the longest chapter ever

So in a pacifist run, before any neutral runs or genocide runs, I picture Frisk as being the embodiment of mercy. That'll probably change later, though... But for now, they are
mercy. So when mercy is taken away, and you have to fight... Well, that's Chara's job. Mercy's gone, now.

It'll be back, of course. Next chapter. Speaking of, I'm going to tentatively say that this fic will end with 25 chapters and an epilogue or two. And possible sequels? I don't know yet. I'm very tired, and this fic's been going on for about half a year now. It's been super fun to write, and weirdly enough this has been one of the most enjoyable chapters to write!

And if you have suggestions for an epilogue or one-shots I'd LOVE to hear them!!!!! And thoughts in general, hahaa.

As to swearing... I actually picture Chara swearing A LOT but I personally don't really swear, and typing it feels weird, so I try not to. But this warranted it, I feel.

So this is what made the most sense to write in a story format, and it's kind of full au now.
Chapter 25 - Down in the dumps
Part 7 - True Pacifist

I reach out and hit the reload button. When I blink, I’m outside of The Barrier, where Asgore, who’s alive again, waits to fight. I sit up, and slide out to stand beside Frisk’s body. They flop back on the ground, seemingly asleep. I poke their cheek, my entire body tense. What if this doesn’t work?

They frown, and I sigh in relief. A moment later, they shift, and sit up.

“What…?” They mumble. “Chara? What’s happening?” They say quietly. Asgore’s just beyond the door, after all.

“There’s been a change in plans. We’re gonna go see Alphys first, come on,” I say, helping them to their feet. They’re confused but they comply, so I lead them away from Asgore.

“What happened? Did I miss something?” They ask as we walk through the castle garden.

“Something like that. I’ll tell you later, but first let’s not fight Asgore. ...What do you remember?” I ask, worried that they know more than they need to. If I can help it, they don’t need to ever live that nightmare that I went through. They don’t ever need to know about it, even.

“Just entering the fight… Asgore did something, and then I woke up. It felt like I’d been sleeping for forever. Speaking of, everything hurts.” They groan, and I wince. I forgot that while we’re healed when reloading, there’s still traces of dying.

“Yeah, sorry about that. We fought Asgore, but he didn’t respond to talking, so we died. And that’s when you woke up,” I lie. I mean, it’s not technically a lie, because that’s what happened. It’s just that there’s more that happened after that. I was probably alone for… A day? Maybe more, maybe less. Void time is weird, and with resets and reloads and saves it’s nearly impossible to figure out anything.

“That makes sense,” Frisk nods. I only feel a little guilty. We pass the judgement hall, and go into the elevator bypassing New Home. “So what do we do about Asgore?” I pause for a second.

“Um… We’ll cross that bridge when we get there.” I wish that Flowey’s advice had been more helpful. We’ll go talk to Alphys, but then what? Do I have to live all of that again? And since when do I take advice from maniac talking flowers? We get in the elevator to the Core.

“We’re going to face him at some point, you know. We can’t avoid him forever,” Frisk says grimly. Right, because for them we just spent about an hour or two procrastinating Asgore’s encounter. They just think I’m still finding excuses to avoid it. We walk through the Core, past the last place we saw Alphys with Mettaton.

“I know. I just need a plan before then, alright?” I say. We get in the elevator to the hotel. I never really thought about it before, but there’s a lot of elevators in this section of the Underground.

“Then I guess I’ll have to trust your judgement,” Frisk smiles. Strangely enough, I can kind of feel waves of ‘trust’ coming from them. I wonder if that’s left over from sharing a body for so long? Or
maybe sharing a soul? I smile in return. We step out of the elevator, and make our way to the hotel. The phone rings.

“Hey…! Uh, this is Undyne…” Undyne’s voice says through the receiver. She sounds… Not as confident as normal. Almost as if she’s embarrassed? But what could Undyne, the strongest fish in the underground, possibly be embarrassed about? “Shut up Papyrus! This was YOUR idea!” This is whispered to the side, presumably to Papyrus. She talks into the phone again, shouting to seem more confident. “HUMAN! You have to deliver something for me! Uh, please? I’m at Snowdin in front of Papyrus’s. See ya, punk!” She hangs up.

“Well scratch the Alphys thing, let’s go see Undyne! And Papyrus!” I say.

“But what about Alphys?” Frisk asks.

“We can see her later. Undyne’s thing sounds more urgent. Besides, I didn’t really have a plan with Alphys,” I admit. Frisk shrugs, and I take that as acceptance. We start heading to Snowdin, taking an elevator from Mettaton’s resort to Alphys’s lab. Resisting Frisk’s temptation to go in, we head for the Riverperson.

“Tra la la. Care for a ride?” Riverperson asks. Frisk nods, and we step onto the boat.

“Snowdin, please,” Frisk asks.

“Then we’re off…” The boat pushes off the shore. “Tra la la. The water is very wet today.” We land on the snowy shores of Snowdin. “Tra la la. Come back again sometime.”

We hop off the boat and are greeted by the cheery demeanor of Snowdin. Walking down the road, we eventually reach Papyrus’s house. And, true to her word, she and Papyrus himself are waiting outside.

“Hi, Undyne!” Frisk greets.

“Hi. Um, so, I have a favor to ask you. Uuuuh, I… I need you to deliver this letter. To Dr. Alphys.”

“…Why don’t you do it?” Frisk asks in confusion. They wince when they feel it comes off as rude.

“Huh!? Why don’t I do it myself…? …um. W-well…” Undyne stutters, blushing. I narrow my eyes, a grin spreading on my face.

“It’s a love letter, huh?” I smirk. Frisk smiles, and I take that as probable confirmation. “Awww! That’s so cute! This was such a good idea!”

“...It’s kind of personal, but we’re friends… so…” Undyne continues. Here comes the confirmation of love in the air. “I’ll t-tell you… Hotland SUUUUCKS!!! I don’t wanna have to go over there!!! So here you go.” She hands us the letter, which Frisk takes. I’m disappointed. I had hoped that she would tell us the truth, but I guess Undyne’s too stubborn to admit it. Just one of the marks of being a badass, I guess. I eye the letter, curious as to what it says. “Oh, and if you read it… I’ll KILL you. Thanks so much! You’re the best!!”

“Well, I guess we’re going to Alphys’s after all,” I shrug. And Papyrus is right there, so I nudge Frisk in his direction. He’s been watching the conversation with open interest, glancing back and forth between us and Undyne. Frisk waves to Papyrus.

“UNDYNE WRITES A LOT OF LETTERS. BUT, SHE CAN NEVER SEEM TO FIND THE RIGHT WORDS. SO WHEN SHE GOES TO DELIVER THEM HERSELF… SHE ALWAYS
“Ah. This is amazing. She’s in love, but she wants to make it perfect! This is everything I’ve ever wanted for those two!” I can’t help but gush. After the horrors I just lived through, I think it’s about time something goes my way! Frisk giggles at me a bit, but I don’t really care.

We take the Riverperson to Hotland, and arrive at the lab. The door has no mail slot.

“Let’s slide the letter under the door!” Frisk says cheerfully.

“No! Don’t you want to read it first!?” I say, pulling back their hand. They give me a confused look.

“That’s an invasion of privacy, Chara. I’m not above consequences,” Frisk says. They slide the letter under the door and give it a knock. I grumble, but I’m not that angry. Knowing Undyne, she probably sealed it too tightly and we wouldn’t be able to open it anyway.

We hear Alphys tap her claws on the floor on the other side. “... O-oh n-no, is that another letter…? I don’t want to open it… C-can’t I just slide it back out…? ...N...no… I can’t keep doing this. I’ll read this one.”

“...Why is she acting so weird?” I wonder. Frisk shrugs, a look of concern on their face.

“Um… I-it’s shut kind of strongly, isn’t it?” Alphys grunts. “Wait a second…” A chainsaw is heard, and the rustle of paper. The door slides open after a bit, and Alphys looks at the ground, not seeing us at first. “Hey, if this is a joke, it’s…” She looks up, and her eyes widen in shock. “Oh My God? Did YOU write this letter?” She asks. Frisk starts to open their mouth, but I cover it with a hand.

“Shhh… Maybe she’ll tell us what Undyne said,” I tell Frisk. They close their mouth, and I remove my hand.

“It wasn’t signed, so I had no idea who could have…” Alphys continues, blushing. “Oh my god. Oh no. That’s adorable… And I h-had no idea you, um, wrote that way! It’s surprising, too… After all the gross stuff I did… I don’t really deserve to be forgiven. Much less, um… This? And so passionately, too. ...You know what, okay! I’ll do it! It’s the least I can do to make it up to you! Y-yeah! Let’s go on a date!”

“Oh yeah!! Dating start!” I cheer. When I look back, Alphys has disappeared. “...Wait, where’d she go?”

“Uhhh, sorry! I’m still getting dressed!” Alphys calls.

“Oh, okay. That makes sense,” I nod. Then I start grinning again. “Ahh, but this means Undyne asked her on a date! This is the cutest thing ever!”

“And now we’re dating her,” Frisk adds.

“Yeah, that’s kinda weird. But maybe we can play matchmaker! Aren’t you the flirtmaster here? Do something, and make them a couple!” I say, tugging Frisk’s sleeve.

“Alright, alright! I’ll try!” Frisk says, brushing me off. Then Alphys emerges, and is wearing a black dress with white polka dots. Frisk gasps in delight.

“H-hhow do I look?” She asks. Frisk nods and gives a double thumbs up, grinning. She blushes, and starts to look nervous. “My friend helped me pick out this dress. She’s got a great sense of… Um,
anyway! Let’s do this thing!”

“Dating star-” I begin.

“H-h-hey, w-w-wait! Actually, we still can’t start the date yet!!!”

“Dating… Stop?” I say. And it’s totally a coincidence that her words seemed like a response to mine. Right? Right.

“Umm, I’ve gotta give you items to raise your affection statistic, first!” Alphys says in a rush.

“That’ll increase the chance of a successful outcome to the date! Right…? Anyway, d-don’t worry! I’m prepared! I-I’ve been stockpiling gifts in anticipation for a date like this! F-first, I’ve got… Some metal armor polish!” She brandishes a jar filled with the stuff.

“That was for Undyne!” I say excitedly. Frisk discretely pokes me. “You’re right, I should calm down. But this is the most excited I’ve been in forever!”

“...Um, maybe you can’t use that,” Alphys admits. “But!!! I also brought some waterproof cream for your scales! Your, uh… Scales… Uh, well, how about… This magical spear repair kit, that I… Um…”

“And those were also for Undyne. This is fun. I’m having fun,” I nod, content.

“Hey, let’s forget about the items! Let’s just start the date!” Alphys says, her entire face red.

“Dating!! Start!!” I say triumphantly.

“Yeah!!! Let’s, uh, date!” And then the silence drags on. “...uh… Do you… like… Anime…?”

“Yeah,” Frisk shrugs.

“H-hey! Me too!!...Hey! Let’s!! Go somewhere!!! But where’s a good place to go on a date…? ...I’ve got it!!! Let’s go to the garbage dump!!!” Alphys blurts. Frisk smiles awkwardly, and lets Alphys lead them to the dump. It doesn’t feel as far as normal, Alphys must know a shortcut from her house.

“Didn’t Bratty and Catty say that she showed them the dump?” I ask. Frisk thinks for a moment, then nods.

“Here we are! This is where Undyne and I come all the time… We find all sorts of great stuff here. Heh, she’s really… Uh…” She lapses into awkward silence. Frisk takes in the dump for a moment, finding nothing impressive among the junk. “Oh no,” Alphys says suddenly, looking in the distance. “That’s her over there. I c-can’t let her see me on a date with you!”

“Why not?” Frisk asks. I elbow them. They know why.

“Why…? Because, uh… Well… Oh no, here she comes!!” Alphys ducks behind a nearby trashcan. Undyne arrives.

“Hey!! There you are!!” She says. She’s wearing a different outfit, now. A jacket over a sweater, with leggings, a scarf, and some furry boots. It’s very fashionable. “I, uh, realized, if you deliver that thing…” She lapses into awkward silence. Frisk takes in the dump for a moment, finding nothing impressive among the junk. “Oh no,” Alphys says suddenly, looking in the distance. “That’s her over there. I c-can’t let her see me on a date with you!”

“You’re too late, Undyne. The train has already left the station and wrecked horribly. Though this is pretty fun, I’ll admit,” I say. Alphys watches intently from behind the garbage.
“So I’m gonna do it!!! Give it to me!!!” Undyne demands. Frisk pats their pockets apologetically.

“It’s gone,” They say.

“Huh!? You don’t have it!? Ngggaaahhh!!” Undyne groans. “Have you at least seen her?” Alphys starts to tremble.

“Frisk, you gotta be careful. Say you haven’t seen her,” I advise. Frisk waves a hand at me from their side.

“Yeah,” They say. I groan.

“Yes? So she’s somewhere around here… Thanks. I’ll keep looking,” Undyne says. Alphys comes out from behind the trash can.

“Oh my god… W...well, I guess it’s obvious, huh? I… uh… I really like her. I mean, more than I like other people! I’m sorry. I j-just figured, y-you know… It’d be f-fun to go on like, a cute, kind of… Pretend date with you? T-to make you feel better?”

“Oh, first Papyrus, now you? That’s cold, Alphys,” I shake my head, crossing my arms.

“...Well, it sounds even worse when I put it like that. I’m sorry. I messed up again. Undyne’s the person I. Um… really want to go on a date with.”

“Knew it,” I say. Frisk rolls their sightless eyes.

“But, I mean… She’s way out of my league. N-not that you aren’t, um, cool!” Alphys hastily amends. “B-but… Undyne… She’s so confident… And strong… And funny… And I’m just a nobody. A fraud. I’m the royal scientist, but… All I’ve ever done is hurt people. I’ve told her so many lies, she thinks I’m… She thinks I’m a lot cooler than I actually am. If she gets close to me, she’ll… She’ll find out the truth about me. ...What should I do?”

“Well, we want both to be happy, so maybe she should keep lying,” I reason.

“Tell her the truth!” Frisk says with conviction. I sigh.

“The truth…? But if I tell her that, she’ll hate me. Isn’t it better this way? To live a lie where both people are happy… Or a truth where neither of us are?”

“That’s what I’m saying. We should play it safe!” I say. Frisk frowns at me.

“They say ‘be yourself’. But I don’t really like who ‘myself’ is. I’d rather just be whatever makes people like me.” Frisk puts a comforting hand on her shoulder. “Eheheh… No, you’re right. Every day I’m scared… Scared what will happen if people learn the truth on their own. They’ll all get hurt because of me… But how can I tell UNDYNE the tr… truth? I d-don’t have the confidence… I’m going to mess it up! How can I practice!?” She panics.

“Obviously let’s roleplay,” I nod. Frisk thinks for a second, humming. Then they nod.

“Let’s roleplay it,” Frisk says.

“R… roleplay?” Alphys asks nervously. “...That actually sounds kind of fun! OK, which one of us will be Undyne?”

“I’ll be Undyne,” Frisk says. I nod in agreement. That makes sense, because she’s Alphys already.

“You’re cute!” I say. I’ve got to get the ball rolling somehow.

“I’m fine,” Frisk says, playing it safe and ignoring my suggestion. Whatever, I will keep making suggestions.

“Ha! Ha! Glad to hear it!! …Uhhh, so I’d like to, um, talk to you about something,” Alphys says nervously.

“Then she kisses you!” I float over to Alphys and poke her cheek. My hand goes through her, but I can kind of feel something solid. There’s the tiniest bit of resistance.

“What is it, Alphys.” Frisk continues to stay on the safe route. Boring.

“Umm, you see… I… I… I… I h-haven’t been exactly truthful w-w-with you… Y… you see, I… I… Oh, forget it! Undyne!!! I… I want to tell you how I feel! Y-you’re so brave, a-and s-strong… A-and nice… Y-you always listen t-to me when I talk about n-n-nerdy stuff… Y-you always d-d-do your best to m-make me f-f-feel special… L-like t-telling me that y-you’ll b-beat up anyone that g-gets in my way… UNDYNE!!! I CAN’T TAKE THIS ANY LONGER!!! I’M MADLY IN LOVE WITH YOU!!! HOLD ME, UNDYNE!!! HOLD ME!!!” Alphys shouts.

Frisk starts to inch towards Alphys, eyes wide, debating if they should try to ‘hold her’ or not. I step back a couple feet. And then, Undyne appears.

“What did you just say?” Undyne asks.

“U… Undyne! I… was… just…” Alphys stutters.

“Hey, woah, wait a second! Your outfit’s really cute! What’s the occasion!” She asks. I can only watch in stunned silence, dying to know what happens next. This is better than any TV show. Undyne’s eyes narrow. “…Wait a second. Are you two… On a date?”

“UHHHH, YES!” Alphys blurts out, with no tact at all. “I mean, UHHH NO!” She says, with even less tact. “I mean, actually we were only romantically roleplaying as you!”

“What????” Undyne shouts.

“I MEAN!!! I mean… Undyne… I… I’ve been lying to you!”

“What?? ABOUT WHAT???” Undyne’s face contorts, trying to process the new information.

“About… well… Everything!” Alphys launches into a speech, barely making time to breathe as she rapidly lists all of the apparent lies she’s told Undyne. “I told you that seaweed was like… scientifically important… Really, I just… I just use it to make ice cream! And those human history books I keep reading… Those are just dorky comic books! And the history movies… Those… Those are just, uh, anime! And that time I told you I was busy with work on the phone… I… was just eating frozen yogurt in my pajamas! That time I…” Luckily the look on Undyne’s face makes her stop to breathe for a second.

“Alphys.” Undyne says, looking down at the shorter monster.

“I… I just wanted to impress you! I just wanted you to think I was smart and cool. That I wasn’t some… nerdy loser,” Alphys admits.
“Alphys,” Undyne says, laying a hand on her head.

“Undyne, I… I really think you’re neat, OK…”

“Alphys.” Undyne kneels on the ground, hugging Alphys reassuringly. “Shhhh. Shhhhh.” And then Undyne picks up Alphys, and throws her into the trashcan. She swooshes through a basketball net hanging somewhere above it in the dump. “Alphys! I… think you’re neat, too, I guess. But, you’re gotta realize… Most of what you said really doesn’t matter to me. I don’t care if you’re watching kid cartoons or reading history books. To me, ALL of that stuff is just NERDY CRAP! What I like about you is that you’re PASSIONATE! You’re ANALYTICAL!! It doesn’t matter what it is! YOU CARE ABOUT IT!! 100-PERCENT!! AT MAXIMUM POWER!!! …so, you don’t have to lie to me. I don’t want you to have to lie to anyone anymore. Alphys… I want to help you become happy with who you are! And I know just the training you need to do that!”

Apparently the trash can didn’t have a bottom. Alphys pokes her head out, and stands up with the trashcan as her feet come out of the bottom. “Undyne… You… Y--you’re gonna train me…?” Alphys asks. I can see her blush through the darkness of the can.

“Pffft, what? ME?” Undyne scoffs. Then, slowly, Papyrus rises from the garbage behind them, also wearing a new outfit. “Nah, I’m gonna get Papyrus to do it.” Papyrus’s outfit consists of a top that reads ‘jogboy’ and a sweatband on his skull. He’s also wearing jogging shorts and his normal snow boots.

“GET THOSE BONES SHAKIN’!!!” He says. “IT’S TIME TO JOG 100 LAPS, HOOTING ABOUT HOW GREAT WE ARE!!!”

“Ready? I’m about to start the timer!” Undyne says.

“U-Undyne… I’ll do my best…!” Alphys says determinedly. She and Papyrus leave.

“OH MY GOD!!!” Undyne yells as soon as they’re out of earshot. “She was kidding, right!? Those cartoons… those comics… Those are still REAL, right!? ANIME’S REAL, RIGHT?!!!” Undyne asks.

Frisk and I exchange a glance. “Anime is real,” We say in unison.

“HA HA HA!!! I KNEW IT!!! GIGANTIC SWORDS!!! MAGICAL PRINCESSES! HERE I COME!!!” She pauses for a second, calming down. “Uhh, thanks for taking care of Alphys. I didn’t get to say what I wanted to, but… Things seem like they’re going to get better for her. Well, I gotta go catch up with them! Later!” Undyne says, and then she leaves.

“That was… a lot, huh.” I let out a breath, and Frisk nods in stunned silence. We pause for a moment, collecting our thoughts. Then we walk a little ways in the garbage dump, passing the spot with the flowers that we fell on earlier. We go to the place we fought the Mad Dummy before when we get another phone call.

“Howdy!” Papyrus says. “IF IT ISN’T MY GOOD FRIEND, WHO TRUSTS ME. THIS IS PAPYRUS, YOUR ALSO MUTUAL FRIEND. ALPHYS AND I FINISHED OUR TRAINING EARLY, VERY EARLY. SO I SENT HER HOME. VERY HOME. UH… NOW. I FEEL STRONGLY AND FOR NO APPARENT REASON. YOU SHOULD ALSO GO… THERE. TO HER. LAB… HOUSE. I HAVE ONLY GOOD FEELINGS ABOUT THIS. GOODBYE.” Papyrus hangs up.

“That was weird,” I comment.
“I hope she’s okay, he sounded pretty worried!” Frisk frets. I shrug. Papyrus definitely didn’t sound like his usual self, but that doesn’t mean something’s gone wrong. Besides, I trust him. He’d tell us if she was in any danger.

We emerge from the dump by Undyne’s house, and go right to Gerson’s. From there we hop on the ferry back to Hotland.

When we get to the lab, the door automatically slides open. Alphys must have left it unlocked. So far, everything seems normal, except there’s no sign of Alphys herself anywhere. Just in case, we inspect the fridge for food. But there’s nothing but instant noodles and soda, which I’m not the biggest fan of. We leave it alone.

When we get close to the bathroom door, it slides open and draws out attention. There’s a note by the door, which Frisk picks up for me to read.

“It’s a note from Alphys. Read it…?” I ask uncertainly. Frisk nods their head. “It’s hard to read because of the handwriting, but I’ll try my best. Ahem. ‘Hey. Thanks for your help back there. You guys… Your support really means a lot to me. But… As difficult as it is to say this… You guys alone can’t magically make my own problems go away. I want to be a better person. I don’t want to be afraid anymore. And for that to happen, I have to be able to face my own mistakes. I’m going to start doing that now. I want to be clear. This isn’t anyone else’s problem but mine. But if you don’t ever hear from me again… If you want to know ‘the truth.’ Enter the door to the north of this note. You all at least deserve to know what I did.’ …That’s all she wrote.”

“This is… worse than I thought,” Frisk says hesitantly. I’d agree, this is a lot to handle at once. But now I’m also concerned for Alphys. Very concerned. That letter kind of sounds like something I wrote, for Toriel and Asgore. I tore it up, of course, but it did sound kind of similar to that. I look at Frisk.

“I guess we go through the door, and hope that we find her?” I suggest.

“Before it’s too late…” Frisk nods. We enter the door, which turns out to be the entrance to an elevator. Huh, and all this time I’d assumed that it was a bathroom. There’s only one button. Before long the elevator starts to shake, and a robotic voice sounds in a speaker.

“Warning! Warning! Elevator losing power! EM tethering lost! Altitude dropping!” Says the elevator. It continues to shake violently, until it starts to fall completely. It lands somewhere, almost titled sideways, and knocks Frisk off their feet. I grab their hand and pull them up, glancing at the broken light at the top of the elevator. Some light comes through where the doors have been torn loose.

“I guess we’ll be leaving somewhere different, then,” Frisk says, a frown of concern on their face.

“Yeah, guess so.”

Chapter End Notes

This chapter was originally very long, but I’ve decided to split it into two. Hope that’s okay! I’m in the woods and there’s no signal or internet, but my dad gets a bar or two so I’m using his hotspot. Send help
And Chara is such Alphyne trash it's ridiculous. Has anyone else noticed that?
Hopefully, if you're looking for it it's really obvious. One more chapter before more
feels and bad stuff. Good luck, haha, and see you next week!
Chapter 26- Origin Stories

We leave the elevator and enter some kind of hallway. The walls are an unsettling blue-green color, and the lighting is dim. We walk silently, cautiously down the hall, the elevator closing behind us. As we walk by it a screen on the wall buzzes to life.

“That says something, there. You want me to read it?” I ask. Frisk nods a confirmation. “Okay. ‘Entry number 1. This is it… Time to do what the King has asked me to do. I will create the power to free us all. I will unleash the power of the Soul.’”

“That sounds a little shady…” Frisk comments uncertainly. “These are Alphys’s entries, right?”

“Yeah, I’d assume,” I agree. The next screen on the wall flicks on a couple steps later. ‘Entry number 2. The barrier is locked by Soul power. Unfortunately, this power cannot be recreated artificially. Soul power can only be derived from what was once living. So, to create more, we will have to use what we have now… The Souls of monsters.’”

‘Entry number 3. But extracting a Soul from a living monster would require incredible power… Besides being impractical, doing so would instantly destroy the Soul’s host. And, unlike the persistent Souls of humans… The Souls of most monsters disappear immediately upon death. If only I could make a monster’s Soul last…”

‘Entry number 5. I’ve done it. Using the blueprints, I’ve extracted it from the human Souls. I believe this is what gives their Souls the strength to persist after death. The will to keep living… The resolve to change fate. Let’s call this power… Determination.’

“Oh,” Frisk says in wonder. “Did you know about that before, Chara?”

“Well… I’m… pretty sure Alphys isn’t really the first scientist to study that stuff, so… And Asgore, being the king, was pretty knowledgeable about it himself. So yeah, I learned a couple things,” I explain. I can’t really remember where I learned it, which is a shame. But I do know a couple of facts.

“Will you teach me something?” Frisk asks. We turn a corner in the hallway, entering a long stretch.

“Alright… Well, all humans have Determination, but not many can actually use it to mess with time. I think it might depend on the color of the Soul, but I don’t really have a confirmation on that. Plus, you have a red soul and I’m pretty sure that you can’t. But I can, which is apparently really rare,” I ramble. “Maybe Alphys knows more, and wrote about it in her journal entries.”

“Yeah, maybe,” Frisk says. We arrive in an open room, with a door in the center and two others off to the sides. There’s a SAVE point. We activate it, and Frisk pauses expectantly.

“What are you waiting for? I’ve got nothing for this one, sorry,” I shrug. I don’t really know what they’d be determined enough about to create a SAVE, so I don’t try to explain it this time. Frisk gives up and inspects a potted plant.

“Hmmm… Yeah,” Frisk says, inserting the coins. We hear the noise of gears.

“The vending machine dispensed some chisps.”

“Some what?”

“Chisps. Popato chisps. It’s… an inside joke, I guess,” I mumble. “So which way now? The door in the middle here looks like it needs four keys to unlock it. It’s labeled the Power Room.”

“Then we’ll need that to fix the elevator… There’s a note on the ground there, right?” Frisk asks.

“Yes… I can’t make it all out. ‘Elevator… lost power… enter the center door…’ That’s all I can read,” I shrug apologetically. “But hey, at least there’s another fake plant over there.”

“Can we go through the door on the right?” Frisk asks. I float over and inspect it.

“No. It needs a red key, I think. The lock’s red, at least. Let’s go left,” I point. Frisk agrees, and we find that the left corner of the room branches off into another hallway. There’s an entry on the wall.

‘Entry number 6. Asgore asked everyone outside the city for monsters that had ‘fallen down.’ Their bodies came in today. They’re still comatose… And soon, they’ll all turn into dust. But what happens if I inject ‘Determination’ into them? If their Souls persist after they perish, then… Freedom might be closer than we all thought.”

“I don’t like this very much… Feels too ‘crazy scientist thought she was doing good but really she’s making everything worse’…” Frisk worries.

“Yup. Pretty much. Which makes me wonder what’s down here. Probably something cool, right?” I nudge them with an elbow.

“...No. This feels like a horror movie.” Frisk frowns sternly, and continues down the hallway. In the next room, at the end of the hallway, there’s some chairs like you would see at a dentist as well as some sinks. “Nope! I want to leave.” They turn around, but I take their shoulders and push them back into the room.

“No, no. We’re in this for the long run. Look, an entry. I will read it. ‘Entry number 9.’ Wait, where’s seven and eight? ...Doesn’t matter. Continuing. ‘things aren’t going well. none of the bodies have turned into dust, so I can’t get the Souls. i told the families that i would give them the dust back for the funerals. people are starting to ask me what’s happening. what do i do?’”

“...And what are these tables?” Frisk asks, poking one of the three.

“It’s some kind of operating table. It’s sticky… They’re all sticky,” I shudder. I can see what Frisk means now. Whatever took place here, probably wasn’t good. There’s a doorway and across that are three sinks. “You should turn on the sinks. All of them. Do it.” I poke them, and they seem amused. They turn on the first sink, and then the second. On the third sink, something happens.

A white substance leaks from the faucet, morphing into a smiling face. Frisk and I both take several steps back, and watch it transform into a larger, white, gooey monster. Then it splits into three. I shrink back and stay behind Frisk, while they look uncertainly at the…

“Uh, c-check!” They say, turning to face me. I shake my head, making a humming noise. Then the things make a terrifying sound, like static but loud and overwhelming. They dot the floor with the same white substance they’re made of, which then grow into the most terrifying faces I’ve ever seen.

A few come a bit too close to me, ignoring Frisk. I shiver, and crawl backwards, as far away as
possible. But I can’t leave the room, so I’m only a few feet behind Frisk. Those things… They can’t know I’m here, right…?

“But nobody came…” I whisper in monotone.

“Chara, don’t worry! I’ve got it under control!” They hesitantly pat my shoulder. Then their attention returns to the things. “Oh, um…” Frisk frowns. The keep glitching back and forth, distorting like an old screen. I take a deep breath. Something in their pocket makes a noise. They pull out their cell phone, and they can hear voices through the receiver…!

“Come join the fun,” The say, vanishing. Their attacks hit Frisk once, which makes me angry, and strangely protective. I snap out of my dazed state and go back to helping rather than staring blankly.

“…Memoryheads,” I say. Frisk looks at me in confusion. “That’s what they are. Do you want to join the fun?” I ask shakily.

“Mmm, no thanks!” Frisk tells the Memoryheads.

“Be seeing you,” Says one.

“Come join the fun!” Repeats another. Frisk gets hit a total of two times.

“Seems like it doesn’t care anymore,” I say. Frisk spares them, and we both relax. In the sink is a bright red key. Frisk takes it and puts it on their keychain. Peering into the doorway, I can see a slot with a note next to it. Frisk inserts the key with a click, and it lights up.

“Read the note?” Frisk asks.

“I can’t make it all out, but… ‘drain… dropped it…’ Yeah, that’s all I can read,” I say. “I’d assume that’s a clue to find the red key, so let’s keep moving. Now we can probably go through that door with the red lock.” Frisk nods and we backtrack through the lab.

True to my theory, the other door opens right away. We emerge into a new hallway, with new log entries.

“‘Entry number 12. nothing is happening. i don’t know what to do. i’ll just keep injecting everything with ‘Determination.’ i want this to work.’ ‘Entry number 13. one of the bodies opened its eyes.’” I glance towards Frisk, who listens with apparent apprehension.

“That’s probably not good,” They comment. I agree. We enter the next open room, which is filled with beds. Closer to the door is an empty dog food bowl. “Maybe I could lie down for a bit… I’m exhausted.”

“Are you serious? We’re in a creepy lab! Filled with creepy creatures!” I protest. They yawn a bit, and I sigh and think for a moment.

“I haven’t slept since the resort,” Frisk reminds me. And that says more than they know, because it’s been a lot longer since then than they think it has. At this rate, I’m actually surprised that they haven’t collapsed already. “Plus, I’ll have you to guard me, and if anything happens you’ll wake me up! It’ll just be a power nap,” Frisk adds when I don’t say anything.

“Alright… Fine,” They give me a sleepy smile and hop into the closest bed. Before long, they’re sound asleep without even the covers on. I sit down on a bed next to them and assume guard duty.

A little while later, a white figure appears at the side of their bed. I know this makes me a terrible
guard, but I just freeze up and watch it as it slowly moves its hand closer and closer to Frisk. I hold my breath, hoping that it’s not dangerous.

When the figure gets close enough to touch, its limb shoots down and grabs the blanket, pulling it up over Frisk’s head. It pats their hair a couple of times, and vanishes. My body unlocks, and I consider waking Frisk up. But they look pretty content, even if I can’t see their face anymore. I decide to let them sleep a little while longer.

Eventually, after about half an hour or so, I come to the conclusion that I can’t take it anymore. I flick their head, and they jump up and out of the bed.

“What, what’s wrong?” Frisk says, panicked but still tired.


“Oh. So it was a nice thing?” They ask.

“Don’t know. Either way, I don’t think we should stay in one place for too long. Are you refreshed, at least?”

“As much as I can be. You’re right, though, let’s keep going,” Frisk nods. We go inbetween the beds to the other side of the room. I notice that one of the beds is unmade, and I stop Frisk with a hand to the shoulder.

“Look under those covers. I think there’s something there,” I say. They pull back the blanket and find a yellow key, adding it to their keychain. We find a SAVE point, and another screen. “‘Entry number 14. Everyone that had fallen down… has woken up. They’re all walking around and talking like nothing is wrong. I thought they were goners…?’”

“So are these the beds that they were in? Before they woke up?” Frisk asks.

“Must be. Right or up?” I ask.

“Right.” We enter the right hallway, and find ourselves in a strange, carnival-like room. There’s mirrors at even intervals along one wall, and the other wall is lined with tables covered in flowers. They’re golden flowers, which remind me of Flowey. He was a golden flower, too. But these ones are too small to have faces, and don’t show any signs of talking. There’s a screen on the wall.

“‘Entry number 7.’ Ha, found them. ‘We’ll need a vessel to wield the monster Souls when the time comes. After all, a monster cannot absorb the Souls of other monsters. Just as a human cannot absorb a human Soul… So then… What about something that’s neither human nor monster?’”

“That’s where the flowers come in, huh?” Frisk asks, turning to examine the tables of flowers.

“Golden flowers,” I correct.

“Right. Next entry?”

“Yeah. ‘Entry number 10. experiments on the vessel are a failure. it doesn’t seem to be any different from the control cases. whatever. they’re a hassle to work with anyway. the seeds just stick to you, and won’t let go…’ Huh.” We continue down the room, and pass a line of mirrors. I’m not visible in any of them. We get to the last mirror without incident, but then I think that I see something in the mirror. I float over Frisk’s head to get a better look, but then I backpedal as fast as I can.

A white ball in the mirror comes forwards until it’s not in the mirror anymore, and the shifts into a
goopy glob with gaping jaws. Then it transforms again, into a monster with a long neck, one large eye, small, malformed wings, and small feet. It looks familiar, but I can’t tell from where. I’m too busy making sure that I don’t get too close as I stand back against the wall again. Why am I so useless against these!?

“Check?” Frisk asks. I try to say something, but I stutter and jumble up the words, making them incomprehensible. The , mimics me, and a small white, vaguely human shaped monster appears before it. The figure is then attacked by a swarm of bugs, possibly moths. It waves its arms in distress, and then falls to its knees. It vanishes.

“...What was that!?” I ask in a panic.

“Eh, I don’t know! But… don’t you think it kind of looks like a Loox? Or maybe Astigmatism? Maybe I could pick on it and get a reaction,” Frisk suggests. I shrug.

“It also looks like a lot of things, Frisk! Just hurry up and beat it!” I say.

“...Fair point, but it looks most like Astigmatism, so I’ll go with that,” Frisk decides, ignoring my distress for now. They pick on . It seems effective. The , says more jumbled words, and then the small figure appears again. It walks towards Frisk, with bugs flying off of it as it approaches. Frisk gets hit a couple times. “Alright, that was probably not the best plan.”

“Nope,” I agree.

“Then I’ll try what worked with Madjick. Mystify, right?” Frisk asks. They do something mysterious, and , recognizes it has more to learn from this world. The figure is again summoned, and it’s bug free. Buuut then it launches its own head at us. Its head immediately grows back, and then we’re being barraged with a series of flying heads. Possibly one of the most traumatic things that’s ever happened to me. And that’s saying something. And yet we still can’t spare the thing!

They try humming to the , And yet that doesn’t work either, and now Frisk is at only 4 HP. “You should eat,” I suggest.

“Hey, since when did we get Glamburgers?” Frisk asks, eating one. The Pie and the Snowman piece are still in their inventory, too. I guess that’s from resetting.

“...Don’t know,” I try. They don’t need to know about any of that. “Just… Try cleaning? That works for Woshua.” They frown at my subject change, but take my advice on what to do. They wash their hands, and yet nothing happens. “Then I guess the only option is to pray for mercy, and hope that it goes away.”

Frisk shrugs. “Please stop fighting!” They pray. I get a small flashback to fighting Asgore the first time. And the next couple times. I shake my head to clear it, and decide to name it first. Reaper Bird seems to remember something. It’s words become unjumbled, and it repeats what monsters before have said.

“Reaper Bird seems placated,” I say. Frisk spares it. “Whew. That was a difficult one,” I sigh in relief.

“Yeah,” Frisk nods. “This door, now?” They ask. I gesture for them to go first. Inside is a slot for a blue key. Sadly, we don’t have one of those. I decide to read the note, hoping it will give us a hint.

“...Cold…” I read. But that’s the only word I can make out. It looks like we’ll have to find the key someplace… Cold. Very informative. We exit that room, and the flower room.
“So now we go through this door, yeah?” Frisk confirms.

“I guess. I’d rather just leave, at this point,” I say, suppressing a shudder. Frisk grins a little.

“But I thought you were the one who wanted to see this through? And now you’re scared?” Frisk teases.

“Well, I’m not scared, I just… don’t feel like we have anything to gain by continuing,” I attempt. Yeah, I’m a little scared. But who wouldn’t be!? These goopy white monsters attacking you, and a friend somewhere down here, alone…

“But I’ve changed my mind. We’re seeing this through, and we’re gonna find Alphys!” Frisk says. They have that look again, the one that radiates pure determination. Quickly becoming my least favorite look. Really it’s shocking that they don’t have enough Determination to mess with time.

“Well, here’s another entry. ‘Entry number 15. Seems like this research was a dead end… But at least we got a happy ending out of it...? I sent the Souls back to Asgore, returned the vessel to his garden… And I called all of the families and told them everyone’s alive. I’ll send everyone back tomorrow. And then there’s a smiley face.’” Frisk smiles a little at that.

“‘Entry number 16. No No NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO.’ …Oh.” I say.

“That’s not good. …What’s down here?” Frisk asks, concerned. They point to a door going off the hallway, into darkness.

“Let’s find out?” I shrug. We enter the doorway. At the end of the hallway is a shower curtain with a silhouette waving back and forth behind it. I groan. Frisk even looks apprehensive, approaching the curtain slowly. We finally reach it, and Frisk jerks back the curtain. There’s nothing there but a green key.

“What was that thing?! Where did it go!?” Frisk says, searching the bathtub with their hands. Their fingers bump into the key, which they hesitantly take and put on their keychain. “…Anyways… Let’s continue, shall we?” Their voice shakes a little, but they won’t give up that easily. We leave that room and continue down the hallway.

We enter another room, with a large metal contraption hanging from the ceiling. It has metal tubes around it, weirdly vertical jaws, and huge, empty eye sockets. In short, it looks a lot like Flowey’s form that I fought a while ago.

I shrink back, and chose to hide behind Frisk. They cast a worried glance over their shoulder, and seem to examine the thing with their soul. “That doesn’t look good,” They comment.

“There’s a SAVE point blocking the path, go get that,” I say quickly. I can’t help but be paranoid that the monstrosity is going to come back to life and attack us. I don’t want to relive that. Frisk nods and walks over to the SAVE point.

The SAVE point then turns white, and sprouts a smiling face. I’ve been betrayed by the one thing I thought I could trust! It grows into a human-shaped mass, then shifts to reveal its real form. It’s like the lower body of Shyren, and the head of a Moldbygg. It drips white goop on the floor. It also smells like sweet lemons.

“This one’s called Lemon Bread,” I say. It’s probably not, but that’s the first thing that came into my slightly panicked brain. “You can either scream or cry, in my humble opinion.”

“I’ll hum, first, thank you,” Frisk says. They hum a familiar tune, and Lemon Bread’s body shakes…
“Welcome to my special hell,” it says, speaking in a million different voices at once. I step back, as far as I can. What are these things? Its attack forms huge teeth above and below Frisk, with only a single gap. They duck into the gap, and the teeth come crashing down around them. They open again, but the next gap is too far away to reach in time. They lose some health, and some more trying to dodge the next one.

“It looks like Moldbygg, right? I’ll… Unhug it,” Frisk says, standing back and giving the thing its personal space.

“That’s what they all say,” Lemon Bread says. The next attacks leave Frisk at only four health.

“Eat,” I say. They eat the second Glamburger, and are restored to full health. They then lose some in the next turn. “You could call for help. That normally seems to work,” I say, reminded of that by the metal contraption hanging near us.

“Help!” Frisk yells. Maybe Alphys will hear. But nobody came.

“Do you think I’m pretty?” Lemon Bread asks. Its jaws start to shoot balls of rapidly changing colors at Frisk. They alternate between blue and orange. Frisk loses 6 HP.

“There’s traces of Aaron in there… Flex, maybe?” I suggest. They shrug and flex an arm. Lemon Bread seems to remember something.

“I’ve felt this before,” it says. We don’t dodge very well, but only lose 3 more HP.

“Could this be goodbye!? Hopefully!” I say. Sure enough Frisk spares it and we can continue on our way.

“Since that wasn’t an actual SAVE point, shall we go down the menacing hallway?” Frisk asks, faking cheerfulness. I shrug.

“As long as we’re exploring the entire creepy lab, why not?” I respond. We enter a room with shelves of books and VCR tapes on either side of an old TV. There’s a key slot on one side, and a screen on the other. “…Well this looks important.”

Frisk puts the yellow key into the yellow slot, first. Then they look at the note next to it, and I read it silently. “Oh, it’s just saying where the yellow key was, under the bed sheets.” We walk over to the screen, and it flickers on. “Entry number 4. I’ve been researching humans to see if I can find any info about their Souls. I ended up snooping around the castle… And found these weird tapes. I don’t feel like Asgore’s watched them… I don’t think he should.”

“They’re Asgore’s? I wonder what they are…” Frisk comments. I have a fairly good idea. Back before I died, my family had had a video camera that everyone used, all the time. But remembering some of the things we said on it, I don’t want to watch them. Much less do I want Frisk to watch them.

“Maybe we shouldn’t watch them? If Alphys doesn’t think that Asgore should see them, maybe we shouldn’t, either,” I try. Frisk frowns at me.

“No, we’re watching them,” Frisk says. I sigh.

“Fine.” I guess there’s no avoiding it anymore. Looks like Alphys isn’t the only one with secrets kept down here. Frisk picks up one of the tapes by the VHS player, and I look over their shoulder to read the label. “They seem to be labelled in a specific order. You’re holding Tape 1, right now, and
there’s five total,” I explain. Frisk nods and puts the tape into the player. The screen flickers to life, but it’s completely black.

“Psssst. Gorey, wake up,” A voice on the tape says.


“Mmm? What is it, dear?” A deeper voice says. “...err, and why do you have that video camera?”

“And Asgore,” I add. Frisk frowns.

“What does it look like?” They ask.

“Oh, there’s no visual. It’s black,” I say.

“Shush!” Toriel says. “I want to get your reaction. Gorey, dearest. What is my favorite vegetable?”

“Hmm… Carrots, right?” Asgore asks.

“No no no! My FAVORITE vegetable is… Eda-MOM-e. ...get it???” Toriel snickers, proud of herself. Frisk laughs, too. I groan.

“Go back to bed, dear,” Asgore sighs.

“No no!! Not yet! Hee hee hee. Now, If I were a dog, what breed of dog would I be?” Toriel asks.

“Hmm… I don’t know, honey. What kind of dog would you be?”

“I would be… A MOMERANIAN,” Toriel laughs at herself.

“Hohoho! You sure are excited to have this child,” Asgore chuckles. “You know, if you keep making jokes like this… One day, you could be… a famous MOMedian,” Asgore says, and waits for a laugh. It never comes. There’s a moment of awkward silence, before Toriel responds.

“Well, I am going to bed,” Toriel says. That is cold.

“Hey! Come on, Tori! That one was funny!” Asgore protests.

“Hahaha, I know. I am just teasing you. Goodnight, dear.”

“Goodnight, honey. ...Oh dear, perhaps it is too dark in here for the video to come out…” The video fades away, and the tape ends.

“Well, that was fun, but we should stop now,” I say, pulling on Frisk’s shoulder so that they don’t face the TV anymore. They shrug off my hand, and turn back.

“So that was when Toriel was pregnant? With Asriel, the prince, right?” Frisk asks, ignoring me.

“Really, these are personal,” I protest, whining a little.

“They’re here for a reason,” They shrug, picking up the next tape in the pile. “Is this Tape 2?”

“...Yeah,” I sigh. They slide the tape into the TV. It flickers on, too dark to see anything once more.

“Okay, Chara, are you ready?” A familiar voice asks. I jump at my name, and look at Frisk to see their reaction. They turn to me in surprise, and I already know what question they’ll ask.
“Who’s that? Is that Asriel?” They say, exactly as I knew they would.

“...Just watch,” I say.

“Do your creepy face!” Asriel says. There’s no response, but a second later Asriel yells in fake terror. “AHHHHH!! Hee hee hee! Oh! Wait! I had the lens cap on...” There’s a pause where a response would be. “What?? You’re not gonna do it again...? Come on, quit tricking me! Haha!” It fades out. Frisk turns to me.

“Why couldn’t I hear your responses?” They ask in confusion.

“Because I didn’t say them out loud,” I explain without really explaining anything. Frisk frowns.

“Why not?” They ask. I sigh.

“As a kid I never really talked. I don’t remember if I was ever even capable of it, to be honest. I did try, but I just couldn’t, really. So everyone learned sign language from... someone? ...and I used that most of the time. But my family couldn’t really use it because their hands were paws, so they just talked with their voices and I talked with my hands,” I explain. Frisk gasps.

“Really? Wow, I’d never have guessed you never talked! You talk so much now!” They laugh a little.

“Well, now I’m a ghost. I do what I want!” I defend, and poke them in the side. They jump back in response, and seem to debate getting revenge. Apparently, they decide against it, and instead choose to pick up the next tape in the pile. And they slide it in.

“Howdy, Chara! Smile for the camera!” Asriel says. “...Ha, this time I got YOU! I left the cap on... ON PURPOSE! Now you’re smiling for noooo reason! Hee hee hee! ...What? Oh, yeah, I remember. When we tried to make butterscotch pie for Dad, right? The recipe asked for cups of butter... But we accidentally put in buttercups instead. Yeah! Those flowers got him really sick. I felt so bad. We made Mom really upset. I should have laughed it off, like you did... Um, anyway, where are you going with this? Huh? Turn off the camera...? OK.”


“Relax, he’s fine now. And before you ask, yes, it was an accident,” I say. I take a shaky breath. As much as I try not to think about, or remember, the rest of my story... It’s becoming harder with each minute.

“Asriel said you laughed it off?” Frisk asks in concern.

“Oh, yeah. I was pretty sure that buttercups wouldn’t be able to kill a fully grown boss monster. I was mostly laughing at Asriel for being so scared,” I say. It’s mostly true, but I had been scared, too. But I didn’t know what to do about it, so I just laughed, like I do with everything. ...Probably not the best reaction, I know, but...

“And why did you ask Asriel to turn the camera off? Was it secrets?” Frisk asks.

“Gee, you’re nosy today. And who knows why I do anything? Maybe the tapes will say,” I float above the TV, attempting to distract them. Frisk hums, then decides that I’m probably right and puts in the fourth tape.

Asriel’s voice starts, sounding timid and afraid. “I... I don’t like this idea, Chara. ...Wh... What? N-no, I’m not... big kids don’t cry. ...Yeah, you’re right. ...No! I’d never doubt you, Chara... Never!
“Flowers? What flowers?” Frisk asks. I shush them, and put their hand on the next tape from where I’m draped over the TV.

“Just watch,” I say, really not feeling like talking right now. They pick up the fifth tape, the last one.

“Chara… Can you hear me?” Toriel’s voice says softly. “We want you to wake up…”

“Chara!” Says Asgore, more forcefully, but just as worried. “You have to stay determined! You can’t give up… You are the future of humans and monsters…”

“…Psst… Chara… Please… wake up…” Asriel says. He sounds like he’s crying. I can hardly remember this, I had been just barely strong enough to sign at this point. “I don’t like this plan anymore. I… I… no, I said… I said I’d never doubt you. Six, right? We just have to get six… And we’ll do it together, right?”

“Six what?” Frisk asks. I chose not to respond. “…Chara. Six what? What was this plan?”

“You’re a smart kid, you figure it out.” This comes out a little harsher than intended. Frisk sits down and leans against the TV stand, humming thoughtfully. Their eyebrows are furrowed in concern.

“Asriel said you’d free everyone. You brought up buttercups… Then you were dying, but you just needed six… Six what? … … Oh. Souls,” They say, eyebrows rising much higher than they have any right to. “You were going to shatter the barrier. But to get across you needed a monster soul and a human soul. So you… You poisoned yourself, didn’t you!?” Frisk stands up, and looks at me accusingly.

“Yeah. What about it?” I ask, nonchalant.

“Chara! That’s not good! Even if… It didn’t even work!” Frisk says, and begins to pace around the small room.

“Thanks for rubbing it in,” I comment, voice flat.

Frisk continues to pace. “You know, I’d wondered how it was possible for you to die, since you can reload and stuff. But I guess if you wanted to die, then… Hmm... “ They seem to calm down, and come to a stop in front of the TV once more. “So what happened? What went wrong?” They ask.

“You know this part of the story already. Remember? Asriel carried my body to my village, and the humans attacked. He didn’t want to fight back, so he died as well. But he managed to carry me back to the castle, where he died. And then I guess Toriel buried me in the Ruins.” I explain.

“Oh. Right. So the monsters didn’t know the truth about what happened, then, did they. And they never learned. Did Toriel and Asgore know?” Frisk asks.

“No. And if you don’t tell them, they never will,” I say. “Now that that’s all out of the way and you know all of my secrets, shall we continue through the creepy lab?” Frisk shrugs and walks towards the doorway.

“For some reason I get the feeling there’s more you’re hiding,” They say, as an afterthought. I glance at the metal contraption still hanging from the ceiling, the one that reminds me so much of Flowey.

“Nope. Nothing.” Another entry from Alphys on the other side of the room lights up, and we walk over to read it. “‘DT Extraction Machine. Status: Inactive.’” Frisk turns to the metal, and looks to be
examining it with their soul.

“DT extraction? Is that Determination?” Frisk asks.

“Yes, I turn to look at it again, now considering how it could be used. “Probably for the human souls, right?” I shiver when the thought comes across of how it could also be used on living subjects. Getting Determination extracted would be painful. I hope that the human Souls weren’t sentient or conscious for that.

We enter the next room, which turns out to be smothered by fog. I can’t see, which would normally be where Frisk stepped in, but they step back. “It’s too thick, I can barely breath through that!” Frisk says, coughing.

“We can come back, right? Let’s go the other direction down the hallway,” I say. Frisk nods and we go back, passing entries and eventually reaching the fork in the road. We came from the south, so we continue going east, to unexplored parts of the lab. We end up in a room that also has fog on it, but it’s much less thick. I can see pretty well, and Frisk doesn’t cough again.

“I think this room’s fine,” Frisk says. I hum in agreement. An entry lights up next to us, and I can just barely read it.

“Entry number 11. now that mettaton’s made it big, he never talks to me anymore. … except to ask when i’m going to finish his body. but i’m afraid if i finish his body, he won’t need me anymore… then we’ll never be friends ever again. … not to mention, every time i try to work on it, i just get really sweaty…”

“Aww, poor Alphy. Maybe when we see Mettaton again we can tell him to appreciate her more,” Frisk said, smiling.

“Yeah, if we see anyone again. I get the strangest feeling that we’re going to die down here,” I say with a shiver. Frisk swivels around to place a hand on my shoulder. They smile softly, and then their face goes back to being serious as they turn back to face ahead.

Fans line one wall, turned off. White things that resemble flower petals float through the fog, aimlessly drifting. At the end of the hallway there’s a red switch on the wall. I beckon Frisk to press it, and they do. The fans turn on, and push all of the fog away from the room. The white petals don’t blow off, however. They come together, and form a smiling ball, then morph into a dog-like thing. It advances towards us, and once Frisk realizes that there’s nothing they can do, they sigh and let the monster pull them into battle.

“It’s the Amalgamate,” I say, snapping my fingers. Yeah, that’s what they’re all called! It looks like a dog as a whole, even though there’s a gaping black hole where the face should be. The negative space between it’s legs form the silhouettes of cats, strangely enough. Or maybe they’re dogs? It’s ambiguous enough that they could be either.

“Check?” Frisk asks.

“Amalgamate. It’s unclear how many dogs this counts as,” I nod. Frisk glances at me in confusion, but then focuses on the pending attack. A little dog forms, and then it’s face vanishes into a black void, similar to the Amalgamate. It shoots a barrage of little arrows at Frisk, who dodges all but one. “Amalgamate is watching you intently,” I inform Frisk.

“...I’m going to pet it,” Frisk says, hesitantly.

“Do not. That can’t end well,” I advise. Even though I say that, this Amalgamate is so far much less
terrifying than the rest. It looks like a dog, and dogs are good. Frisk gives me a blank stare, and I know that I’m about to be ignored. They raise a hand to the thing, but they’re too far away. They just pet the air. “Smooth move.”

“Shhh. I need to pet every dog, remember? It’s a life goal!” Frisk says defiantly. The attacking dog grows a little rocket tail and zooms around, but Frisk manages to dodge it completely. “...It smells like a bunch of dogs...” They say, wrinkling their nose. “Anyway, beckon!” They call to the dog, and it comes bounding to them, flecking a strange liquid from an orifice. Their attack dog bounces up and down, shooting more arrows. Frisk gets hit a lot. The Amalgamate hovers close, looking for affection.

“You’re dying out there, kid,” I say. They’re at 4 HP. They nod, but they choose not to eat. “What are you doing?” I ask.

“I’ll heal at a SAVE. I want to save my food for Asgore, remember?” They say, tilting their head as they pet the Amalgamate. It convulses rapidly... then calms down. It rests quietly on their lap for a moment, snoring. Then it shoots away and crawls wildly on the walls. Frisk jumps back in surprise, and I may have made a noise in fear. It starts to strike the wall with its claws.

Frisk raises their hand again and goes over to it. “You aren’t seriously going to try that again, are you?” I ask, raising an eyebrow.

“It seemed to like it,” Frisk shrugs. I put my hand on their shoulder.

“No, it doesn’t look like it wants to be pet right now,” I say, pulling them away.

“So do I... Play with it?” Frisk asks. I shrug, and apparently they take that as an invitation to throw their knife into the corner of the room. The Amalgamate brings it back to them... Proudly? They repeat this process a few times. Now the Amalgamate is very tired, and it lean its dripping, amorphous body on Frisk. It starts to twitch affectionately. They somehow manage to dodge all of its attacks, but only barely.

“Eat now, please. One more hit and you’re dead. Eat the Chisps or something,” I say. Frisk sighs and opens the bag of Popato Chisps. They recover 13 HP! And immediately lose half of it.

“And now I pet.” Frisk pats the dog thing, and it starts to generate a Stage 1 happiness froth. Gross. Its convulsions intensify. “And I shall pet again!” They say triumphantly as they stroke the Amalgamate. It seems to calm down, and smiling cat faces appear in the negative space between its legs. So they were cats, after all. I look at it, and finally come up with the perfect name.

“Endogeny is contented,” I say. Frisk looks at me blankly. They spare the dog, and then tilt their head at me. “Okay, so, the word Amalgamate means ‘combination’, which all of these monsters seem to be. Combinations of different monsters. So this amalgamate’s called, Endogeny!” I make jazz hands, but they don’t react at all. “Come on, that’s a good pun! Endogeny means that it grows from within, and it’s genes are all combined monsters, so within, it’s always growing from separate lifeforms. And it has the word ‘dog’ in it!”

“I... would have never guessed.” Frisk sighs. “Let’s just go find Alphys.”

“You never appreciate my puns!” I mutter as they walk back down the room.

“Oh, hey, maybe the ventilation from here cleared the fog in that other room,” Frisk suggests. I shrug, a little bitter that I’m being ignored. We walk all the way back to that room, which, lo and behold, is completely clear. To our immediate right is another screen log. “...Read it, please?” Frisk
Asks when I just float with my arms crossed.

“...Fine. ‘Entry number 19. the families keep calling me to ask when everyone is coming home. what am i supposed to say? i don’t even answer the phone anymore,’” I read. There’s a refrigerator next to us, so Frisk opens it, a little afraid of what they’ll find. But it turns out to be empty. There’s another one a little ways down, so they open that one, too. This one seems to contain samples of some kind.

“Is that one... Shaking?” Frisk asks when they close the door. I nod, eyeing it cautiously. There’s another log beside it, but I don’t really want to get closer. It might have another Amalgamate inside.

“Can you read the screen from here?” They ask.

“...Maybe. We should get a little closer, though. I guess.” We get as close as we dare, and it flickers on so that I can read it. “‘Entry number 20. Asgore left me five messages today. four about everyone being angry. one about this cute teacup he found that looks like me. thanks asgore.’”

“That’s super cute,” Frisk says, nervously gazing at the fridge. “...Should I touch it?” They ask. I shrug, and they decide to inch closer. They get as close as arm’s reach, and then they flick the door open.

It swings open, and... “It’s empty,” I sigh in relief. “...But what was in it?” Frisk shrugs, looking a little more unnerved. It continues to shake once we’re past it. There’s another entry log. “‘Entry number 21. i spend all my time at the garbage dump now. it’s my element.’” Frisk opens the next fridge in the line of seemingly endless fridges. There’s more samples inside. Miraculously, we reach the last fridge next. It’s also empty, so we keep walking.

Then that fridge turns completely white, and morphs into another Amalgamate. It seems to radiate freezing temperatures from itself.

“...It’s so cold...” Frisk says, shivering. I shrug. This amalgamate looks like a couple of vegetoids, and a snowdrake, and maybe one or two more that I can’t quite place. “Check.”

“ATK -12, DEF -5. ...Seems like it’s losing itself,” I say, floating up to the ceiling to watch from a safe distance. I really hate these things.

“sn... o... wy...” It says. I glance up at the familiar name. Snowy’s the snowdrake kid who lives in Snowdin. His dad’s the unfunny resort comedian. ...I remember hating that family, with a passion. I can’t remember the reason why, though, but the feeling remains. Her attacks don’t even go near us, and hover in the air way above Frisk’s head. They couldn’t reach the snowflakes if they tried.

But what the attack can reach? Is me. It’s almost as if they’re deliberately targeting me, and that’s not okay! I have to actively dodge, though her attacks are still weak and slow.

“That’s not good...” I mumble to myself. “...Tell her a joke?” I suggest to Frisk. What matters right now is getting safely out of this fight. But didn’t the dad snowdrake mention his wife dying? ...And didn’t Alphys try to experiment on monsters who had ‘fallen down?’ ...Oh. Heh.

“There’s snow jokes to tell...?” Frisk says. What a bad pun. I’ll need to teach them better, someday. But her expression starts to shift, regardless. Her attack doesn’t come anywhere close, yet again.

I float through the air, dodging the snowflakes again. It’s annoying, though. Does she still not like me, or... And a better question, how does she know I’m here!? I frown in frustration. Frisk starts to giggle at their own joke.

“You laugh, and keep laughing. It’s SO funny, you can’t stop. Tears run down your face,” I say sarcastically. Their joke was terrible and doesn’t deserve to be laughed at. Frisk turns their head up
towards me to frown. “...What? You didn’t do that?” I ask innocently.

“sn... o...wy...” She whispers again. Poor snowmom, never able to see her son again.

“Heckle her,” I order. Frisk frowns, and shakes their head. “Come on. You said something like… ‘You look horrible. Why are you even alive?’ ...What? You didn’t say that, either?” I ask. And maybe she heard me, too. She absently sents up a snow star, but it’s not her turn so she can’t do any real damage. So nothing happens. “...Joke again, I guess.”

“...There’s snow way to tell a good snow pun...” Frisk says hesitantly. I groan. Her expression changes more.

“Haha... thank... you...” She says.

“Snow problem!” Frisk grins.

“Your puns are the actual worst,” I despair. Regardless, the amalgamate fades out of existence, leaving behind a gleaming blue key. Frisk picks it up and puts it on their phone’s keychain. The door next to it leads to a green slot, which we luckily already have the key for. I don’t bother to read the note. We head back out into the hallway.

“...I’m still really cold,” Frisk comments, wrapping their arms around themself. “Brrr!” I look at them, and actually notice what they’re wearing for the first time. I hadn’t noticed before, but they seem to be in their pajamas.

“Wait a second, are you wearing pajamas?” I ask.

“...Yeah. Did you never realize?” Frisk asks. I shake my head. They hold out an arm. “Here, feel. It’s soft.” I put my hand on the sleeve of their sweater, which does feels soft, kind of like felt. “You know what kind of material this is?”

“...No, what?” I ask.

“Boyfriend material,” Frisk says, shooting finger guns at me. I take my hand away in disgust.

“How come you’re good at puns now?” I ask, incredulous.

“That’s not a pun, that’s a pick up line. My specialty!” They smile. I notice that their shorts are made of the same material as their top.

“But why are you in your pajamas?” I ask, getting back on topic. Frisk shrugs.

“...I dunno. I wasn’t really... I wanted to watch the sunrise, okay? And I didn’t bother putting on clothes, but then I... just kinda... Ended up falling down a hole?” Frisk shrugs again. ...That doesn’t sound entirely truthful, but I’m not feeling like calling them out on it. It’s... kinda plausible, but probably not the full story. I’ll find out later.

We leave that room, and backtrack to where the blue key goes. It’s kinda far away, all the way back in the flower and mirror room. We make sure to SAVE on the way there, though, to recover our full health. Now the main door, the one by the entrance to the lab, should be open. Wow, what a journey this has been. A long, hard, probably pointless journey.

We reach that door again, and it slides open with ease. It turns out to be an elevator, but it’s lost power, too. It has another door leading to the side, though, so we go through there. There’s another screen on the wall, but it doesn’t seem to turn on. The next one doesn’t, either. We enter a door at the
That opens up into a room with a powerful looking generator, connected to the wall via several different metal tubes. There’s a large red button on the front of it.

“It seems like this controls the elevator’s power. Turn it on,” I recommend. Frisk hits the button, and there’s a humming noise of machinery coming to life. Then, out of the door we just entered, come all four Amalgamates that we’ve fought, creeping towards us, slowly. They get close enough to brush against Frisk’s pajama shirt when a voice calls out.

“Hey! Stop!!!” The amalgamates part, and make way for Alphys to enter. She looks very stressed. “I got you guys some food, okay!?” She says. All of the amalgamates leave the room, appeased for now.

“Alphys! W- I found you!” Frisk exclaims. Alphys sees them, and winces.

“Yeah, sorry about that… They get kind of sassy when they don’t get fed on time. I think they smelled the potato chips you had, and…” Alphys looks around, searching for something more to say. “Anyway! The power went out, and I’ve been trying to turn it back on! But it seems like you were one step ahead of me. This was probably just a big inconvenience for you…”

“No, no! It’s cool!” Frisk says, making Alphys blush.

“But I appreciate that you came here to back me up! As I said, I was afraid I might… Not come back… But that’s not because of these guys or anything! I was just worried I would be too afraid… To tell the truth… That I might run away, or do something… Cowardly. …Uh… I… I suppose I owe you an explanation.”

“You bet you do!” I say. I mean, finally! A simple explanation for once!

“As you probably know, Asgore asked me to study the nature of Souls. During my research, I isolated a power I called ‘Determination.’ I injected it into dying monsters so their Souls would last after death. But the experiment failed. You see, unlike humans’, monsters’ bodies don’t have enough… Physical matter to take those concentrations of ‘Determination.’ Their bodies started to melt, and lost what physicality they had. Pretty soon, all of the test subjects had melted together into… Those. Seeing them like this, I knew… I couldn’t tell their families about it. I couldn’t tell anyone about it. No matter how much everyone was asking me. And I was too afraid to do any more work, knowing… everything I’d done so far had been such a horrific failure. …But now. Now, I’ve changed my mind about all this. I’m going to tell everyone what I’ve done. …It’s going to be hard. Being honest… believing in myself… I’m sure there will be times where I’ll struggle. I’m sure there will be times where I screw up again. But knowing, deep down, that I have friends to fall back on… I know it’ll be a lot easier to stand on my own. Thank you.” Alphys turns away, and the Amalgamates pop back in, and are greeted with a soft smile.

“Come on, guys. It’s time for everyone to go home.”

Chapter End Notes

So I guess in this one you get a lot of Chara, Asriel, and some of Frisk’s backstories. And Flowey’s is hinted at, but that’s more of a next chapter thing. Hmm. Oh, and this chapter is a record for word count at 8,000 words! Wow! And it could have been
longer, too... Heheh. I almost tried to trim it down, or split this one in two, but then it'd be too short and I figured you guys'd like this better anyway. And it's written on time for once, so why not?

...Is my interpretation of Frisk's clothes okay? And that's obviously not the full reason of why they went underground, and I'll expand on that someday... When I actually figure out the rest... but that's a start, right?

Anyways... Reviews/comments would be lovely! Critiques, things noticed, ideas, problems, encouragements, all are soooo welcome! Love you all!

EDIT: Some kind people pointed out that I don't write Frisk as blind very consistently! So I've edited a couple of things surrounding that. :)

EDIT 2: I changed some stuff that happens during the Amalgamate fights, please re-read those! I remembered my personal theories that haven't been addressed yet, and what I had written contradicted them a lot! If you're lazy, just re-read the snowdrake amalgamate's fight.
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 27- An Ending

“...At least Asgore had a backup plan?” Frisk offers as Alphys leaves with the Amalgamates. “I mean, his plan of slowly collecting human souls may have… not been the most effective, so I’m glad that Alphys was helping him… Even if it led to so much trouble,” Frisk shrugs. “Does that make any sense?”

“...A little. But it’s probably things like this that led to Toriel leaving, right? And if Alphys was doing this while Toriel was around, then maybe it wasn’t too long ago that I died?” I suggest.

“...Well… I don’t know. It seems more like Asgore started working with Alphys a while after all that, because he could see that what he was doing wasn’t working. You know, I could always just ask someone…” Frisk says.

“No, you’re not supposed to know about any of this, remember?” I say hurriedly. “Don’t do that, you might even get Alphys fired!” I mean, it could happen. But I don’t think that I want to know the answer yet, anyway. And Frisk asking about it would provoke questions, and I really don’t want anyone to know that I’m still around. It’d be… Awkward.

Frisk frowns, but doesn’t try further. We leave that room, and go back into the hallway with the black screens. As we pass one, it turns on with a buzz. I jump in surprise, and turn to look at it.

“Oh, that’s not good…” I mumble. A red smiley face has appeared, glowing through the dim light of the lab. Frisk turns, too, but in my opinion they don’t need to know. “It’s nothing, continue on,” I say, waving a hand.

“Wait, does it say anything?” Frisk asks, poking the screen. Weirdly enough, the image turns into words.

“Oh. Yeah, it does. Ahem. ‘Entry number 8. I’ve chosen a candidate. I haven’t told Asgore yet, because I want to surprise him with it… In the center of his garden, there’s something special. The first golden flower, that grew before all the others. The flower from the outside world. It appeared just before the queen left. I wonder… What happens when something without a Soul gains the will to live?’” I read.

“...What? What did she do!?” Frisk asks, worried. Their gaze turns suspicious, and they look at me with narrowed eyes. At least, more narrowed than normal. “A… a golden flower. I’ve heard that before. Actually, I’ve heard that a lot of places before.”

“Well, yeah. But come to think of it, haven’t we met a golden flower with the will to live?” I hint.

“...Yeah, we have.” The second screen shows the same image, and I shudder at it and debate moving on. But Frisk hears the hum of electricity and pokes it, revealing what it says.

I sigh. “‘Entry number 18. the flower’s gone.’” I blink at the screen.

“That’s it?” Frisk asks, eyebrows raised in surprise.
“Yeah. And you and I both know where the flower went.”

We hop into the elevator and press the button. Frisk jumps when the phone starts ringing in their pocket. The pull it out, and hesitantly put to their ear.

“Chara… Are you there?” A voice asks. Frisk turns to me, and hold the phone between us.

“…What?” I ask flatly. The voice chuckles. It’s familiar, but I can’t quite place it.

“It’s been a long time, hasn’t it…?” Oh, great, it can actually hear my voice. “But you’ve done well. Thanks to you, everything has fallen into place. Chara… See you soon.” The caller hangs up.

“The fuck?” I ask. I’m not sure, but that kind of sounded like Flowey…? And it would… Kind of make sense. And the more I think about it, the more I’m pretty sure that it was indeed Flowey, trying to disguise his voice. But last time I saw him, I was in Frisk’s body. How could he possibly know my name? ...And yet, I’m about 80% sure that it was Flowey. Besides, I don’t have any other ideas.

“Who was that!?” Frisk asks worriedly. “Who else actually knows you’re there? Well, there’s Sans, but… He doesn’t know your name, does he?”

“No… The only other things that seemed to know I was there were the Amalgamates. But it couldn’t have been them, could it…?” I ask hesitantly. I decide not to tell them that I think it was Flowey.

“Wait, what? The Amalgamates could see you?” Frisk asks in confusion.

“Yeah, I think so. I’m not positive, though, it just seemed like they were attacking me sometimes instead of you,” I explain.

The elevator starts shaking, preventing Frisk from responding as they fall to their knees. It crashes hard on the ground, and some vines force their way inside. They shove Frisk, who goes tumbling out and I after them. The vines then seal the door shut. We find ourselves back in New Home. The SAVE point’s gone.

“What was that?” Frisk asks shakily.

“...Not sure. Let’s keep moving, though,” I suggest, helping Frisk to their feet while keeping an eye on the vines.

We walk up, and find the elevator straight to the castle. Luckily, it still works. Frisk and I glance at each other.

“What is going on?” They ask. I shrug. We go through the judgement hall in silence, still trying to figure out what happened. I, for one, am pretty sure I’d have noticed an elevator from Alphys’s lab to New Home, so the mystery of how we even ended up here is a mystery. There’s still no SAVE points anywhere to be seen, and that really worries me. We wander around for a bit, heading to Asgore’s castle since there’s nothing else we could possibly do.

Finally, there’s a SAVE point outside the entrance to the Barrier. We save in relief, then turn our attention to the looming barrier.

“Asgore’s in there, huh?” I ask. Frisk nods.

“Like I said, we can’t avoid him forever. Though, I’ll admit, the lab was a pretty good detour,” Frisk says. I nod, lost in thought. What will be different this time? Flowey had said that… Well, he hinted that Alphys held the key to my ‘happy ending.’ But how had I actually changed anything?
Frisk pokes me. “What?” I ask, jolted from my thoughts.

“You there?” Frisk asks. I hum in response. They nod, satisfied. “Alright, then, let’s go.” They round the corner and walk the few feet until they’re standing behind Asgore. They step their feet loudly, to let him know they’re there. Asgore shifts, but doesn’t turn around.

“This is the barrier,” Asgore says as the barrier pulses with the power it contains. “This is what keeps us all trapped underground. ...If… If by chance you have any unfinished business… Please do what you must.” Frisk doesn’t move, and shakes their head. “...I see… This is it, then.” Asgore slowly turns around. “Ready?” The seven human souls rise from the ground, and we’re pulled into battle again.

“...I’ll repeat myself, why not?” I mutter. “A strange light fills the room. Twilight is shining through the barrier. It seems your journey is finally over. You’re filled with… Determination.”

“Human…” Asgore says. “It was nice to meet you. Goodbye.” He looks down, and prepares to wield his weapon. I place myself protectively in front of Frisk, because I don’t need a repeat of last time.

As it turns out, I didn’t need to worry so much. A fireball appears before he draws his trident. He looks up at it in confusion and shock, and then it flies at him and knocks him over. Smoke obscures my vision for a moment, and when it parts...

“Toriel!” Frisk says, a grin spreading quickly across their face.

“Mom?” I ask in disbelief. She steps out of the smoke, and smiles gently.

“What a miserable creature, torturing such a poor, innocent youth…” Toriel opens, the same line as when she fended off… Flowey. Right, that guy. He’s probably still an issue, right? “Do not be afraid, my child. It is I, your friend and guardian. At first, I thought I would let you make your journey alone… But I could not stop worrying about you. Your adventure must have been so treacherous. ...And ultimately, it would burden you with a horrible choice. To leave this place, you would have to take the life of another person. You would have to defeat Asgore. However… I realized… I cannot allow that. It is not right to sacrifice someone simply to let someone leave here. Is that not what I have been trying to prevent this whole time? So, for now, let us suspend this battle. As terrible as Asgore is… He deserves mercy, too.”

Asgore picks himself off the ground with some effort due to his imposing form. “Tori… You came back…!”

“Do not ‘Tori’ me, Dreemurr!” Toriel’s eyes go cold immediately. I tilt my head in confusion. Was there something I missed? ...I mean, probably. “You pathetic whelp. If you really wanted to free our kind… You could have gone through the barrier when you had ONE Soul… taken six Souls from the humans, then come back and freed everyone peacefully.”

“...Hey, that was my plan!” I huff. At least mom and I agree on one thing, then. Frisk gives me a half smile, but they seem more concerned about the two monsters fighting.


“...Tori…” Asgore closes his eyes in sadness. “You’re right… I am a miserable creature… but, do you think we can at least be friends again?” He asks hopefully. Toriel sighs.

“NO, Asgore,” Toriel says forcefully. Asgore starts crying softly.
Then Undyne shows up with a yell. I am delighted, always a pleasure to see her. “Ngahhhhh!!! Asgore! Human!! Nobody fight each other!!! Everyone’s gonna make friends, or else I’ll…!! I’ll…” She seems to notice Toriel for the first time.

“Hello, I am Toriel. Are you the human’s friend?” Toriel asks. “It is nice to meet you.”

“Uh, yeah…?” Undyne says uncertainly. But she ends up greeting her with a sharp-toothed smile. “Nice to meet you!” She slides over to Asgore. “Hey, Asgore, is that your ex? Jeez. That’s rough, buddy.” Frisk snickers at that, for some reason.

And then Alphys shows up, to make this party bigger. “H-hey! Nobody hurt each other! …” She glances at Toriel nervously, presumably not recognizing her.

“Oh! Are you another friend?” Toriel asks. “I am Toriel. Hello!”

“Uh, h-h-hi! …” She turns her head down, eyes wide, and stage whispers, “There’s two of them???” While blushing so much her face turns red. She nervously goes over to stand with Undyne, who looks down in sympathy.

Now it’s Papyrus’s turn to arrive. “HEY! NOBODY FIGHT ANYONE! IF ANYONE FIGHTS ANYONE…! THEN I’LL!!! BE FORCED!!! TO ASK UNDYNE FOR HELP!!!”

“Hello!” Toriel greets. I can’t tell if she’s nervous, or excited by all of the new people. She’s been living by herself for a long time, right?

“OH! HELLO, YOUR MAJESTY!” Papyrus says. I blink. Did he know that Toriel was queen? He looks at Frisk, and lowers his voice the slightest notch. “PSST. HUMAN. DID ASGORE SHAVE…? AND CLONE HIMSELF?????” Oh, well that clears that up. For a second I thought that he knew… things…

Sans is next, and as far as I can tell, the last to arrive. “hey guys… what’s up?” Toriel gasps, her eyes widening.

“That voice…!! Hello, I think we may… Know each other?” Toriel asks, walking to stand by Papyrus.

“Oh hey… i recognize your voice, too,” Sans smiles. You know, as always.

“I am Toriel. So nice to meet you,” Toriel says.

“the name’s sans. and, uh, same,” Sans winks.

“Oh! Wait, then…!” She turns to get a better view of Papyrus. “This must be your brother, Papyrus! Greetings, Papyrus! It is so nice to finally meet you! Your brother has told me so much about you.”

“WOWIE…” Papyrus blushes. “I CAN’T BELIEVE ASGORE’S CLONE KNOWS WHO I AM!!! THIS IS THE BEST DAY OF MY LIFE!!!!!!!”

“Hey, Papyrus…” Toriel says. A strange light enters her eyes. “What does a skeleton tile his roof with?”

“HMMM… SNOW-PROOF ROOF TILES???” Papyrus guesses.

“I’VE CHANGED MY MIND!!! THIS IS THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE!!!” He yells in anguish.

Undyne pipes up. “Come on, Asgore! It’s gonna be okay!” When I return my attention to Asgore it seems that he has not stopped crying since he started. Undyne pats him awkwardly. “There are plenty of fish in the sea…”

“Y-yeah, Asgore!!” Alphys says. “Undyne’s totally right about that fish thing! S-sometimes you’ve just got to, uh… S-stop going after furry boss monsters and, uh… J-just get to know a really cute fish...? … It’s a metaphor.”

“Well,” Undyne says slowly. “I think it’s a good analogy.” From somewhere in the not-so-distant distance, a voice calls.

“OH MY GOD! WILL YOU TWO JUST SMOOCH ALREADY!?” A leg points at Undyne and Alphys from somewhere vaguely to the right. “THE AUDIENCE IS DYING FOR SOME ROMANTIC ACTION!” And then it disappears as quick as it came.

“HEY, SHUT UP!!!” Undyne yells at who we all know to be Mettaton. “Man, the nerve of that guy! Right, Alphys!??” Alphys doesn’t respond for a second, looking around nervously. “...Uh, Alphys?"

“...No,” Alphys says. “He’s right. LET’S DO IT!” My heart leaps. Finally! I float closer, grinning wildly.

Undyne looks confused for a moment. “Well??? Uh??? I guess??? If you want to??? Then??? Don’t hold anything back!!!” She decides, blushing. She leans down as Alphys reaches up, and I hold my unnecessary breath.

“W-wait!” Toriel shouts, dashing between the two. “Not in front of the human!” She looks scandalized.

“...You’re kidding, right!?” I say in annoyance. “They can’t even see! But I can, and it’s not like I have a problem with it!” I rant. Sans winks at me and I glare back, blushing a little. Forgot he was there, again. Frisk giggles.

“Uhh, right! S-sorry, I got a little carried away there,” Alphys blushes. I snap my fingers in annoyance.

Toriel giggles. “Hee hee hee. My child, it seems as if you must stay here a while. But looking at all of the great friends you have made… I think… I think that you will be happy.”

“See? That’s what I’ve been saying!” I complain, turning to Frisk. “We can be happy here, right?” They tilt their head towards me, and nod with a smile. Toriel smiles warmly back.

“H-hey, that reminds me,” Alphys says. “Papyrus… YOU called everyone here, right? Well, besides, uh, her.”

“...What? ...Nice!” I say in almost disbelief. It was Papyrus? ...Well, I guess that’s awesome then, even if it doesn’t quite make sense.

“Uh, anyway…” Alphys continues. “If I got here before you… How did you know to call everybody?”

“LET’S JUST SAY…” Papyrus says smugly, “A TINY FLOWER HELPED ME.” Frisk, Alphys
and I all gasp simultaneously.

“A tiny… flower?” Alphys asks shakily. All of the color drains from Frisk’s face.

It seems I’m the only one to notice a small green vine off to the side of the room. I watch in horror as it grows to be as thick as my head, and dashes in coils and loops around all of our friends. It tightens, and suspends everyone in the air, the thorns slowly draining them of HP. Only Frisk and I are spared.

Asgore hangs his head in defeat and acceptance while Undyne glares and struggles as much as she can, to no avail. Toriel closes her eyes in pain, clenching her fists. Sans’s eyes go black, and his smile almost falls. Almost. Alphys looks terrified, knowing that it’s her own creation that’s causing this. And Papyrus frowns in concern, his face visibly strained.

And that’s definitely Flowey. Thinking back to the phone call- if that was really Flowey, which it probably was, - I remember that he can hear me, and probably see me too. I dart behind Frisk, using them to block myself from sight. I’m still hesitant to possess them again with the worry that they’ll see some memories that they shouldn’t.

Frisk stares blankly forward in horror, and Flowey himself rises from the ground. “You IDIOTS,” Flowey says. “While you guys were having your little pow-wow… I took the human Souls! And now, not only are THOSE under my power… But all of your FRIEND’S Souls are going to be mine, too!”

He pauses for a second, and leans to the side in an attempt to see around Frisk. I wince, and realize that he’ll see me sooner or later, so I might as well just possess Frisk before that happens. I take a breath and step forward, and blink Frisk’s eyes a few times. They gasp in actually seeing the situation for the first time.

_Pretty sure he can see me,_ I explain. Frisk gives a subtle nod. Flowey frowns in confusion, but soon replaces it with his usual smile.

“Hee hee hee! And you know what the best part is? It’s all your fault. It’s all because you MADE THEM love you. All the time you spent listening to them… Encouraging them… Caring about them… Without that, they wouldn’t have come here.”

...Is that true? Frisk asks hesitantly.

_Well… I mean… He’s twisting it up, Frisk. You didn’t force them to do anything, you just… were yourself. And that’s not a bad thing, so screw Flowey, he’s awful. _I don’t think I helped very much, but Frisk seems a little less worried.

“And now, with their souls and the humans’ together… I will achieve my REAL FORM.”

_Oh no. No, no, no. That’s not good._ I think in a panic. If that last thing that I fought wasn’t his ‘real form’, then what was? “But why…” I end up asking before catching myself. I can’t let anything slip!

Chara? Right, I can’t tell them. But they can probably read my thoughts, so… I try to distract myself by listening to Flowey’s next words carefully.

“Hee hee… Huh? WHY am I still doing this?” Flowey echoes, laughing. “Don’t you get it? This is all just a GAME. If you leave the underground satisfied, you’ll ‘win’ the game. If you ‘win’, you won’t want to ‘play’ with me anymore. And what would I do then? But this game between us will NEVER end. I’ll hold victory in front of you, just within your reach… And then tear it away just
...Yeesh. This flower has problems. Frisk nods in agreement.

*Besides, this isn’t a game, this is real! Life and death matter, even when you can reset!* Frisk protests. I’m… not sure I totally agree, but I do know that this isn’t a problem that can be solved by turning off a screen. This is… much bigger than that.

“Listen. If you DO defeat me, I’ll give you your ‘happy ending.’ I’ll bring your friends back. I’ll destroy the barrier. Everyone will finally be satisfied. But that WON’T happen. You…! I’ll keep you here no matter what!”

Frisk’s Soul springs out, and is trapped within a tiny box. ‘Friendliness pellets’ surround it. Frisk tries to move, or break out of the boundaries, but find they can’t. “Even if it means killing you 1,000,000 times!!!” The seed bullets close in, and shave off 7 HP. More and more appear, until we’re down to only 1 HP. One more circle closes in, and I close my/Frisk’s eyes and just accept it. There’s nothing either of us can do.

A light appears from beyond their eyelids, and I open our eyes. A ring of fire stands around our Soul. Normally this would be a bad thing, but it blocks the seed bullets, then fades away. “Toriel…? Frisk whispers.

“What?” Flowey asks.

“Do not be afraid, my child…” Toriel says weakly. “No matter what happens… We will always be there to protect you!” More pellets appear, and a bone blocks the ones on the right while a spear blocks the one on the left.

“That’s right, human! You can win!!” Papyrus says confidently. “Just do what I, would do… Believe in you!!”

“Hey! Human! If you got past me, you can do anything!” Undyne cheers. “So don’t worry! We’re with you all the way! “

Sans’s pupils come back, and it looks like he’s brought his attention back to the present instead of wherever it went. “Huh? you haven’t beaten this guy yet? come on, this weirdo’s got nothin’ on you.” Another small barrage of seeds is blocked by some fire, courtesy of Asgore, and lightning bolts, presumably from Alphys.

“Technically, it’s impossible for you to beat him…” Alphys starts. “B-but… Somehow, I know you can do it!!”

“Human…” Asgore says, “for the future of humans and monsters…! You have to stay determined…!” Frisk smiles warmly at their friends.

More monsters show up, like Snowdrake (ugh), Shyren, Vulkin, Monster Kid, Muffet, the Royal Guards, a Froggit, all of the dogs from Snowdin, etc, until the room is filled with words of encouragement. More voices are cheering us on from outside, where they couldn’t fit in the barrier room.

Flowey seems concerned. “Urrrgh… no!” He complains. “Unbelievable!! This can’t be happening…! You… you…!” Suddenly he drops the act and grins wickedly. “I can’t believe you’re all so stupid. All of your souls are mine!!” He screams unsettlingly, and the room shakes and spins. The monsters all fall to the ground, and that’s the last thing we see before it all goes white.
When I blink open my eyes I let out a choked gasp. Asriel is standing right there, with his back turned to me. He rolls his head, stretching his neck, and flexes his fingers. His shoulders shake, and I can’t tell if he’s laughing or crying from where I’m lying on the ground. I can sense Frisk groggly waking up as well, and the confusion that comes with it.

I watch Asriel motionless with bated breath, until he finally speaks. “Finally,” He says. My eyes well up and all I want to do is hug him, but something holds me back for now. “I was so tired of being a flower.” My eyes widen in surprise.

“N-no, you can’t-” My words don’t work as Frisk cautiously rises to their feet. Asriel finally turns around, and nothing about him has changed. Frisk is more careful than I am, while I want to run to him they firmly root their feet to the spot.

“Howdy!” Asriel says. “Chara, are you there?” He asks. I open my mouth but Frisk closes it. Careful. This is still Flowey, and I don’t trust him.

Frisk, that’s Asriel! Not Flowey! I pull, but it looks like Frisk’s determination is winning this fight.

...I’m not so sure. Flowey’s not above tricks. And if this is your brother... He’s not the same person you once knew, I can feel it. Can’t you sense something’s off?

“It’s me, your best friend,” Asriel says. He then changes, in a flash of light. When we see him again, he’s taken on a new form. He’s taller, almost as tall as Mom, and he’s wearing a long black robe that also resembles her’s. The delta run is emblazoned on the front, and his horns have grown. There’s black patterns in his fur, and… He’s wearing a heart locket. I put my hand over the matching one, concealed under Frisk’s shirt. “ASRIEL DREEMURR.” Even his voice has changed.

That’s what he looked like when he died, when he had my Soul. That’s what a monster looks like with a human Soul, I explain in shock. Except now he has six human Souls, and countless monster Souls.

...It’s the end.

We’re pulled into battle, and Frisk goes for the ‘check’ option automatically.

I shrug. Infinite attack, infinite defense. A legendary being made of every Soul in the underground. Asriel attacks with fire, which we manage to dodge. It’s strikingly similar to Toriel and Asgore’s attacks, which is no surprise. This shouldn’t be that hard.

I can… hope! I’ll hold on to hope, and that’ll see us through!

That’s the worst idea you’ve had yet. The black void around us turns to flashing colors, which reminds me that I have no clue where we are. Frisk, Asriel and I all seem to be floating in a black void, similar to the one I fought Flowey in. Er, that is to say, a place I’ve never been before. Shoot. Can’t think about that!

Somehow Frisk’s hope idea works. Asriel raises his hands, and huge stars shoot down from above. They explode into smaller stars, and we miraculously don’t get hit at all!
And now I can… Dream! Think about why we’re here now. We have to do this, and then we can start our life, finally! We can feel the empty space in our inventory grow smaller and smaller.

“You know,” Asriel says. “I don’t care about destroying this world anymore.” He raises his hands again and lightning made of pure neon energy shoot down, several at a time, giving us only a small space to dodge between them. Near the end of his turn they get much bigger, and harder to dodge. We lose 8 HP.

Might want to eat…

Later.

“After I defeat you and gain total control of the timeline… I just want to reset everything.” Asriel forms two swords of magical energy and swings them one at a time. Frisk jumps to the left, then to the right, and nearly trips when they maneuver away from the third swing. He swings both, but they dissolve into tiny stars at the last minute. “All your progress… Everyone’s memories. I’ll bring them all back to zero.” He uses the lightning bolt attack again.

But I’ve come so far! Chara, no offense, but your brother is kind of a jerk. Is any of this really necessary!? Frisk thinks as they dodge between the lightning.

Hey, I promise he wasn’t like this before! I was the jerk that got us both killed! … And you’re at 4 HP. Eat something.

Frisk eats the second Glamburger as Asriel charges star blazer.

“So um... We’re almost out of food, aren’t we? I question. We’ve eaten the only glamburger we had, and the pie. And we aren’t going to ever eat the Snowman Piece.

Yeah, but look! There’s other things in the inventory! Frisk says, looking down at the list on their phone. Last Dream. They use that, and the dream becomes real! It restores their HP fully.

...Weird. Let’s not have to use many more of those, though, okay? Frisk nods.

“Now, ENOUGH messing around!” Asriel says. “It’s time to purge this timeline once and for all!” He shakes his head, winks, and a huge, magical goat skull appears before him. It begins to absorb everything, not that there’s much in the void. But Frisk and I both feel the pull, and we struggle to stay out of it. Stray used attacks from Asriel fly past us into the miniature black hole. We get hit by
several.

**Uh oh, we are dying.** I check the status floating in front of us, and see that there’s only 1 HP left.

“...even after that attack, you’re still standing in my way…?” Asriel says in wonder. “Wow… You really ARE something special. But don’t get cocky. Up until now, I’ve only been using a fraction of my REAL power! Let’s see what good your DETERMINATION is against THIS!!”

...**Hoo boy, here we go!** Frisk thinks as all sources of light fade from the void. It’s pitch black for a moment, then Asriel’s second (third?) form is revealed.

**...Hey, I recognize that! I drew that!** I think indignantly. Asriel now has huge wings that have multi colored, moving patterns on them. He doesn’t have legs, his torso ends in a sharp point. He has oversized gauntlets with extruding spikes, and the shoulders of his clothes extend to look reminiscent to black flames. His ears curl forward into points, his horns are long and spindly, and he’s still wearing the heart locket.

*I don’t think that’s what we should be focusing on right now!* Frisk thinks in a hurry as they struggle, and find that they can’t move.

“Urah ha ha ha… Behold my TRUE power!!” Out of Asriel’s gauntlets come many streams of magic, one of which…

Kills us. Frisk gasps, and then glares at nothing in particular. **NO.**

**Asriel isn’t allowed to kill us!**

*I won’t let him win!* Frisk’s Soul breaks in half…

But it refused. We hop right back into the battle, but this time with full health. We still can’t move, though.

“I can feel it…” Asriel says. “Every time you die, your grip on this world slips away. Every time you die, your friends forget you a little more. Your life will end here, in a world where no one remembers you…”

“No, it won’t!” We say. I can’t even tell if it was Frisk or me now. We dodge more of his attacks, almost completely successfully. Dying isn’t so much of an issue, now, since we’ve discovered that we don’t actually have to die anymore. If only we’d done that sooner!

“Still, you’re hanging on…?” Asriel asks in confusion. “That’s fine. In a few moments, you’ll forget everything, too. That attitude will serve you well in your next life!”

...**Would I actually forget everything if we reset?** Frisk thinks with a trace of fear as they dodge more magic.

**We’ve reset before, right?** I reply.

**Yeah, but what if we reset... To the beginning? What if Asriel resets? Would I remember?**

...**I don’t see a reason why you wouldn’t.**

**Because I don’t have Determination? I mean, the world-resetting kind. That’s all you, right?**

I guess so. Well, we just have to make sure that nobody resets, then, won’t we?
“Ura ha ha… Still!? Come on… Show me what good your Determination is now!” Asriel taunts. Frisk reaches for their cell phone to get to the inventory, but they find that they still can’t move their arm. Looks like we can’t do anything, besides struggle and use our Soul to dodge.

**What if we reset to before this happened?** I suggest. Frisk nods, and I try to reach the SAVE file. Nothing happened. I try again, but nothing happens. *It seems that SAVING really is impossible. But… maybe, with what little power we have… We can SAVE something else?* I smirk. I think I know how to beat him.

*...What are you planning, Chara?* Frisk asks in concern.

**Go on. Try it. SAVE some...one…**

*We can SAVE our friends!* Frisk asks, and smiles. I nod.

**Who first?**

*I guess Toriel and Asgore!* Frisk thinks enthusiastically. They reach out to Asriel’s Soul and call out to their friends. They’re in there somewhere, aren’t they? *...Toriel, Asgore! Are you in there!? Please don’t forget me!* They call. … Within the depths of Asriel’s Soul, something’s resonating…!

We turn to the right, and see Toriel and Asgore standing there. Both of their faces are obscured by a strange, seemingly pixelated mess of light.

**The Lost Souls appear. But, you know them as Toriel and Asgore.**

*What do I do!?* Frisk panics.

**It looks like they want to fight,** I hint.

*...Toriel, I don’t want to fight you! I refuse!* Frisk says, focusing their attention on Toriel for now. Something about this is so familiar to her…

“This is for your own good.” Toriel says.

“Forgive me for this,” Says Asgore. Large paws swoop over, leaving arcs of fire that Frisk easily dodges.

“But Toriel, I have to leave if I’m going to free everyone!” Frisk protests. Something is stirring within her.

“No one will leave again,” She says firmly.

“This is my duty,” Asgore says. Frisk looks at him in concern, then goes over to Asgore and hugs him. It seems like his aggression is melting away…

“Asgore, I won’t hurt you, no matter what!” Frisk says. Suddenly, the memories are flooding back! The light disappears, revealing their faces to us.

“Your fate is up to you now!” Toriel says.

“You are our future!” Asgore says. Frisk smiles, and turns back to Asriel.

**Now what?**
Sure.

We turn to our right and see Sans and Papyrus, their faces covered similarly to how Asgore and Toriel’s were. **Well, how are you going to get them to remember you?** I ask.

... I know! Frisk turns to Papyrus first. “Papyrus, will you cook something for me!?” They say hopefully. He tries to hide his joy.

“I MUST CAPTURE A HUMAN!” Papyrus says.

“just give up. i did,” Sans says. Frisk’s Soul turns blue, and bones rise from the ground. Frisk jumps over them, and skillfully dodges them, just like when they fought Papyrus so long ago.

“...Um, Papyrus! Why didn’t the skeleton go to the party? ...Because he had no BODY to go with!” Frisk says, and snickers. Papyrus seems to hate it, but Sans seems to like it.

**Hey, you can’t steal things from my brain! That’s cheating!**

*Do you want Papyrus back or not?*

**...Continue.**

“THEN EVERYONE WILL…” Papyrus says, then trails off in confusion.

“why even try?” Sans asks. Frisk dodges the bones that the two summon, and then considers what to say next. They seem to be a little stumped, but then it’s as if a lightbulb flashes over their head.

“Papyrus! Will you help me with a puzzle?” They ask triumphantly. He doesn’t know why, but he really wants to help them.

“…” Papyrus considers.

“you’ll never see ‘em again,” Sans says, pessimistic as always.

...**Maybe try talking to Sans?** I suggest. Frisk hums, thinking of what to say.

“Sans. I think that junior jumble is harder than crosswords!” Frisk says. Sans nods his head, like he knew this without question. … Both skeletons seem to snap out of it! The white distortion clears, and they both grin at Frisk.

“NO, WAIT! YOU ARE MY FRIEND!” Papyrus says. “I COULD NEVER CAPTURE YOU!”

“nah. i’m rootin’ for ya, kid,” Sans says. The two vanish, but now we know that they won’t forget. We turn back to Asriel. We can feel something resonating faintly within him!

**Now they’re saved! And last but not least, let’s SAVE Alphys and Undyne!** I cheer.

*Alphys first,* Frisk nods stubbornly. We turn to behind us, where we see Alphys waiting in her black and white polka dot dress. The white distortion hangs over her face.

“...Hey, Alphys, what’s your favorite cartoon?” Frisk asks. We can tell that she can barely hold back from giving us an enormous answer.

“You hate me, don’t you…?” Alphys asks. Her attacks are Mettaton’s attacks, with the small robots
raining down. Our Soul is yellow, and we shoot away the robots before they can get too close.

“Alphys, I’ll always continue to support you!” Frisk encourages. Something about the way they said it is familiar to her.

“I’ve got to keep lying…” Alphys says. Frisk thinks for a moment while they shoot some bombs and dodge the blasts. Then they pull out their phone, and call Alphys. She hears her phone ring and starts to sweat. Suddenly, the memories come flooding back! “No, that’s not true! My friends like me! And I like you, too!”

**Now Undyne’s turn!** I demand. Frisk turns again, and finds Undyne waiting for them, her face covered.

*Fake hit!* Frisk thinks. They dart forward, and tap Undyne on the shoulder, the same way they did when we were at her house. Something about the way they fight is familiar to her…

“All humans will die!” Undyne says. She tosses us a spear and turns our Soul green. We almost get hit, but I remember her fight as fun and manage to make it out okay.

“Undyne, teach me how to cook!” Frisk asks. She doesn’t know why, but she kind of wants to teach them how…

“You’re our real enemy,” She says. Frisk thinks and then decides to give her a big smile, like they remember she likes to do. Suddenly, her memories are flooding back! “Well, some humans are OK, I guess!” She grins.

We go back to Asriel happily, and feel something resonating within him.

**Strangely, as your friends remembered you… Something else began resonating in the Soul, stronger and stronger. It seems that there’s still one last person that needs to be saved.**

*But who…? Suddenly, they realize. I smile and we say it together.*

“Asriel!” We call.

“Huh? What are you doing...!?” He asks.

*I’m talking now.*

Alright.

“Long ago, a human fell into the underground,” I start. “The human, fallen and injured, called out. Eventually they were found by a monster child. The monster child helped the human, and brought them home. The monsters welcomed and accepted the human, for they were their hopes and dreams. The monster had given the human a family.”

Asriel looks down, eyes closed. “Wh… what did you do...? What’s this feeling...? What’s happening to me? No! NO! I don’t need ANYONE!” His expression turns to anger, and he unleashes a volley of magic attacks, too many to ever hope of dodging.

“Asriel, we can be a family again!” I try.

“STOP IT! Get away from me! Do you hear me!? I’ll tear you apart!” Asriel yells, and sends more magic. They’ve dwindled considerably, and are easily avoided this time.
“Asriel, you don’t have to destroy anything!” I say firmly.

“...” Asriel’s quiet for a little bit. “... Chara... Do you know why I’m doing this...? Why I keep fighting to keep you around...?” His voice breaks. He throws some fire, but, similar to Toriel’s, they actively avoid hurting us.

“I’m doing this... Because you’re special, Chara. You’re the only one that understands me. You’re the only one that’s any fun to play with anymore. ... No... That’s not JUST it. I... I... I’m doing this because I care about you, Chara!”

A tear streams down Frisk’s face, but I can’t tell who’s it is. It’s probably both of us. I try to speak, but my throat feels stuffed.

“I care about you more than anybody else! ... I’m not ready for this to end. I’m not ready for you to leave. I’m not ready to say goodbye to someone like you again... So please... STOP doing this! AND JUST LET ME WIN!!!” Asriel throws his head back and cries into the void, and I collapse onto my knees. He fires an inescapable laser from his hands, but we can’t die. Not when we’ve come this far! Our HP starts going into decimals, refusing to hit zero.

“STOP IT!!” Asriel screams. “STOP IT NOW!!!” He stops attacking. “... Chara... I’m so alone, Chara... I’m so afraid, Chara... Chara, I... I...” There’s a flash of bright light, and the Asriel I knew stands in front of us.

“Asriel...” I sniff, voice breaking. I... can’t do this anymore. I turn control over to Frisk, who stumbles as they recieve control. Asriel unabashedly cries into the sleeve of his sweater, trying to hide his face.

“I’m so sorry,” He whimpers, wiping his face. “I always was a crybaby, wasn’t I, Chara?”

“Um, I...” Frisk says, uncertain how to continue.

“... I know,” Asriel says. “You’re not really Chara, are you? Chara’s been gone for a long time. ... Um... what... What IS your name?” Asriel asks.

“Frisk,” Frisk answers. I hide in the back of their mind, just there enough to listen to what he says.

“... ‘Frisk’? That’s... A nice name. ... Frisk. I haven’t felt like this for a long time. As a flower, I was soulless. I lacked the power to love other people. However, with everyone’s Souls inside me... I not only have my own compassion back... But I can feel every other monsters’ as well. They all care about each other so much. And... They care about you, too, Frisk. ... I wish I could tell you how everyone feels about you... Papyrus... Sans... Alphys... Undyne... Toriel. Monsters are weird. Even though they barely know you... It feels like they all really love you. Haha. ... Frisk... I... I understand if you can’t forgive me. I understand if you hate me. I acted so strange and horrible. I hurt you. I hurt so many people. Friends, family, bystanders... There’s no excuse for what I’ve done.”

“... Asriel, of course I forgive you!” Frisk says.

“Wh... what?” Asriel asks. “... Frisk, come on. You’re... You’re gonna make me cry again.”

**You and me both, buddy.**

“... besides...” Asriel starts, looking down, “even if you do forgive me... I can’t keep these souls inside of me. The least I can do is return them. But first... There’s something I have to do. Right now, I can feel everyone’s hearts beating as one. They’re all burning with the same desire. With everyone’s power... With everyone’s determination... It’s time for monsters... To finally go free.” I
smile warmly at him, and nod. He rises into the air, feet hanging down and arms outstretched. All of the Souls, monster and human, fan out before him and overwhelm the void with a bright light.

... The barrier was destroyed.

Asriel lands gently on the ground and turns to us slowly. “Frisk… I have to go now. Without the power of everyone’s Souls… I can’t keep maintaining this form. In a little while… I’ll turn back into a flower. I’ll stop being ‘myself.’ I’ll stop being able to feel love again. So., Frisk. It’s best if you just forget about me, OK?”

“No, absolutely not!” I say in shock. Frisk takes the backseat again.

“Just go be with the people who love you!” Asriel urges. I sigh in exasperation and make a… probably rash decision.

… I didn’t want to have to do this, but… I step away from Frisk and stand next to them, smiling shakily. “[…Um… Surprise?]” I say, holding out my arms.

“…I… Chara?” Asriel squeaks in disbelief. His eyes grow huge. “H-how are you alive!?” A smile slowly spreading on his face, he takes a hesitant step towards me.

“I’m… not alive,” I wince. This isn’t going according to plan. Asriel’s face falls.

“B-but, you’re here, and…” He stammers.

“I’m a ghost. I’ve, uh, been possessing Frisk,” I explain, looking away.

“…Oh. So you’re…”

“Yeah. Dead,” I say bluntly. His eyes widen at the bluntness, so I try to amend. “I mean, it’s not the worst thing, it’s kind of cool, I can float, see!?” I float above him in a small circle.

“But that’s my fault!” Asriel blurts out. I stop, taken aback.

“…What? How is it your fault? I’m the one who made the plan!” I protest.

“No, I’m the one who didn’t follow through! Neither of us would have died if I had just gotten over myself!” Asriel argues.

“Um, may I give an opinion?” Frisk asks, raising a hand. Asriel and I turn toward them in surprise, having almost forgot they were there. “...I think it was both of your faults.”

“What?” I ask in surprise.

“Let me explain!” Frisk hurriedly says, “I mean, both of you made some questionable decisions, but… I mean, you were both just kids. People make mistakes, and neither of you were immune to that. And sure, it had some larger consequences, but… I mean… I may not know the full story, but… I don’t think either of you should tear yourselves up about it!” They say, their face scrunching up.

“Frisk has a valid point…” Asriel says after a moment.

“Yeah, they tend to do that…” I mutter.

“Frisk… Thanks for beating me,” Asriel says, his face brightening up a little. “Thanks for not letting Flowey win.”
“Of course! What else was I supposed to do?” Frisk says, blinking in confusion.

“I don’t know, but… Just, thanks. Without you, I don’t think either of us would be here now.” Asriel pauses. “But that doesn’t change the fact that… I have to go soon,” Asriel says, not looking at me or Frisk. “I’m still going to turn back into Flowey.”

“But… you can’t leave,” I frown. “I just got you back!”

“And I just started getting to know you!” Frisk says, backing me up. Asriel takes a step back, holding up his hands.

“But I can’t stay!” He says. “I can’t! I have to go!”

“But what will I do without you?” I ask, pleading with my eyes.

“Please, don’t make this harder! You know I don’t have a choice!” His eyes well up again, and there’s a crack in his voice. And… he may be a crybaby, but… He’s still my brother.

I sniff, but slowly try to accept that this will be the last time I see him. “I’ll miss you…”

He laughs pitifully, and turns around. “I’ll miss you too, Chara,” He says, taking a step forward. “…Bye…”

“Wait! One last thing!” I say, grabbing his shoulder. He turns in surprise, and I roughly pull him into a hug. He’s stiff at first, taken by surprise, but then he wraps his arms around me. He lets out a sob, and holds me tighter, burying his face in my shoulder. I do the same, tears streaming down my face.

I hear a sniff behind us, and remember Frisk. I extract one of my arms to pull them into the hug, too. “...ha… I don’t want to let go…” I whisper. We hug for a long time. At some point we fall over and continue holding each other on the ground, tears coming freely from all ends. Asriel ends up letting go first, having to slowly untangle himself.

“Frisk… You’re… You’re going to do a great job, okay?” Asriel says, wiping his face with his sleeve again. “No matter what you do… Everyone will be there for you, okay?” He pauses for a moment, looking at us with a mixture of emotions displayed on his face. “Well… My time’s running out. Goodbye.”

“Please don’t go…” I whimper. He pauses, his back to Frisk and I. He takes a deep, shaking breath.

“By the way… Chara. Take care of Frisk, okay?” And just like that, Asriel’s gone. Forever. I collapse onto the ground. There’s nothing else to do now, after all. There’s nothing… at all… Frisk lays down next to me, and I roll over into them, combining myself.

Frisk, overcome by the combined strength of our emotional exhaustion, falls asleep. Blissful, silent, dreamless sleep.

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“Frisk!” A voice calls.”This is all just a bad dream…! Please…! Wake up!”

... Toriel… Frisk thinks groggily. I open their eyes to find we’re laying on the ground in Asgore’s castle, surrounded by friendly faces. They sit up.

“Oh! You are awake!” The same voice says. Frisk turns to see Toriel standing by with a smile. “Thank goodness!”
“W-we were so worried...!” Frisk turns to find Alphys. “It felt like you were out forever!”

Next to Alphys stands Undyne. “Yeah! Any longer and I would have freaked out! Tell us next time you decide to take a nap, okay!?”

“yeah. you made papyrus cry like a baby.” Sans says.

“What!! I DIDN’T CRY!!! I DON’T CRY!!” Papyrus protests. “I JUST… CAUGHT SOMETHING IN MY EYE.”

“What did you catch?” Sans asks.

“TEARS!!!” Papyrus says, almost crying again.

“Now, now,” Asgore says from Frisk’s right. “The important part is that Frisk is alright. Here, Frisk. Why not drink some tea? It’ll make you feel better.”

“Errr… Why not give them some space first?” Toriel suggests. “They must be very exhausted. Though, from what, I am not certain. Frisk… we do not remember exactly what happened. There was a flower… and then, everything went white. But now the barrier is gone. When you are ready, we will all return to the surface. It seems the door to the east will lead us there now. But before then… Perhaps you might want to… Take a walk? You can say goodbye to all of your wonderful friends. Do as you wish. We will all wait for you here.”

“I’d rather talk to you!” Frisk tells Toriel. She laughs.

“Hello, Frisk!” Toriel greets good-naturedly. “Alphys upgraded my phone. I am having a lot of fun with the ‘texting’ feature. Sans, ‘check out’ this one.”

Sans looks down at his phone. “oh man, tori… that’s brutal.” Frisk resists the urge to look at the phone, and respects their privacy.

“I CAN’T BELIEVE THE QUEEN HAS RETURNED…” Papyrus says in wonder. “AND ALSO THAT SHE’S A HUGE DORK!!! YOU TWO ARE TWO FEET AWAY FROM EACH OTHER!!! WHY ARE YOU TEXTING!!”

“Worry not, Papyrus,” Toriel says. “We are texting for a good reason.”

“WHY IS THAT,” Papyrus asks.

“well. cause we’re huge dorks,” Sans winks.

“Sans, please, do not say that,” Toriel says. “You are not a dork. You are more of a bonehead!”

“HAHAHA, WOW! THOSE PUNS ARE EVEN LESS FUNNY COMING FROM HER!” Papyrus laughs in disbelief.

“then why are you smiling?” Sans asks.

“IT’S A PITY SMILE!” Papyrus says fiercely. Frisk smiles at them all, and finds Sans trying to catch their eye.

“frisk, tori was telling me how she made b’scotch pie for you,” Sans says when Frisk steps towards him.

“Oh, I should make it for everyone sometime!” Toriel suggests happily. Asgore looks up from
thinking and smiles, probably remembering what the pie tasted like. That’s what I’m doing, anyway.

“O-oh, that sounds really good!” Alphys says quietly.

“COOKING???” Papyrus asks. “CAN I HELP?”

“Wait a second!!” Undyne demands. “Can I help too!?”

“Certainly! It would be fun to cook together!” Toriel smiles.

“On second thought, maybe I’ll o-oder a pizza…” Alphys mumbles. Frisk giggles.

“SO, ASGORE… HOW ABOUT MAKING ME A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL GUARD?” Papyrus asks.

“Well, Papyrus, now that the war is over… We might not need the royal guard anymore,” Asgore explains gently.


While Papyrus laments, Undyne starts up a conversation with Alphys. “So, Alphys. What do you want to do now that we’re all free? We have the whole world to explore now.”

“W-well, of course I’m going to go out and…” Alphys hesitates. “Um… No, I should be honest!! I’m gonna stay inside and watch anime like a total loser!”

“That’s the spirit!” Papyrus cheers. “EVERYONE!!! A CELEBRATION!!! TO BEING LOSERS!!”

“Heh,” Undyne laughs. “Papyrus has the right idea. Losing to Frisk is the best thing to ever happen to me. So I’m glad that we…” Asgore looks at her pointedly. “Huh? What is it, Asgore?”

“Um… what’s an… anime?” Asgore asks hesitantly, as if he’s not sure whether he wants to know the answer.

“Oh My God?” Alphys whispers under her breath. “Frisk. Please. Help me explain what anime is to Asgore.” Frisk looks at her blankly. She sighs, and stops whispering so that Asgore can hear. “Y-you see, it’s like a cartoon, but…”

“With swords!” Frisk adds helpfully.

“So it’s like a cartoon… But with swords?” Asgore clarifies. Frisk nods wisely, Alphys nods embarrassedly. “Golly! That sounds neato! Where is this? Where can I see the Anime.”

“H-hold on, uh…” Alphys says, fumbling around with her phone. “I think I have some on my phone. Here, I-look at this!” She holds out her phone, and Asgore looks at it with wide eyes. “... Oh, uh… Um… That’s the… That’s the wrong… Uh, nevermind!” She says, quickly stowing the phone back in her pocket.

“Golly,” Asgore says in wonder. “Were those two robots…”

“... Kissing?” Undyne asks, having looked over Alphys’s shoulder.

“Boy! Technology sure is something, isn’t it?” Asgore says wistfully.
“Eheheh... yeah! It sure is!” Alphys laughs nervously. She beckons Frisk closer with her hand. “Psst, Frisk! Um, you’ve gotta tell me! D… do you think Asgore and Toriel are…? Uh, ever gonna get back together?”


...I hope they do, but I feel like they won’t.

That’s not helpful! “Um…” Frisk hesitates. “Yeah?”

Alphys blushes. “Y-yyeah!!! Yeah, that’s what I hope, too. Just think about how cute they must have been together. It’s quickly becoming my number one ship of all time.”

No, I’d say you and Undyne are the number one ship of all time, I think. Frisk snorts and puts a hand over their mouth.

“Tori and Gorey…” Alphys says dreamily, not noticing a thing. “My… My old boss and his ex-wife. …Uh, that sounds a lot less cool all of a sudden.” Frisk smiles, and ends up sitting down next to Asgore.

“Howdy, Frisk,” Asgore greets. “Sorry about almost trying to take your Soul. I feel very bad about it. I hope we can still be pals.”

“Hey, don’t worry about it, Asgore!” Undyne cuts in. “I think everybody’s tried to kill Frisk at least once.”

“Oh… I see!” Asgore says. “In that case, I’m not sorry, Frisk.”

“Asgore! That’s not what I meant!” Undyne chides.

...The only ones here who haven’t tried to kill me are Sans and Alphys.

...Debateable. Alphys set traps and puzzles and killer robots, didn’t she?

I guess so...

Papyrus, on the other hand… I get the feeling that he couldn’t kill you even if you let him. He just locked us up in the garage.

Yeah, I guess you’re right! So Papyrus and Sans are now my favorites.

Hey, what about Mom and Dad?

...They’re not my mom and dad.

Not yet, anyway. Just you wait! … Unless… You have parents on the surface?

... Well… No, I don’t.

Really?

Yeah, I’ll tell you the full story sometime. Not now, though. Let’s just go to the surface for now. Frisk beckons Asgore with their hand, standing from the ground. Asgore takes the hint and leads everyone out of the caverns.
Frisk ends up being last in the procession. They pause before going through the exit.

_If you leave here, your adventure will really be over. Your friends will meet you out of the underground._

...I'm ready. Frisk takes a deep breath, and steps through. They blink in the morning sunlight, as the sun is just rising.

The sun… How long has it been since I’ve seen the sun? … There’s no way to know. I had been in the underground for nearly a year before I died… and who knows how long I’ve been dead? Either way, it’s been forever since I’ve seen the sun. It’s… nice. And warm, and golden across the trees and dirt that make up the surface world.

“Oh my…” Toriel says, voicing my thoughts.

“Isn’t it beautiful, everyone?” Asgore asks.

“Wow… it’s e-even better than on TV,” Alphys says in wonder. “WAY better! Better than I ever imagined!”

“Frisk, you LIVE with this!?” Undyne asks in disbelief. “The sunlight is so nice! And the air is so fresh! I really feel alive!”

“HEY SANS?” Papyrus asks. “WHAT’S THAT GIANT BALL?”

“we call that ‘the sun,’ my friend,” Sans explains.

“THAT’S THE SUN!? WOWIE!!! I CAN’T BELIEVE I’M FINALLY MEETING THE SUN!!!”

Papyrus exclaims.

“I could stand here and watch this for hours…” Asgore says.

“Yes, it is beautiful, is it not?” Toriel asks. “But we should really think about what comes next.”

“Oh, right. Everyone… This is the beginning of a bright new future. An era of peace between humans and monsters,” Asgore says. “Frisk. I have something to ask of you. Will you act as our ambassador to the humans?”

Woah. Should I!?

I mean. I can’t think of anyone better suited, so…

“...Yeah!” Frisk says with enthusiasm.


Papyrus says, and runs down the hill towards civilization. I wince.

“welp,” Sans says. “someone’s gotta keep him from getting into trouble. see you guys.” Sans then walks back into the tunnel we just emerged from, continuing to defy all laws of physics and logic. I scowl after him. But… He’s not that bad, to be honest. Given time we could be almost… Friends? It’s not really something to think about right now, but later…

Undyne watches him go with dismay. “Man, do I have to do EVERYTHING?” She says in exasperation. “Papyrus, WAIT!!!” She then sprints off after him.
“Hey, Undyne!! Wait up!!” Alphys says, then hurriedly follows. And then it was just us, Toriel, and Asgore. We stand in silence for a moment.

“Whoops,” Asgore finally says. He then doesn’t do anything else for a little while longer. “Uh, should I do something?” He asks. Toriel just scowls at him. “Well, gotta go!” He says, and rushes off.

Toriel turns to watch him leave. “It seems that everyone is quite eager to set off.” She looks down at us, and we end up looking up at her. “Frisk… You came from this world, right…?” Frisk nods. “So you must have a place to return to, do you not? What will you do now?” She asks.

Frisk frowns, thinking. “I… want to stay with you!”

“What?” Toriel asks in surprise. “Frisk… You really are a funny child. If you had said that earlier, none of this would have happened. It is a good thing you took so long to change your mind. Hee hee hee… Well… I suppose. If you really do not have any other place to go… I will do my best to take care of you, for as long as you need. All right?” Frisk nods. “Now, come along. Everyone is waiting for us!”

She takes our hand, and we smile as she leads us down the mountain and to our new beginning.

**The End …?**

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**Chapter End Notes**

Here it is! The last chapter! I mean, there’ll be an epilogue. Sometime soon. Not too soon though… But yeah!! It's done!

Now's normally the time where people write really sappy things, but... I'm not really the type? So... Just, thanks soo much for reading!

I'm going to edit this pretty hardcore within the next couple days, because I feel like this was rushed (I wrote almost all of it last night) and I don't feel like it was... satisfying. Which sucks. Anyways, I'd loooovvveee it if you could tell me what you would want to see/ what I should change, and I'll probably add it in, or put it in the epilogue.

Critique, tips, advice, general feedback, it's all really really appreciated!!!

EDIT: Bam, it's edited! And it didn't take forever! If you need to, reread the section right after Asriel's fight, when he becomes a kid again. I got feedback that ended up helping my write exactly what I needed, which was awesome! So yeah, it's better now!!

Please [drop by the archive and comment](https://example.com) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!