EX127. That is the marking you are given with. You had a name once, but it has since been stripped from your mind. Since the escape of monsters to the surface, everything fell apart for you. Kidnapped by an unknown organization, you are at their mercy, or lack of. Experimented, tortured, raped, and fighting to stay alive, you wish for death to come. You beg, plead for the next injection to kill you, for the monster across the hall to beat you to death. But it never came. Years later, a child is dropped into your cell by the name of Chara. Within your soul you know you must keep the child alive, from succumbing to the darkness that seeps within the concrete walls. The countdown for your escape begins.

*Based on the Underswap universe*

First undertale/underswap fanfiction! I know it is not good but I hope everyone enjoys the work :) This fanfiction revolves around a lot of topics I wish to keep secret as to not ruin the story. It is for mature audiences so please proceed with caution. Title may/may not change later in the series.
Heat strokes your lower abdomen, the knife slicking through the skin like butter. There is a lull of peace, the pain not quite registering. Something begins to drip down the sides of your stomach, gathering into a sticky pool under the arch of your back. And then, you feel it. Gurgling screams struggle against the bind, falling onto deaf ears as more incisions cut deep into the flesh. Searing pain blooms with each cut, blood quickly filling the examination table. They will not let you die, you are far too important in the research to measly be thrown away. You turn your head, glancing at the husks in a small accumulated pile. Those who did not survive the newest determination testing. Fear permanently etched onto their still faces as the final moments ate them alive. They will be thrown away later. You close your eyes, hissing as a prick of pain invades your being. You knew they had pulled out your soul, keeping the healing effects of minimal green magic to starve off the infections.

“Dose of Determination 8B. 20milliliters. 80% pure human determination. I am about to inject test subject EX127 through direct soul insertion.” The unfocused voice mutters into his recording device, placing the hunk of metal down on a nearby table. There is a quiet ‘ting’ as his finger erases the bubbles from the vile. He does not stand near your field of sight, but you do not have to see him to know who will be preforming the experiment. His footsteps near the table, the polished black shoes click expertly across the concrete floor. The ‘swish’ of fabric rubs against his body, hiding his normal clothes from the bloody massacre.

“Are you ready EX127?” His voice is devoid of emotion, but he still makes pleasantries as though you have a choice. You growl, swinging your left arm up in a lame attempt to break the magic bindings. The doctor chuckles, popping the plastic cap off the needle.

“You continue to amuse me EX127.” The needle pierces through the weak barrier of the soul, causing a searing white light to cover your vision. There may be a scream or two, but it is hidden under a static sound. Slowly around the edges of white, red begins to invade, bleeding in like a sick horror movie. There is extra pressure applied to your wrists as you thrash, your body flaring up from the inside. Determination explodes through your veins, deconstructing, and rebuilding your body. You can feel your soul cracking under the pressure and strain of the newest batch.

‘Maybe, just maybe, it will kill me this time.’

Your breathing begins to slow, the lungs shattering under an invisible weight. Your heart thumps painfully, desperately trying to get the blood out to the wounded areas and the brain. For a moment, the white light vanishes under a veil of darkness. There is a faint high frequency sound fading into the background as peace claims you for the moment.

You gasp, the blinding hospital-like light glaring from above. The beeping resumes somewhere within the room, echoing off the concrete. Sweat coats every inch of your body, clinging like a lifeline.

“Incredible!” The doctor whispers in amazement, scratching some notes onto his damn clipboard. You pant, gulping air in greedily into your lungs. They feel slightly larger, taking in full breaths rather than shallow half breaths.

“EX 127 successfully absorbs Determination 8B. Soul appears healthy and strong yet color remains the host color.” The doctor clicks his recording device off, sauntering over to hover at you. You growl, feeling your magic ebb forward. The cuffs around your wrist ignite, searing the flesh below it. The doctor sighs, shaking his head.
“You should know better by now EX127.” He chastises, beginning the normal wellness routine.

“EX127 appears to have acquired a stronger set of lungs due to Determination 8B. Heart rate is slower than an average human. Skin appears paler and without blemish. Wounds completely stitched up as though not afflicted prior to.” He shines a flashlight into your eyes, prying them open when they wish to close.

“Eye sight appears to have slightly sharpened but that is to be determined. Eye color however is noticeably different. Perhaps the Determination 8B affected the part of the soul for this color change. Eyes appear metallic blue with red creeping from the ring around the iris. Blends about half way to the pupil.” The metal device snaps off, the doctor’s voice ceasing immediately. A few more sounds of scratching on the clipboard.

“Very interesting indeed my dear. You never fail to produce incredible results.” Black hands reach out, grabbing your chin toward their gaze. Golden eyes stare back through the hood, a sickening smile splinters across their hidden face. The fingers clench tightly against your jaw, the flesh-bone like mixture holds an unknown feeling. Like hugging a dog bone with layers of saran wrap.

“My little prodigy.”
You shiver as you come to, your body splayed against your concrete room. A draft fills the air around you with dread, but you ignore it. You climb into your uncomfortable cot, hiding beneath the itchy grey wool blanket. Six hundred eighty-seven says. That is how long you have lived in captivity. Grey walls on grey concrete, the hum of the flickering lightbulb your only friend. A clock in the hallway ticks, each second louder than the last. Various forms of screaming and begging filter down the hallway, reminding everyone of their place, of what is to come. Their first breath of “life” or the last breath of death. You breathe in a slow, steady breath, inhaling the smells of sterilizing alcohol and decaying flesh. You exhale slowly, washing the noises away for a moment. Your fingers begin to toy with the bits of hair left on your head, relishing in the feeling.

‘Remember, you will escape one day and when you do, they will all burn in hell.’

The tumblers in the door creak, the knob groaning loudly under the demanding fingers. There is not much time for you to sit up before the door swings open, thrashing against the wall. A familiar “doctoral” face encases the frame, the light behind her casts her face into the shadows of darkness. In her hand, a small lump of sorts. Their body hangs limply in the captor’s hands, their hands and feet dangling like a rag doll.

“Get in there!” She screams, throwing the body of flesh to the floor. It vibrates upon impact, the sounds of their skull reverberating against the ground fills your ears. You growl at the woman, deep and threatening. You see her stiffen for a fraction of a moment, a slip of weakness before her cocky attitude slips back into perfect place.

“Just because you are his favorite does not mean you are of any standing.” She growls, slamming the metal door behind her. Her heels click against the floor quickly, the sound of another metal door opens within a few seconds. She barks at someone, the sound of some thrashing as the newest capture’s whimpers fill the hallway. You bow your head for a moment, wishing for the person to finally find their peace out of here.

The pile of flesh coughs roughly, drawing your attention back to them. Their coughs come out raspy, either from a dry, irritated throat or something within their lungs. As they cough, they hold their body together with bloody arms, the green shirt torn nearly to shreds. You can almost hear the skeleton beneath the flesh rattle as it tries to remain together. Brown locks cover most of their face, the crude chop and various directional pieces indicating some sort of struggle. Blood coats their clothing, staining the yellow stripe along their center orange and their pants a deep rust brown.

You carefully stand up from the bed, taking calculated movements toward the body. For all you know, it could be a deranged new experiment still riding on their fight response. You crouch a foot from them, watching carefully as they pull their body into a sitting position. Ruby eyes stare back and for a moment, fear tingles down your spine. You have seen red eyes before and it is never a good sign. Red eyes indicate someone who successfully fused with determination. The determination slowly erodes the body until it implodes on itself or the host loses their mind to the tainted effects.

‘It is…just a kid.’

Red blotches of dried blood coat the child’s face, blending with the flush of pink across their cheekbones. An ugly shade of purple covers one of their eyes, swelling it to an uncomfortable level. Faint tear streaks coat the sides of their face, their trails nearly hidden by the smudges of blood, dirt, and broken vessels.
“Hi.” They rasp out. Their voice comes out scratchy and dry, but it holds a faint air of femininity within it. Their Adams apple bobs uncomfortably, trying to swallow the smallest bit of saliva their mouth can produce. You continue to stare at them, quietly examining the damage.

“I...I’m Ch...ar...a”

“Chara.” You watch the child flinch at your tone, cursing silently inside. Due to the rigorous testing, your body is toned like a well-oiled machine despite the frail outer coat. People mistaken you for a soft-spoken individual, but the moment you talk...

You lean forward slightly, raising a quizzical eyebrow at the child.

“Do you know why you are here?” They shake their head side to side, wincing as the bruises covering their neck ache in protest. It is a decent size, nearly as large as a six-foot man’s palm.

“Do you remember the events prior to this?” Again, they shake their head ‘no’. You let out a breathy sigh, standing to your full height. You turn, heading towards the mattress where you keep your stash of valuables. On the surface, it appears to be a poorly put together lumpy bed made of the thinnest of materials possible. There are tares and spots of blood barely hidden by the cheap white sheet covering it. You stick your hand into the furthest tare, feeling the cool plastic brush your hands.

“Do…do you know what they will do to…?” The child leaves the question hanging in the air, the fear eating away the rest of the unspoken question. You grip the plastic, practically ripping it from the mattress. Small bits of yellowing stuffing attaches to the plastic upon departure, fluttering onto the bed. You say nothing to them, merely walking toward them once more with the circular white plastic container. You feel the magic humming within, your body responding to it by infusing a small dose of your own into the concoction.

“What…is that?” They mumble, their voice trembling at the end. You crouch down within a foot once more, unscrewing the cap. Galaxy looking gel jiggles back, the flecks of green and blue shimmering in the dull light. A speck of your magic adds another star to the ever-expanding constellation within the container.

You slide your finger through a small glob of gel, shivering slightly as the cold intrudes through your skin.

“This will help heal your wounds faster. They do not know I have this and I would prefer to keep it that way.” You point the goo finger at the child, giving them a level stare. Chara leans forward, pursing their lips in contemplation. Their lips look pale, like a corpse with cracks running through every seam. They look up at you, determination flashing through their eyes as their lips encase your finger. Chara flinches, but continues to suck the gel off your finger without complaint. You snicker, pulling it out of their pursed lips with a ‘pop’.

“Bitter right? Shit tastes like ass but the properties well…” You shrug, capping the material once more. You notice immediately the child’s complexion changing. Their skin appears to radiate with a golden glow rather than the sickly sunflower color before. The bruising colors begin their transgression until they cease to exist all together. Although the gel will not heal all the knife wounds if they are coated, it will leave a few with nearly invisible scaring. You stand once more, placing the gel back into its hiding spot. You rummage under the bed for a spare change of clothes, whispering quiet apologies to your previous roommate. They were not as little as Chara, but their clothing should fit the child just fine.

You feel fingers snake around your midsection, the pressure weak compared to the bone breaking hold of other experiments. Your body stiffens, the magic humming to life under a possible threat.
“Thank you.” Chara chokes out, nuzzling into your back. You sigh, dispelling your magic immediately. Wet drops pierce through your only clean set of clothing but you let it slide, allowing the child to have their breakdown. If only someone was as nice to you when you first arrived.

They back off after a few moments, quietly accepting the clothing. You turn away, allowing them at least this much privacy. You blow out a frustrated breath, combing your fingers through the short locks.

‘This is not good. If they are kidnapping children now it can only mean…’

Something chimes within the room, the trickle of sound appearing louder than it should. You slowly turn toward the kid, eyes widening as they fumble with something hidden on their person. A simple little tracker blinks back, the red light flashing lowly against the black box. Small enough not to be detected by common folk but with a trained eye…

Chara looks at you sadly, their hand throwing the broken device across the room.

“Kid…you…”

“I got myself captured for a purpose.” They mutter quietly, their feet scuffing at the cold floor. “Monsters have been going missing at an alarming rate as well as some humans. We wanted to see if…maybe…”

You dart across the small space, slapping the child hard across the face. The smack echoes, the brunt of the attack tingling under your heated palm. They do not move, tears falling over their swelling cheek. You grasp their chin, directing their ruby gaze to your fierce eyes.

“You are a child. You shall never put yourself in this much danger ever again. Do. I. Make. Myself. Clear.” They shutter, their emotions flickering with each passing second across their gaze. For a moment, anger settles in, but it quickly shunts to the back of the line.

“You have no idea what they plan to do with you kid. How much they will make you suffer. How many lives you must take just to survive.” You shove their face away, backing up from their body.

“But my Uncles will surely come find us once they…”

“You don’t get it, do you?! They will not find you! This place, these walls, cannot be penetrated from the outside! You are stuck here just as much as I am and no one will save you!” You growl, throwing a solid punch into the wall. It vibrates your bones, bruising the knuckles beneath the skin, but otherwise comes across as a dull twinge. You stand there for a moment, pushing back the tears that threaten to fall from your eyes.

“No one will save you…”
Two months come and go, the kid not once saying more than asked. They come back to the cell
everyday bloodied and beaten, new bruises to cover the old. Each day, a piece of their soul slowly
succumbs to the darkness within as each new body falls to their death. They rock constantly as more
creatures scream, attempting to drown the noise out with humming. It irritates the living hell out of
you, but the change of sounds relaxes something within your own soul.

Every other day the “doctors” come to gather you, keeping a safe distance as they slap on the cuffs.
Chara whimpers as they drag you away, but you offer a smirk in their direction. Some days they kept
the child near you as they worked, allowing your screams to imprint on their brain. Other days they
showed some mercy, allowing the rooms to be the furthest away. Today, they release you early,
throwing your bloody body onto the concrete of your room. You gasp, gritting your teeth as an
exposed rib grates against the floor. They have pumped your body with some concoction again,
refusing your body to bleed out. Yet they leave you wide open, exposed to the other potential
infections this place could bring.

‘Cocky little bastards. Wait ‘til their boss catches wind of it.’

You grasp under the bed, sighing with relief as the metal box slides out with your hand. You pop
open the front, grinning at the sight of the small needle point and antibacterial wipes. You diligently
clean the needle, using the other side of the wipe to clean around the gaping rib cage wound.

‘This is going to hurt like a bitch.’

A popping sound fills your ears, your scream not far behind it. Magic begins to cover the bone,
lulling it to a dull throb as it begins mending the wound. A few splatters of blood trickle out, but
otherwise it is an easy fix. Willing a small amount of magic forward, you thread it through the
needle, watching the flecks of skin color bubbles weave through the robin egg blue color.
Occasionally a fleck of red runs through, disappearing as quickly as it came. The “doctor” says you
are an odd soul indeed and you are inclined to agree. A theory the big honcho said was something
about my parents being uniquely bestowed as well, or something like that.

Shaking your mind out of your thoughts, you pierce the flesh just outside of the wound, mending it
together like two pieces of cloth. As the thread weaves through the skin, it begins to seal the jagged
line, replicating more skin cells below to replace the broken.

It is then one of the “doctors” throw open the door, tossing the child in carelessly like a sack of
garbage. They prepare for the impact, bracing, and tumbling to distribute the damage. The “doctor”
leaves, throwing a food tray in before slamming the door behind them.

“Rough day?” You mumble, snapping the thread with your teeth.

“Mmm…” They gurgle out, spitting up a healthy portion of blood. You sigh, giving them a ‘come
here’ motion. Chara crawls over, propping up against the wall. ‘They did a number on them today.’

Blood gathers at the edge of their mouth, staining their lips with a dark crimson. A rather impressive
gash streaks across their forehead, the blood crusting with their hair and dead skin cells. Their arms
are bruised with a few nicks from a blade but nothing major. You begin your work at the forehead,
summoning the thread with ease. They wince under you as you pierce the skin, but say nothing
more. You snap the thread with your teeth, dispelling the healing properties into the child.
"All right shirt up." They sigh but comply, carefully lifting the tattered remains of their old clothing up. There appears to be a fractured rib beneath the surface, but otherwise the child is unharmed. You frown, feeling slightly unhinged at the lack of serious surface wounds. They normally fucked the child up much like every other experiment. Drawing a blade or beating them into submission, filling their body with drugs or determination.

You hum, resetting the fractured rib back into place.

‘To leave with a few scrapes and a head wound is not normal at all unless...’

The gears within your mind begin to turn, a dark realization dawning as the child looks away. Tears pool at the corners of their eyes, their face flush with embarrassment. Blood trickles down a certain nether region, staining their private area a dark crimson.

“Take off your pants.” You whisper, carefully pulling the shirt back down. Their body begins to shake, their head swaying back and forth. Little pudgy fingers grasp at the hem of their shirt, refusing to let go.

“They raped you... didn’t they.” A distress sound rumbles within their throat, the tears quickly cascading down their face. You blow out a sigh of frustration and sympathy. Of course, it was only a matter of time where they use the tactic most feared by all. They preform it when they feel the experiment is ‘compliant’ enough. It either instills fear into those who live or breaks down the weaker. Still to rape a child so young...

“I need to look at you... Make sure everything is in working order.” You mumble, carefully reaching a hand out to brush the bits of hair out of their face. They shake weakly, afraid to give up that part of them. You blow out a frustrated sigh, trying to touch the child as to not trigger any memories. They squirm within their spot, twisting their body out of your grasp. At this rate, there is only one thing you could do.

Magic flows beneath the surface, the robin color taking over the beige. Your body straightens instinctively, your lungs inhaling the sterile air as your magic settles in your throat.

“Sleep.” Their body slumps against the wall, their breathing evening out to a blissful slumber. You close your eyes, slowly counting to five before picking the child off the floor. Guilt gnaws at your soul as you lay them in your shared cot.

‘Sorry kid. This was the only way.’

You feel generally bad for using a strong ability on the child, breaking the deal between the two of you.

‘I am sure they will forgive me. It was justified to check their well-being.’

You carefully tuck a strand behind their ear, thinking of the first few nights Chara slept within the cell. The kid would beg for it during those nights when the screams overcome their senses, creating an almost permanent adrenaline rush. You told them of the potential side effects but their determination would always win in the end. They would thank you in the morning with a groggy smile and flustered appearance.

You carefully pull their pants down, noting the torn flower panties grasping weakly at their hips. Hand print bruising covers their hips, crushing the crest of the bone. Thick slightly translucent liquid clings in between their inner thigh, leading up to the slit opening. Some of it has already began to crust, suctioning itself to her legs.
‘It’s a girl.’

You tear the hem of your shirt, listening to the brittle fabric tearing in a straight line. The off-white cloth drowns out her naturally beautiful skin color as you wipe her, your soul screaming for retribution. The lips to her opening appear swollen, to the point of turning a bruised purple color. Where her clit should be protected, the skin around it illuminates a deeper plum color. You wince, examining the demolished clit that is most likely devoid of sensations.

‘Bastards…they will pay when I get my hands on them.’

You huff, tossing the cloth haphazardly into the singular crumbling toilet against the wall.

‘The outside of her looks a little cleaner with the crud removed, almost passible for normal.’

You sigh, glancing at the last place you needed to check.

“Please forgive me,” You whisper as you spread the lips apart. Your soul nearly plummets into your stomach at the sight. Acid builds within your throat, attempting to charge straight out of your mouth. Blood pools within the entrance, mixing with the seed of the men. It trickles out as you open her further, the color unsettling. The bottom hem of her wall is stretched to the point of splintering from force, crusting scabs within attempting to repair the tears. The internals of her walls appear flush and dry, various scrapes dug deeply into the fleshy walls. You did not have to look further down to know that they slammed into her cervix with reckless abandonment or lube.

“Fuckers,” You hiss, closing the girl back up. Your magic hums in agreement, seeking out the artificial determination to help. It finds it, merging with the foreign power to change its ability to help the child. Threads of magic slip out of your fingertips, wrapping around each millimeter as it shifts into a gel-like substance.

‘Tomorrow will not be pleasant lest they keep the knives away.’ The gel glimmers on your coated tip, humming with your magic as well as the artificial. No one protected you when you arrived, allowing your screams to die within the walls as they abused your body. No one would help you then, choosing to cower than fight. This time, things will be different.

“Forgive me Chara.” Without another thought, you plunge a finger into her vagina, rubbing each wall with light, tender strokes. The magic gel coats each passing injury, patching it to prevent infections.

The process continues for what feels like hours, each turn of the finger, each stroke pumping more magic into her body. Swelling proceeds to decline, the purple hues turning to their natural pinkish color. Moisture begins to reapply itself within the biodome of her parts, readjusting itself to the new surroundings.

The last bit of artificial determination slinks off, sealing the final cut within. Satisfied, you carefully extract your finger, shivering as a strange mixture drips off. The different fluid mixtures unsettle you, the thickly pink color reminding you of a medication used for upset stomachs. You pull out your sewing kit from under the bed, fishing out an alcohol wipe. Although not completely sanitary, it was the closest thing to washing your hands.

Using the clean part of the wipe, you wash the outside of her entrance, tossing away the panties as you make her look a little more modest. It is quiet for a few moments after that, the screams long drowned out along with the ticking on the wall. You discard the underwear into the toilet along with the used wipe, flushing it down with a sneer. Looking back at Chara, she generally looks okay on the outside, a little tired and possibly malnutrition but otherwise passable. The lecture about souls you
vaguely remember pops into your head, telling you that just because someone looks okay on the outside does not mean they are okay on the inside.

‘I should probably check her soul as well to make sure they did not cause her to fall.’

A shiver creeps down your spine, an odd memory surfacing at the thought.

You watch on as they hold your head forward, your friend strapped to the metallic table you were on an hour earlier. His screams echo within your soul, his begging, his pleading, his silence. They continue to slice through the reptilian skin, cackling madly as thick tar bleeds out.

“You are hurting him!” You cry, flailing against the human’s restraints. You were weak, unable to fight your captors. You never were a fighter, weak and scrawny as they come. You could only cry commands out in hopes someone would hear them.

The door into the room trickles open, a hooded figure joining the crowded room. As they walk, their lab coat rustling against their body. It was always precisely buttoned up matched with black dress shoes, their face always hidden behind the shadows within. A clipboard perches precariously within their hand, the other scribbling down observation notes as they take note of the room. For the briefest moment, they glance in your direction, the yellow eyes piercing through your soul. You have only met this soul one other time, not entirely sure if they could help. You reach deep, willing your voice to convey everything into this shout.

“You! Please help him! He is suffering!” You hoped they were here to stop your friend’s suffering, to take him away from these cretins. The person mumbles something to a nearby associate, handing over their clipboard in exchange for a vile of unknown liquid. Your eyes light up, watching as quite possibly this person could revive your fallen friend.

“My dear, do you know what we do with failures at this facility?” The voice is smooth as satin, the undertone rusty like a worn in pair of shoes. You shake your head slowly no, eying the stranger. Your roommate’s soul hovers out of their chest, lines creasing the beautiful royal blue. The heart begins to crackle as though an unseen force chips away at his very life. The stranger plunges the needle into their soul, exchanging the royal blue with a clear liquid. Your roommate gives one final scream before the soul shatters in clear pieces of glass.

You shake your head, scooting up the side of the cot.

‘You were weak then. You did not know who he truly is. But you can prevent another failure this time.’ Following your training, you carefully hover your left hand over her sternum, beckoning the soul forward. You wait a few beats, feeling her soul smack against some sort of brick wall.

‘Odd…’ Your magic tugs at the soul again, awaiting it to pop out. A few seconds’ tick by, the clock only adding to your irritation. Her soul continues to beat against a wall, remaining within its human shell. Your eyebrows scrunch together in confusion, wondering what or who was blocking you out. That is, until orange magic zaps your hand away. Her soul remains within her chest, the shadow poking through the skin against the illumination of an orange lighting.

‘A guardian of some sort?’ You reason, glaring at the orange color.

“Where the fuck were you when they raped her?” You growl under your breath, summoning your threads of magic. With a flick of your wrist, the strands sail into the glow, some vaporizing on impact while others manage to penetrate.

‘Wh_t the f___ are y__ doi_g kid?’ A voice whispers, static filling some of the missing letters. Their
voice sounds thick with sleep, irritation threading through the undertone. There is a beat of silence where the voice appears to be doing…something. They growl, the magic glowing stronger around the soul. It hisses and growls, warming to the point of nearly burning.

‘Char_w__t the a_c__al ___k is g_in’ on?’ You stare in confusion, wondering why suddenly there is a voice chatting through the magic.

“…Hello.” You mumble, glancing at the child’s sleeping face for confirmation. When they do not stir, you continue.

“Building 13X on the Laboratory plot next to the warehouse. Ridge Industry. Just outside of the city by the mountain.” The magic begins to warble, fading back into the abyss. You growl. You will not let the opportunity of freedom go.

“Building 13X. Lab plot. Ridge Industry. Mount Ebbot.” It fades completely, allowing your magic to carefully pull the child’s soul out. You mumble a string of curses, hoping the receiver understood the message. After they free you and the kid, you would dust them for putting a child in this position. That was a fucking promise you intended to keep.
Chara appears to settle into a comfortable lull as the days press on, flashing a bright smile and a few puns every now and again. Beneath the brave exterior, her soul fissures and cracks, the lines tittering on the edge of falling. You could not blame the child for this, or for thinking about ending it all, but you will not allow another one to succumb to suicidal desires.

An odd amount of time passes when the guards rattle each cage door, demanding notice. A few creatures groan, just awakening from healing their injuries. Others scream in fear, cowering in the corners of their rooms.

“Straighten up you fucking lot! The most prestigious of us all wishes to grace your pitiful existence with his presence!” One thug bangs a little extra on our door, his attempts going blankly ignored.

“Especially you, runt.” The guard gruffs. You glance up from patching the child, raising a quizzical eyebrow.

“Don’t know what the fucking doc sees in a shithead like you, but he wishes to have a word with you after.” Your face pulls into a sharpened smile, the guard visibly shivering at the shark-like teeth.

“What a coincidence. I have a few things I need to discuss with the doctor as well.” You cock your head to the side, the smile growing wider by the second.

“Do tell me how that little tramp back in town is doing. Lillian isn’t it? Heard she recently sought after someone more…voracious.” The guard bangs her fist on the door, leaving a sharp stab of metal penetrating through your side. She stomps off, but not without mumbling a ‘fucking bitch’ under her breath. You turn your attention back to Chara, noting a curious gaze lingering for a brief second. It quickly dissipates, an even smile holding every other emotion back. You sigh, watching briefly as your fingers weave methodically as they sew a piece of torn flesh on their shin. Broken bone with a few muscles torn from the breakage reduced to a little pink scar.

“You want to know something so spill it.” Chara bites her lip, looking anywhere in the room than you.

“You…are a favorite?” She quietly questions as though revealing a deep, dark secret. You sigh once more, biting the thread. Immediately the magic sinks back into her skin, repairing the flesh to nearly new. You stare at it for a few more seconds, weighing out how to answer.

“In a manner of speaking.” She raises a delicate eyebrow, her eagerness rumbling off her body in waves.

“Look.” You begin, staring directly into her ruby eyes. “I am not the favorite for good reasons. I am a favorite because I produce the results he is looking for. I fight and kill with no mercy to live another day. I am just a…”

You pause, a sound causing your train of thought to crash. The familiar tap of shoes against the linoleum catches your attention. As each step approaches, five or so more follow closely behind, scaring those as they pass. The faint hint of cologne hits your senses next, the smell like a clean salty summer lake. Before your eyes can perceive him, your soul gives a painful squeeze in fear.
“He’s here.” You state, getting off the floor to peek out the window. True to your senses he walks gracefully down the halls, his lab coat swishing rhythmically with each elongated stride. Behind him, three other scientists studying under him hold something just out of sight. Each head whispering heated words to each other or the thing in which they hide.

‘A failed experiment.

You glance behind you, noticing Chara perk up in attention to the commotion outside the door. You shake your head, leaning against the door in hopes to block her from the sight. The cool metal sinks into your skin, the heat within retreating to the center of your body. A shiver races up your spine, not necessarily from the cold.

The footsteps slow momentarily, like a safari group examining a herd of wild animals.

“EX127” He mutters quietly, tasting it like a fine wine or a newly obtained woman. You growl quietly, refusing to meet his smug gaze. He continues walking by as though the exchange never occurred. Within his soul however, he smirks quite largely like his ego. Chara makes herself comfortable on the bed, her own discomfort tremble shaking her body. Your gaze travels back to the boss, watching him through a narrow vision. The boss clears his throat, silencing everyone immediately.

“Hello my lovely creations. How are we doing this fine day?” He begins, waving his arms in a mock excitement. A few experiments mumble out a polite greeting while those who do not get their doors pounded on. Regardless of the answer, he continues.

“I have come here with a proposition for everyone. Those who wish to participate will be rewarded.” There is a mumble through the crowd, a set of hands or two holding the bars of their doors. The corner of his lips pull into a quick smirk, vanishing just as quickly behind a falsified smile.

“I wish to allow those who participate a chance to see the outside today. It is quite a lovely day and I wish to share it with as many as are willing.” The chatter within the cells bump up a notch, more hands grabbing to stare at the boss like he was giving them the lottery winnings.

“Sounds nice,” Chara mumbles. You glance at her, noticing the drawn, sickly look in her face. When was the last time the child saw the sun? Where they could run, and play like any other child. The child before you looks as though they went through an intense war, seeing things no one should ever see in a lifetime or two. When was the last time you saw the sun?

‘Does sound too fucking good to be true.’ Chara looks up at you expectantly, eyes shimmering with delight at the prospect. You give them a level stare, wincing as they shove the delight back into a neutral stare.

‘Sorry kiddo. There is way too much unsaid to lead me to believe this is safe.’ As if reading your mind, the boss speaks up.

“Of course, there is a…wrinkle with that information. A minor thing if you will.” He gestures for one of his people to bring over something, a sick smile planted on his face. One of the females drag over a whimpering humanoid creature, its flesh falling apart at the seams. Bloody welts coat their exposed arms and legs, the lashes of a whip across their front reveal a skeletal frame desperately clinging to the remaining skin. Little to no hair remains a top of their head, deep claw marks digging shallow wells into their skull. Their crystal-like rubies search the crowd, their body struggling against the hold. A dull glimmer of a once vibrant green soul deteriorates into a sand-like soul, chips and cracks running over far too much surface area. The teen whimpers quietly under each breathy growl.
They hold your gaze for a second, fear and feral feelings fighting for dominance. Your lips pull to a frown, your head shaking side to side as you remove your gaze from their rotting face.

“I remember them.” Chara hums, standing on her tippy toes. You glance at her, awaiting her next move. She releases the window, back peddling a few steps. She shoves her hands in her pant pockets, her gaze staring back into her memories.

“He use to be one of the experiments that…would have to perform on me. Constantly beaten up for disobeying orders.” She ‘tsks’, returning to the cot without another word. You return to the interaction on the other side, your eyes widening as the boss takes a gentle hold on the teen. He appears to smile down as though they won him something precious. A look a father would give their son after a successful match. It shocks you for a moment that a creature so foul, so darkly tainted could treat something with gentleness and kindness.

‘Then again, what good is a show without some acting?’

“A collar of a…particular caliber will be placed around your necks. For precautionary matters, of course.” He says pointedly, his gaze casting a knowing stare in your general direction.

“Should you try to remove it by any means…” He holds up a shivering test subject, his fingers itching due to the addiction. Visibly malnutrition to become nothing more than a walking skeleton. Around his neck, a hefty looking iron collar, roughly a few inches in thickness. A little darkly colored latch holds onto the front, requiring an intricate key to unlock. There is a faint humming somewhere in the room that you cannot place, chalking it up to the sounds you have grown accustomed to.

The boss man grabs at the collar, setting off the defense mechanism immediately. It clicks and grinds for a few seconds, flashing lights and a warning voice covering the halls. Ooze leaks out from the inside of the collar, sliding down the machine like tar. The moment it touches the flesh of the test subject, everything falls apart.

A blood curdling scream penetrates every soul in the vicinity, their cries drowning out every thought. Their fingers grasp desperately at the collar in a futile attempt to pull it off. They are begging in between screams to get it off, crying as realization dawns on their face. Too deep in their fear they claw, allowing the goo to sink into each layer of flesh. The blue goo eats their skin vigorously, snatching the morsels away from the bone without a speck of blood dropped. It slurps and sucks, sounding of a creature raved with hunger than an inanimate object. The vocals of the deceased stop after a while, their vocal box long since consumed. Their spine hangs limply with the fleshy head attached, cold dead eyes frozen in the last moments of fear. The vertebra crackle and rattle with each shift, swinging lifelessly as it crawls up to consume the head.

You wish to look away, to allow your mind to bleach itself of the images before you. Yet you cannot look away, watching as it first grasps eagerly at the flesh, chomping on it like a soggy tortilla chip. Next came the facial muscles, the sinewy lines of the red flesh mangled apart in its makeshift mouth. Bits of the leftover skin and muscle spew out, splattering along the walls and floor. The eyes came after that, the pin pricks of red staring at the audience as it slowly squishes into a round pancake. With a sickening ‘pop!’ the gel matter within splatters out, anything remaining inside dripping down the deflating ball. It saves the brain matter for last, the grey material slurped up like spaghetti. It took a few good swallows before the goo could finish it; the creature hacking up the pieces it found inedible.

Vomit proceeds to travel up the back of your throat, but you hold it back, listening to those around you retch. A few you vaguely recall fell to the floor the moment it began.
When it reached their abdominals, it tore a large hunk mixture of skin and muscle revealing the digestive cavity. The organs stood no chance against gravity, falling out at the first sign of freedom. It creates a sickening ‘splat’ on impact, the remnants of his stomach spilling into sickly mucus-like puddles. The goo wastes no time harvesting its bounty, throwing matter of various organs around the room.

‘If it weren’t an inanimate thing, it would almost appear like it is throwing shit on purpose.’

Once it finishes its meal, it lets out a hearty sigh, disappearing into an awaiting canister within one of the assistant’s hand. The boss nods in approval, giving a passing glance at the skeleton on the floor.

“A little sloppy with this one, but otherwise a success.” He hums, kicking the skeletal remains across the floor. The fragile bones shatter on impact, the intact ones rattle as they slide. He wipes his hands against his lab jacket, removing any trace of his sins causing this outcome.

The air around the room is quiet, only the brave souls who haven’t thrown up or passed out hang strong against the bars.

“After your ‘outing’ there will be an elimination match. You may wish to participate or not, however…” He hums, sucking the air out of the room. You let out a gasp, your soul thrumming painfully against your ribcage. “Those who do not participate well…” He chuckles darkly, his golden eyes glimmering.

“Let’s just say you will not have a pleasant time.” As if by a spell, the room’s chokehold releases, allowing oxygen back into your lungs. You take a few healthy gulps of stale air, savoring in the oxygen enriching your blood. A few creatures shudder from the effects, releasing their vote and grip on the bars. A few still willing after it all nod in agreement, allowing the followers in to forcefully attach the collar. They are led out by a leash, the threads shimmer various colors as different souls weave them. They begin to chat as the bodies walk, whispering dreams of seeing sunlight again or the possibility to reach the stars. You shake your head at the delusional bastards, pushing away from the door.

‘Poor bastards. It’s all a trick to weed out the undesirables.’

There is a static in the air, prickling the hairs on your arms to stand erect. Your soul beats in fear once more, practically shoving magic into your system without thought. You slowly turn your head around, coming face to face with the boss himself. He stands poised on the other side of the door, hands behind his back as though to hide a surprise.

“Hello my dear. How are we this fine afternoon?” He coos, his tone laced with no general interest. You roll your eyes, glaring at the bastard.

“G…good sir.” Chara chirps up from her spot, a plastic smile on her face.

“You don’t need to answer him child.” You reply with your own falsified joy.

“After all, he is only here for his own selfish purpose.” The grin on his face stretches further, the ends splintering off into oblivion.

“Naturally I have come to see if my prodigy will be partaking in the…festivities.” His golden eyes light up at the mention, his arms swiftly bringing forth the ‘surprise’. This collar is thinner than the test subjects, decked out in a bronze color rather than the sharp iron. A faint hum of black magic circulates around it, little cosmic wisps snuggling into the material. On the front, a small silver wolf howls, its forlorn features expertly designed right down to the feathery whiskers on its snout.
‘Is…that a collar loop on it?!’

Bile rises within your throat, a sickening feeling washing over your senses. The room begins to spin slightly, but you push it back down. You close your eyes for a moment, keeping your face expressionless.

‘Chara is watching. He is waiting for an answer. Do not show weakness.’

“Why in fucking hell would I participate in such?” He makes a ‘tsking’ noise, shaking his head like a disapproving parent.

“Now now. No need to use such language in front of a child.” You cross your arms, resisting the urge to stamp your foot like a child.

“Since when do you fucking care about children or any of us for that matter.”

“Since I am willing to make a bargain with you.” Your eyes widen slightly, your mouth falling to the floor within your mind. He notes this, his own eyes intensifying.

“That is…if you can shut that foul trap of yours.” You feel a growl within your throat, itching let loose a few more ‘foul’ words. You hold it back, taking a thick swallow to drown it down. Your eyes cast a look toward Chara who stares between the two of you curiously.

‘This might be my only chance to truly help the child.’

He smiles, nodding his head in approval.

“Much better my dear. Now, let us get to the bare bones of this, shall we?” He pauses for a breath, flipping with some papers outside of the door.

“You care for this child and I can guarantee their safety.” He gestures Chara with his free hand, his eyes never leaving the papers. You raise a quizzical eyebrow, his honeyed words drawing an appealing offer.

‘There is always a catch to these things. Especially when it comes to him.’ You quietly remind yourself.

“What does this protection guarantee?” You glance at Chara from the corner of your eye, watching her tense. Her fingers tighten around the hem of her shirt, the seam tearing with little ‘rip’ sounds. Her soul on the other hand practically screams at you, begging to know what you are doing. You give her a look, hoping to convey your feelings in those few seconds. You direct your stare to the cretin in front of you, staring into the cold, collected eyes blocking the door.

“Clever child. Always knew you were something special.” He hums wistfully, finally returning your gaze.

“You know what leud practices the doctors love to perform here. Some of the more…hands on approaches. I can grant protection from those means.”

“What is the catch?” His smile widens under the hood, reminding you vaguely of a cheshire grin.

“Nothing much my darling prodigy.” He purrs. You find your face within his grasp, his index finger delicately petting your face while the palm holds your teeth away from harming him.

“You fight through the eliminations, weeding out the undesirables. Shortly after you will not fight us
as we give you a newly untested dose and allow examination without restraint. Do as asked of you and experiment C6537 will not be undesirably touched.” He releases your face immediately to the point where your mind questions if he really was holding you.

You give the creature a level stare, weighing out your options. You know there is a catch, a loophole within his sugary words you were missing. Something not quite adding up in the arrangement that you could not piece together.

It is some days after the initial rape and you find the cell to be quieter than usual. You reach out, seeking the familiar determined soul. You hear her screaming out within, but her vocals remain quiet. You know what is going on and what to expect when she returns. Your soul gives her a gentle pat before dispersing, your fingers already preparing the kit necessary. They throw her in, a couple of the “doctors” cooing at her sickly, laughing as they walk away. You scoop up the child, placing her on the cot. Your fingers subconsciously begin to work patching the outer wounds.

“How do you do this every time?” She whispers, her gaze somewhere else.

“You get use to it.” You reply evenly, patting a particularly deep wound with the healing gel.

“I… I can’t…” Tears break across her face; her movable arm covers her face in shame. Without warning her, you pull her soul out, feeling the magic fizzle and pop around it. A deep fissure begins to separate the pure glowing red, digging deeper than a chasm.

“You can and you will.” You state, calling your magic forward. “I can guarantee you will.” She sniffs, inhaling the snot back into her face. She hiccups for a few seconds, continuously snorting the mucus back into her sinuses.

“How?” She whispers, glancing at you.

“I will be with you.” You reply simply. Without a better explanation, you begin threading your magic around her soul. It immediately gets to work mending the fissure separating the soul. Little pin prick holes pierce each side, weaving in and out all while pulling the two halves back together. After a moment, it ties itself into a little ribbon, pulsing out a soothing balm over her body. You feel her soul visibly relax, accepting the treatment with no resistance.

“This thread will help keep you in tune with me at all times. Should you need me or my assistance, I am but a call away.” She sniffs once more, her eyes drying as they light up in amazement. After a few quiet moments, she speaks.

“Why are you so nice to me?” You pause for a moment, contemplating her words. After a few seconds, you shrug. Your gaze drifts behind the child, past the walls to what lies on the outside.

“I ask myself the same question everyday kid.”

Since then, it has become common practice to help the child. You do not understand why you do other than a possible way out. You barely know them, let alone enough to go to the extent of soul repair. Still, the eager look she gives you when you do well, the determination coursing beneath each action, you cannot help but to protect something so innocent from falling to the corruption. You do not look back at the child as your mind formulates an answer.

“I accept your terms.”

“A wise choice.” The tumblers in the door creak open, the suited figure latching on the collar immediately. The cool metal chills the skin around your neck, the weight pressing slightly uncomfortably against your collarbone. You stumble forward, growling slightly as he slams the door
behind him. He holds a thick black leash connecting to the front, a knowing smirk on his face.

“X?!” Chara shouts, her little hands grasping at the bars. “Please don’t do this!” She shouts and screams as we walk away, her cries imprinting on my soul.

‘This is for you kiddo.’

“Now we mustn’t dally dear prodigy. We have much to accomplish and there is only so much daylight left.” He gives a tug at the lead, drawing your body closer to his. He wraps an arm around your shoulder, his nails biting dangerously hard into your skin. A stupid smirk lines his face as you walk, as though he knows your thoughts. You bite your tongue, mentally muttering all the curse words you could think of. “Doctors” laugh at you as you pass, but you ignore them, going as far as tripping one particularly rude one. The boss does not care, his mind on work mode as he leads you down the halls. You stop in front of a rather unremarkable door, its appearance the same as every other door in the facility. He clicks it open, flicking on a pair of neon bulbs as you enter. The room is pure white to the point where the neon lighting messes with your sensory. The boss drops the lead, his hand leaving a few bite marks within your flesh. A few lackeys run up to him with various types of supplies, muttering about bringing in the first fighter.

“Well my prodigy, it looks like it is your time to shine.” He appears to teleport to the stands above, clipboard in hand. A few others pose like him, ready to take down as much information as possible. A door opens behind you, the sound of feet scurrying in filling your ears.

‘I am so sorry. I must execute these people to keep a promise.’

“Let us get started.”

Chapter End Notes

Just a little note:
I do have a bit of a cold as do many with the weather going from 60 to 10 and snowing. The chapter posted may be a little rough on the editing, but it is for the most part to my liking. Thank you all for the comments and kuddos as well :) They really help motivate me to post more as well as motivate me in life (that isn't too weird right?) Again thank you all! <3
Screams echo down the halls, piercing each soul as it drills past. Each creature shivers as it shoots by, their heads turning away in fear. It reaches Chara, her body stiffening as the voice sends a harrowing message. She knows the voice well, knows the sacrifice being made for her well-being. She knows they will not keep their end of the bargain for long so long as they accomplish their mission. Chara gently grasps her soul, clutching it desperately as to seek relief from the onslaught of emotions. It glows bright orange under her grasp, the familiar voice of her uncle breaking some of the tensions. The scent of sweet honey filling her mind with ease.

“We are ready when you are.” The child nods, glancing through the bars. Not a single guard patrols during this time, each choosing to fulfill their darkest fantasies on the experiments here. A smile creeps on the child’s face, a delightful sound escaping their lips.

“R.E.A.D.Y”

Your screams die within the back of your throat, the sound reduced to a groan.

“Sir, we have the new injection ready,” one of the followers mumble, his voice ringing in your ears. Every sound appears to drown in the sea around you, each voice, each movement, muffled by the water rushing by. There is a distinct blurb of a machine beeping in the background, monitoring your vitals as they inject one concoction with another. You glance down through the haze, straining to make out the shape of the IV stuck within your arm. A green liquid appears to drip into the tubing, cooling the cells beneath your arm.

‘Green magic.’ Your mind fills in. ‘To keep you alive.’

Something pushes against your sternum, wiggling to stay behind it with all its might. You gasp, your hands instinctively reaching to touch your chest as your soul flies out. There is a sting in both your wrists, your mind piecing together the two bodies holding them down. Both hands have turned an ugly shade of purple, tingling pin pricks numbing the suffocating nerves. You frown at them, or you think it is them, you are not entirely sure.

“We will proceed to inject experiment 127 with Determination X9.2. This concoction contains ninety percent determination, ten percent perseverance. It will be through direct injection into the soul.” A cold feeling settles within your body, your skin appearing to lose heat as they wash the outer coating with something. It appears white and gives off the smell of rubbing alcohol.

‘They are being extra careful with this one.’ You note, your eyes straining to witness the events
around you. The familiar dark blob you note as the boss looms over you, his hand reaching out to stroke your forehead. Cold sweat breaks out on the contact, your body responding in panic before your mind could comprehend what is happening. There is a moment of silence, the water rushing by with no moving bodies within. A prink penetrates your soul, reminding you vaguely of a mosquito bite. The boss nods his head to people out of sight, the plunger slowly pushing down.

You scream.

You have no control over your body, its movements erratic as something foreign, something not quite right penetrates your very being. Arms attempt to flail, to smack the foreign object out of the culprit’s hand. They are pinned down, the bodies grunting as they lay their whole weight on them. Your legs are next, digging your heels into the metal table, struggling to push off, to stand, to kick, to run. There is a dull pain within one of them, the other pinned down by a body. Your mind feels the impulses signal the left foot to flail due to the lack of pressure, but it never moves. Your body arches, squirming, struggling, doing all it can to shift away. The room blurs around you, the sounds muddle together into a foreign language. You try to focus in through the pain onto your soul, straining to see what becomes of it.

Cracks line the internal meat of it, magic leaking through like gas leaking through a pipe. The wisps float out, circling the soul, attempting to push itself back home. It cannot head back in for the determination slinks in, its effects filling the empty space with a sticky feeling. The boundaries of your soul feel ready to bust, the seams holding it all together slowly crack apart.

“Please,” You gasp, tears falling freely from your eyes. You begin to drown in the pain, your mind reaching up, calling someone to save you. To save you from the cruel smirks, the constant abuse of injections, the fighting, everything.

**But nobody came.**

Slowly, the room darkens as your eyes begin to close. Vaguely you are aware that your body is going into shock, everything shutting down retaliation to the determination. One lone tear slips out of your eye as you mumble with the last of your strength.

“Kill me.”

You feel your heart beating erratically against your ribs, hammering it to the point of nearly breaking. Your lungs struggle behind the organs, feeling all the oxygen going in is not enough. Within the darkness, you run, searching for something among the rubble of your mind. You hear something splintering, something shaking the room around you. You glance up, a gasp escaping your lips at the sight. Red cracks penetrate the blackness, the threads creeping down with each passing second. It appears to splinter the dark, yet joins it to one, beating being.

‘I wonder if I am succumbing to the darkness of determination. Is this what they see in their final moments?’

The thought passes, a shiver chilling your spine pushes you to run faster, to work harder. Vaguely you are aware of a burning sensation behind your eyes, something vile eating away at your sight. You push the feelings away, demanding all your attention to the task at hand. The world around you begins to warble and blur, each red crack appearing to blend in the darkness.

‘No. I will not succumb to the determination. I have someone who needs me.’

There is a ‘chink’ sound, a light breaking the end of the blackness. You spare a glance back; your face paling as liquid determination follows close on your heels.
‘I will not die.’

‘chink.’

“I will not succumb.” Your feet press hard against the floor, sailing you high into the air. Another piece of black debris falls. The determination is hot on your heels, following each movement precisely as to not lose sight of you. It is then you see a familiar shimmering blue beacon beckoning you forward. Your senses pick up a shrill cry within, commanding you to survive. Commanding you to live.

‘chink.’

“I WILL DEFEAT THEM!” Your voice echoes through the space, rumbling the walls. Silence follows close behind, but only for a second. The black shatters, reminding you of the sound of a vase smashing against the floor. Pieces of the black tile begin to fall, the red falls with it as though glued to it. White slowly invades your vision, erasing the place from your mind. You steal a glance back, noting a red trail continuing to follow you. The line is thin compared to the lava it was but a moment ago. As your mind brings you to the world of the living, you hear a small, timid voice echo the space.

“T.H.A.N.K. Y.O.U.”

You crack open an eyelid, your senses assaulted by the iridescent lab lights. The smell of alcohol and burning hair causes your nose to scrunch up in disgust. People chatter around the spacious room fall silent, the only sound appears to be an obnoxiously loud beeping monitor.

“Fuck,” You rasp gruffly, the pain searing your swollen throat. Your eyes open once more, adjusting slowly to the sights around you. Everything is sharp, crisp solid lines and vivid colors. White and black do not appear to be one solid color but the absence or presence of all the colors in the spectrum. Light shines in various arrays of colors, some tinting the light one way or another. This room…a hint too blue.

You take a deep breath, wincing at the pain residing within your lungs. The sterile smell of alcohol is the first to assault you, the deep metallic tang in the hair a close second. It feels funny on your tongue, your mind having difficulties wrapping itself around the tang of slick, refreshing yet off putting taste of metal. Your eyes glance around the room, watching various nimble bodies scatter, collecting data spewing out of some large looking machine. It hums and chugs, its processors barely keeping up with the demanding strain.

One body accidentally trips over their own feet, though you can clearly see one of their associates tripped them up in their passing. The body topples to the floor, each muscle bracing as their knee bones crush against the floor. The fluid behind it moves it slightly, cushioning the blow with ease. In the topple, they bring down an array of tools, each one scraping against the floor in a cry of protest. The sound of metal clanking against the tile reminds you of nails on a chalkboard amplified causing you to cover your ears in pain.

“EX127.” The rumble of the voice shocks you, it does not sound like the man you remember. His voice is richer, full of dark bass tones mixing with shocking mellow undertones. Without the haunting overtone coating his words, it sounds like a new person running the show.

‘Remember, he is the reason you nearly died.’

You swivel you attention to the body at the end of the table, his shadow looming over you. What you see literally makes your jaw drop. The lines of his lab coat are crisp, clean, the faint color of the
shirt beneath fading the chest cavity in a rich violet. The same violet colored hood still conceals his face, the darkness hiding the person beneath. With the right tilt of his head, the angle in which the smallest speck of light reaches, you can make out the hollows of his eyes. Golden eyes flick over your face, twitching excitedly. The color is not all golden however, little bits of orange fleck around the pupil, merging and mixing with a faint hint of ruby.

“Beautiful. Simply beautiful.” He breathes. You break off the strange gaze, sliding your eyes around at the followers. Majority of them meet your gaze, their bodies trembling beneath the surface. Those of a lesser rank cower under your scrutiny. Your eyebrows knit together, your head tilting to the side in confusion.

‘The fuck are they scared about.’

The boss is the first to approach, his clipboard given to his right-hand follower. You vaguely remember him, a young boy no more than twenty by the name of Samuel. Samuel stumbles clumsily with the board, failing about before landing a solid grip to it. His knuckles begin to turn white, gripping the piece of wood tightly like a lifeline.

Fingers grip your chin, the index finger tucking under your bottom lip, his thumb digging into the hole beneath. He hums, turning your head side to side as though examining a prized possession for flaws. The coldness of his grip is a slight comforting contrast to the sweat thoroughly coating your body. His head swivels around to the group, each one jumping to attention.

“Take notes. Determination X9.2 appears to be fully absorbed into system. Visible signs of body enhancement seen. Senses based on reaction appear sharper than any other testing. Reflex…” He raises a gloved hand, the motion appearing to slow down in time. Each frame of his hand comes down at a quickening pace and you watch in amazement as each muscle in his hand pulses to meet the sudden movement. Without thinking, your hand shoots up, halting the slap in a vice. People around you gasp, some inching forward to intervene. The boss shakes his head, yanking the trapped hand from your grasp. You can’t help but smirk as you hear a slight ‘pop’ at a bone dislocating. He shoots you a disapproving glare, shaking the pop back into place.

“Quite spot on.” You shake your head away from his other hand, glowering at the boss through a half-lidded gaze.

“Physical features appear to remain the same otherwise. The soul however…” You growl, fighting against the strings pulling at your soul. It pounds against your sternum, creeping back into its place after a few seconds of thrashing.

“Don’t.” You growl, baring your teeth at the boss. He blinks at you for a second before a smirk crawls across his face. He blinks at you for a second before a smirk crawls across his face. You make out the smallest bit of white pushing into his sockets. You gasp, feeling the soul slam once more against something and then…nothing. The crystal-like heart glides forward, encasing the space with a strange iridescent glow. Beams of ruby swirl on the outskirts of the light, creeping down to mix with the blue. They weave together, dancing along a fault line of light predetermined by the two colors. Flecks of beige and purple dot the center line, remaining out of the way of the dancing duo. You feel relieved, mentally noting the predominate color of the light remains the vibrant blue. There is a murmur within the crowd, voices glancing between each other and the boss. You vaguely hear the boss murmur a “success” under his breath, a hint of relief tainting the tone.

You glance directly into the heart of the soul, frowning as the light appears to lie. The vibrant blue and beige that consumed the entirety of your soul is no more, or at least, not the predominant coloring. A circle the size of your thumb holds your original color in the center of the soul. It splinters out like veins in an arm, the threads creating new pathways as they make their way to the
outskirts of the color. Where the red and blue meet, it swirls with a purple-like color, not a deep rich violet color yet not a soft lilac color. It takes up a good portion of the soul with hints of determination capping the outskirts. You beckon the small thing forward, taking care to hold it delicately within your awaiting palms.

‘What did they do to you?’ Your mind quietly whispers in anguish over the soul, its light dulling a fraction. You zone in on the boss, feeling the hate seep into your mind at the destruction of your soul.

“We did it…. We did it!” The boss cheers, his body backing away from the table excitedly. His features are elated, almost ecstatic at the discovery. His followers cheer along with him, hugging, high-fiving, and congratulating the boss on a job well done. You close your eyes, feeling the tears pool in your lower lid.

‘This is for the protection of the kid. Remember that. Do not do anything rash.’

You chant this within your mind, a mantra of sorts, trying to keep your sanity together.

‘Kill them. They nearly destroyed you. Burn this place to the ground.’

Your eyes open slightly, glaring at the celebrating party only a few feet ahead. There was roughly five of them, six if you included the boss. They were easy kills by the looks of their souls. Low levels, little to know experience in the ways of combat. The followers are all fluff with no real bite. Sheep brought to a slaughterhouse. They would be the easiest to dismember, ripping and tearing their souls to shreds with a flick of your wrist. The boss however, is the alpha of the pack, the main wolf protecting the sheep. You strain your eyes, closing and reopening in a vain attempt to make out the blurred numbers above his head. No matter how hard you looked at him, you could not distinguish his LV or EXP.

‘It is as though it is hidden by an unseen force.’ You hum, gently pushing your soul back home. It fills your body with a warm breath of fresh summer air.

You did not notice nearly everyone left the room until the metal door slams with a resounding ‘thud’. The machines still connect to an insert within your arm, the heart monitoring suction cups still clinging tightly to your exposed top. Your hands go to rip them off when a pale hand grips your wrists.

“Ah, ah, ahhh little experiment. Can’t have you taking off your lifelines, now can we? After all,” the voice leans closer, the scent of musk filling your nose with disgust.

“I like it when they tremble in fear.” Navy blue coats your soul with its thick tendrils, forcing your body to remain stationary against the metal slab. It presses a heavy weight against the balls of your shoulders, another force pinning your ankles at a wide angle. You struggle to fight against the strong gravitational force, curling your fists toward your arm as though trying to lift. The pressure feels like a person, a heavy 400-pound muscle person who lifts buildings for fun. The person laughs at your weak attempt, slamming your easily. You hiss, turning your neck against the force to glare at your attacker.

“Nice isn’t it? This power the doc pumps into scrawny little things such as yourself.” Metal on metal cuts through your hearing as a knife drags along the metal table. The cold metal skims along the curvature of your torso, the tip nicking as the blade shoots up.

“Keeping it away from the rest of us. Having us follow blindly due to the lack of power.” You did not believe the voice, having heard it from long ago. As they step into the little light glaring down at you, your face pales. Your pupils dilate, your mind running a thousand thoughts a second. The
familiar face above you smiles, ruby eyes piercing through you, promising a bad time. Images of a broken, beaten body infiltrates your mind, his screams piercing through your soul every day for as long as you remember.

“Danny…” Danny grins, his teeth shark sharp. The familiar baby blues you adored are long gone, demonic red coating every inch. If you look close enough, a fleck or two of the sapphire remains, but only for a second as the red eats it alive. Disheveled black tresses frame his face, accentuating his paled complexion. His face is ghoulishly hollow, his cheeks sunken in protruding the high cheek bones. It was an odd contrast against his muscular body, like a shrunken head on a normal sized body.

‘Or like an elderly’s head sewn onto a child’s body.’

“Aww, so you do remember me X or should I say…”

“Don’t say it!” You scream, tears biting at the corner of your eyes. You bare your teeth, growling at the situation, at the place, at him. Danny barks, his laughter drowning the room in darkness.

“Oh? Have you given up on that name after everything you have done. After all those people you killed?” You blink back the tears, rage replacing the fear and sadness you feel. You struggle against the hold once more, meeting his mocking gaze with a harsh stare.

“I had no choice and you know this Danny!”

“EVERYONE HAS A CHOICE!” He roars, a sound filling the silence. Your head rolls to the side, pain slowly encroaching your cheek. A few of your teeth rattle within, shifting uncomfortably at the blunt force. Blood pools in between a few of the teeth, dipping low into the valley beneath your tongue. You spit it to the floor, rolling your head back to meet his eyes.

A sweet child who came to play every day. They picked dandelions and made floral crowns with you. They would cry when they got scraped up from roughhousing, earning you a talking to and him an ice cream.

“We will be friends forever!” His voice echoes, a big silly grin stretches across his pudgy tan face. You stick your tongue out, crossing your arms.

Years pass, the monsters are released to the surface.

“They should stay where they were. It’s better for the lot of us.” He mumbles.

“We are more of a monster than they are.” You reply stiffly. A moment later, you are captured in the yard, his screams echoing the small, metal space as they drive away.

‘He is a true monster.’

“And now, I am choosing to take what is rightfully mine.” He wastes no time, ripping the borrowed pants away from your thighs. The flesh bumps in response, the cold lab air stealing the heat from the new meat. Sharp pricks of nail dig into your thighs, latching on as his arms drag your body half off the table. His nails trail into the inner valley of your body, creating long, red welts in their wake. You feel embarrassed, ashamed, angry, fearful as you are fully exposed to the person you use to call friend.

‘He was never looking for me. He became the monsters I seek to destroy.’

Wet sticky trails race down your legs, twirling in between each hair and pore as it stains your skin.
red. You stare at his face, watching his nostrils flare, inhaling the scents around him. His pupils dilate, the black nearly vanishing under the sea of red. A black tongue snakes out between his purple lips, coating the outside with a thick, purplish liquid.

“What I so utterly deserve...” He whispers, the purple liquid dribbling down his chin. You hear it ‘plip’ against the tile, smacking a piece of fabric on the way down. His face twists in an odd way, a mix of insanity and arousal. Your ears perk in attention at the sound of a belt unlooping, sliding through the pant loops with ease. The fabric falls to the floor, kicked to the side like an abandoned toy. There is a moment of heat as he draws closer, his member grinding itself against your folds. Pain sears into your lower abdomen, tears freely flowing down your face as your body attempts to scramble away. Danny grips your hips to steady himself, his body shuddering in delight. Within your body, you feel his member stretching you out to the point of breaking, the head poking at your cervix.

“Is you.” He whispers, drawing himself out. His tip remains within your entrance, awaiting the momentum forward. You glare at him through the tears, growling as his eyes command your attention. His hips thrust forward, smacking against your cervix like a small, crudely built semi-truck. Everything feels dry like sandpaper, the coarse prickles of half grown in pubic hair roughing up the outer lips protecting the clit. While his actual member surges forward repeatedly, dragging the dried tip along the irritated walls. Danny continues to mash into you with no rhythm, each stroke harder than the last. The table tares your behind and shoulder blades roughly, each thrust shaving off a thin layer of skin cells.

He finds a comfortable rhythm twenty thrusts in, allowing his hands to roam freely. His large hand reaches up, digging the points into your breast, literally borderline from ripping it off your body. The flesh screams in protest, flaring a deep red. The chilled points of your nipples attempt to recede only to be caught before getting away. His large fingers pinch the rosy buds roughly, turning them an irritated red. Each touch is painful, each grunt causing your mind to shiver in disgust, each thrust eating a small part of your soul. Yet despite it all, you are determined not to scream out, to beg the assaulter to stop.

‘His time will come.’
Okay fellow readers, we are soon going to engage within the Underswap Surface! This chapter is rather long and I apologize now if it appears very wonky and wobbly. I still hope everyone enjoys it :)
soaked strands around his face, dripping dangerously close to your skin. They give off the same purple color as his saliva, leading your mind to conclude there is a mutation within the glands.

‘This is new.’ You muse. ‘But useful right now.’

You wrap your legs around his midsection, using the muscles to pull you up and around. You shake a fraction, struggling to hold your weight with just your leg muscles. Danny snaps out of his thought, his deep, booming laughter ringing in the quiet space. You feel his hands grasp at your ass, giving them a hard squeeze.

“Didn’t want me to stop, did you you little cunt.” He coos, giving an extra thrust for good measure. You grunt in pain, your face twisting at the slight pain. You resist the urge to gag at the talk, using the disgust to throw a fake, heated moan.

“You were doing such a good job I just...” You trail off, snaking your fingers around his neck. Your fingers tangle in the black tresses, eliciting a moan for your efforts. You allow the tips of your fingers to scrape along the back of his neck earning a thrust to ‘reward’ you.

‘This is my chance.’

You lift yourself up a little further, leaning your head to rest against the crook of his shoulder. Despite yourself you feel a predatory smile stretch across your face. He leans his head away from you, exposing his neck submissively.

“Wanted you to have a good time.” You sink your teeth into the flesh, feeling the blood immediately grace your lips. His screams die out as a hand chops his windpipe, silencing him for a moment. The pain is weak compared to what the boss puts you through, what other followers do to you. In a mist of his panic, he attempts to hook you with a right punch. Sensing this, you dislodge your teeth, releasing your hold, allowing the oaf to punch himself in the wound. He mumbles a stream of curses, clutching the open chunk of flesh as his life bleeds through his fingers.

You chuckle in delight, licking the blood off your teeth. Adrenaline pumps through your system, lighting each vessel with the fight or flight hormone. The pain slowly recedes to the back burner of your mind as you assess the cursing fool.

“You know Danny, you are right. I haven’t changed in the slightest. I made the choices to kill.” A shiver races across his frame, his forehead breaking out into a cold sweat.

“Do you know why I am so lethal?” You coo, slowly stalking forward. He makes a lunge for you, swinging the air just above your head. He throws another punch at you, missing as you tilt slightly to the other side. A table clatters behind him, his dumbass body falling over it like a teen horror movie. The stupid man tries creating projectiles, tossing items carelessly with little to no aim. You smile, flashing off your pearly whites, watching in delight as his eyes widen. Each throw you dodge with ease, stepping to the side, or deflecting the object with the threads of your magic.

“It is because they taught me things.” The room quakes once more, shuttering and shaking like the fool in front of you. Metal objects scrape roughly against the floor, the remaining tools and papers scatter to the floor. You pay it no mind. You beckon your magic forward, humming in delight as it immediately comes to your aid. With a quick movement, the threads slice through the air, latching into his body. Each puncture rips open a decent size tare in his skin, shredding through the various levels until halting at the bone. It makes a delightful ‘tink’ sound as the needles taps the calcified outside shell.
You watch in glee as his mind attempts to process everything going on, his eyes darting around the room as though it holds the answer. The minute his lips part, an ear-piercing scream coats the room in his fear. A loud symphony of pleas and curses, scurrying to cover himself and defend himself. It all sings wonderfully to you.

You subconsciously lick the iron substance on your lips, moaning as the taste of his magic tingles your taste buds.

“How the soul works. The most efficient way to take down an enemy.” You walk forward, enjoying each cry as you pull a thread.

“How to break them.” Your fingers curl around the clump.

“How to succeed.” You give the fistful a hard yank, heated cries increasing in pitch and tempo. He is in tears by the time you reach him, his face paling at the blood loss or fear. You are not sure.

“Did you know?” You whisper, clutching his face. “That you being here means you are just invested as the rest of them?”

“Go to hell.” He spits, his frame shaking. His blood splatter saliva covers your face, dripping slowly down your face. You cackle, loud and long yet the sound feels foreign to your ears. Your legs back you up, smiling wickedly at the imp beneath your feet.

“Believe me, I am already there.” You hiss, giving a hard kick to his stomach. His face contorts in pain, his hands flying instinctively to sooth the injury. You hum, twirling the threads around in your hand.

‘Time to end this.’

You squat to his level, the same sadistic smirk resting on your face. Without warning, your hand smashes through his sternum, shattering the bones into hundreds of tiny weapon-like shards. He howls in pain, blood gushing around your fist as the strings of your magic seek out his soul. Once they connect, you rip the dinky thing out between the two of you. The navy-blue soul floats in the open air, a black aura coating the exterior light. It drips with black taint, his intentions and actions ruining what once use to be a beautiful soul.

‘A pity.’

Your magic forms one strand within your palm, fine tuning it to a sharpened point. With one final look at the sniveling demon before you, you give the thread a toss. Everything occurs in slow motion.

The thread sails through the air, cutting it away as it strikes the target. It impacts the glassy surface, a quiet tinkling of glass falling to the floor at the penetration site. Color bursts through the small opening, leaking onto the floor like a dripping faucet. Black and blue mix as they descend, the acidic poison dissipating as it contacts the floor. The thread exits cleanly through the other side, smashing into the wall behind his head. It takes the soul only two seconds to completely drain of color. It takes a second longer to shatter the casing into thousands of glass shards. There is a scream somewhere in the background, the noise canceling as soon as the last shard breaks away. You rip the chords out of the corpse, sighing in relief.

You slowly come down from the high, your mind filling you with dread. The quiet ‘ping’ of your soul signals the gain of EXP and evidentially a LV up.

‘It had to be done. He is part of the cause and deserved to die.’
The man before you, filled with power and corruption, begins to dust, his form slowly picking apart one dust particle at a time. It is only a fraction of time before an ash pile resides next to the remnants of the glass casing. You give a small nod to the pile, shifting to stand once more.

Without warning you collapse, your legs folding underneath, cushioning the blow as well as adding to the growing pain between your legs.

“Son of a bitch!” You hiss, desperately pushing off the floor to no avail. The rattling of the door shakes you from your mini episode. Your eyes widen as the knob turns, your hands frantically attempting to push you into some sort of standing position. The door slowly swings open, allowing the chaos within the halls to run free.

A silhouette of a child looms within the door, their little fingers gripping the handle like a lifeline. They appear rather short, their height making it difficult to distinguish if they are ten or younger. They shake their head, removing their hand off the door handle. They appear to dig through their clothing, tossing a hard, round object in your general direction. The object skids across the floor, rolling and clattering across the tile. It approaches your body, the lights reflecting a shiny clear object. The wrapper is clear as well as the candy, no brand name or possibility to know what exactly it is.

You reach forward, watching the child with one eye as you retrieve the sweet.

“Th…” They lift their hand to the area around their mouth, pointing one finger up in a ‘shush’ motion. Without a word, they leave you be, the sounds of screams and sirens filling the room.

“Huh…” you mumble. Unraveling the treat within your hand, you feel it has a cooling effect like a mint, but a strange citrus smell to it. It is perfectly circular, no flaws or bumps, as though it was made perfectly. Nothing is truly made perfectly, not even by machinery. You shrug, popping it in. The moment it touches your tongue, you begin to feel its healing properties.

‘Monster candy.’

Sweet notes of honey coat your tongue, the thick liquid coating the worn vocals. You roll it around your mouth, allowing it to bounce along each tooth. It clacks around, sticking to either side of your cheeks. The pain between your legs settle into a light thrum, dissipating after a couple of seconds. Claw marks from Danny begin to disappear beneath the new set of skin cells coating your skin. As the candy dwindles, the flavor changes slightly to a lighter, sweeter note with a hint of citrus. You cannot remember the taste, filing it to the back of your mind for later.

The candy disappears with one last swallow, filling your body with energy you did not know you were lacking. Every movement feels stronger, every action energetic as though it were lacking before. You push yourself off the floor, testing out your power. Easily your body carries your weight, the pain no longer an issue on the muscles and nerves. You let out a childish giggle, running around the room for a moment.

‘Incredible! I have not felt this good since…!’ There is another explosion, the shock closer to the room. The ceiling slightly crumbles, pieces of debris clatter to the ground, taking out pieces of furniture. Your own footing wobbles for a second, your hands grasping at a turned over object to steady yourself.

‘Wonder what the hell is going on out there.’

You begin scanning the lab, looking for something suitable to wear out in the open. Your original clothing material is of not wearable means, tears and missing pieces of cloth in notable areas render it useless. You check the bunkers in the back of the lab, sifting through the rubble of turned over
fixtures for leftover clothing. There is a black tank top tucked away in a drawer, the cleavage a little low for your liking.

‘Still … it beats walking around naked.’

Your pants are next to be scraped back up, your face grimacing the waistband appears to be the only thing without a hole. There are various holes along the pubic region, revealing a lot for someone with no underwear. With a muffled groan, you cave, slipping on the rags for pants.

“So fucking embarrassing,” you mumble to yourself. You take one last glance around the room, sighing in frustration as nothing appears to be wearable.

“Boss…attack…escape…bones…!”

You hear the voices rush by the door, their footsteps frantic as they chase or flee. The siren melts into the background, the faint torch lights give off an eerie feeling. Shadows bounce off the walls, standing and falling with each flicker of light. You shiver, shaking your head as though answering an unspoken question.

“So…today is the day…” You hum, making your way out the door. Chaos is the first thing to greet you on the other side, creations and people alike running rapid at their chance of freedom. Rubble litters the once pristine floor, blood and organ matter splattering various parts of the walls and floor. Bodies and dust piles litter each step, your feet carefully stepping around them. True to Danny’s statement, numerous followers are found in a compromising situation, the experiments using their enhancements to destroy them. Then, there is the smell. You nearly heave everything out of your stomach at the retched smell. It is indescribable, yet at the same time can be pieced together with a few words. It smells…dusty like an old room in a mansion never touched for a hundred years. It smells like cooking meat as well roasting on an open flame during a barbeque. It also smells like urine and feces smeared across the walls, the stench fresh and new. You try to ignore your heightened sense of smell, making your way back to your room.

There is no mercy in this hall.

You stroll down the hallway, watching each individual fight work itself out. A struggling match with a weak experiment and a follower leaves the follower as victor, their bloody face clutching a knife desperately as they go to town. The experiment’s blood slaps up against the wall, their screams a mere tinkle of sound in a sea of chaos. The follower stabs them repetitively, at least twenty times or so until the experiment turns to dust. Even the dust gets the knife treatment, the remains stabbed into the floor. A few experiments gang up on an unsuspecting fool, their claws digging deep into the center of the follower. Their hand slips out the other side, clutching the human’s heart. The other two go to town, digging into their living flesh like a gourmet meal. Every couple of feet one or the other are murdered brutally, each party taking extra care to mangle the remains as though they will rise from the dead.

‘It’s a beautiful day to get out of this hellhole.’

You notice after a couple of turns, a leftover follower struggling on the floor. His outfit is a train wreck, torn and bloodied all over the damn place. Blood leaks from each slash, their organs hanging limply in their cupped hands. Their face is fucked beyond recognition, the top layers of skin practically peeled off their skeletal face.

“Help…me…” They rasp, blood spitting out with each word. One of their hands release the entrails of the organs, reaching for you like a lifeline. You shrug your shoulders, walking closer to the sad excuse for a scientist.
“Oh, I’ll help you all right,” You hiss, bringing your foot above their skull. The heel comes down quickly, the bones within their skull shattering at the force. They scream for a second, blood pooling out of every facial orifice. Their eyes pop under the pressure, joining the mess of entrails along the floor. Brain matter along with the blood quickly joins the mess, their screams silent, their body motionless.

“Ew.” You mumble, attempting to shake the matter off your feet. Blood splatters cover the bottom half of your legs, speckling and staining your skin with the blood of your enemies. It takes a good second of shaking to release your heel from the matter, a good portion of it refusing to let go of the arch of your foot. You shiver with each walk, feeling it squish with each step. The hallways in general make you shiver as random bits of matter collect below.

‘Just…don’t think about it…Think of it like wet grass…or organs.’

You continue making turns down hallways, slipping through open doors into various quarters. As you advance to familiar surroundings, the fighting begins to lessen. Numerous bodies line the walls, most covered in ash and blood. You happily hum that majority of those deceased are wearing the doctoral lab coats. A few are that of the experiments, their bodies mangled and partially eaten by the starving. Not that you blame them, but it still twirled your gut in a funny way.

You arrive at your previous cell door, glancing into the room through the bars. A child huddles beneath the bed, the sheets stripped away leaving a bare mattress. Her frame continues to vibrate in fear or excitement you are not sure. Whatever the emotion, they remain curled into a small ball, their voice whispering incoherent phrases.

“Chara?” You call quietly, curling your hands around the bars. The blanket mess that is Chara shifts, her body struggling against her own hold. She pokes her head out from under the bed a moment later, her eyes widening. Fear dances within her ruby gaze as well as relief, but mostly fear.

“…X…? Is…is that you?” She stutters, her eyes wide as saucers. You nod, slipping a small smile.

“It will be all right Chara. I will get you out of here.” You crack your knuckles, sighing as the bones shift into a better place. Magic builds within your fists, the glow increasing in power.

“Stand back.” Was all the warning you gave the child. You release your fist into the door, the sound reminding you of an explosion. The door trembles with the impact, a decently sized indent pokes through the other side, practically insulting the other indent. Hinges creak as the door slowly topples forward, the metal slamming against the concrete floor. Fracture lines crease the floor, giving you a fair warning should the floor be damaged further…it will collapse. Dust floats within your line of sight, causing you and the kid to let out a stream of coughs.

“X…” She shivers, pulling her body out from under the bed. The sheet remains behind, a small burrow den remaining intact as they depart. You shake your hand off, ridding your bones of the dull pain.

‘That wasn’t so bad as I thought.’

Chara takes a timid step towards you, her eyes assessing your body.

‘Of course she is scared. I must look gory as shit.’

“It’s all right Chara. I had some…altercations on my way over here.” She continues to stare, her eyes wide. You huff, shifting awkwardly.

“Do you have my sewing kit?” She nods, pulling out the sewing kit from beneath the bed, popping it
open to show you all the supplies. Everything imbedded and hidden within the room resides in there including some of the bedding material as make shift wraps or casts. You ruffle the hair on her head affectionately.

“Good going lil trooper. We might need that later.” She shrugs her shoulders, keeping her gaze to the floor.

“Better prepared than not at all.” She murmurs, shuffling her shoes against the floor.

“Don’t I know it.” You bend down to her level, frowning slightly as she avoids your gaze.

“Hey…” You carefully hold her chin, turning it to meet your gaze.

“Look…I will not bullshit you kid. It is going to be rough out there. There are things that…kids your age should not see.” She nods, tears welding into the corner of her eyes.

“I just want to go home.” She whispers, her body trembling. Something within your soul chinks, twisting in slight pain.

“You will. I promise and I don’t make promises lightly.” She lets out a broken chuckle, a few tears escaping her eyes.

“You sound like my one uncle…He doesn’t like making promises either.”

“They are hard to keep kiddo. I can relate.” You chuckle. The building quakes once more, the floor beneath your feet rumbling. Parts of the wall begin to fall as well as the ceiling, the quakes becoming more frequent and dangerous.

“It is time to go. Ready?” Chara gives you a timid nod. She clutches the metal close, tucking her head into your collar bone as you scoop her up. The little thing is light beyond her recommended weight, her little bones sticking out in various places. One of her hands clutch your tank top, shaking as though you would let her go.

“Keep your eyes hidden and your head tucked. Things are about to get ugly.” You quietly remind her, stepping into the long hallway. You break into a light jog, keeping an eye out for any survivors. Every now again you two pass a few struggling scientists, their fingers clawing away at their skin to eliminate the toxin within. Some of them continue to scream as the impulse overtakes rational, ultimately leading them to bleeding out or throwing their own organs all over the place. The howls and cheers of those still fighting filter down the halls, their screams following a second later. Chara whimpering within your cradle, but says nothing as the screams continue to grow in volume.

“Almost there kid.” You mumble, lowering your head to her ear. She nods against you, digging further under your pit.

The room rumbles behind you, the sound of something charging a blast giving you only a few seconds to react.

“Shit!” You dive, rolling out of the way as the wall decimates behind you. Pieces of the wall scatter in various sizes, taking parts of the ceiling and floor along with it. Deceased bodies fly overhead along with the explosion, those within its line of fire vaporize to nothing but ash. Chara lets out a yelp at the sudden shift, curling inward as you slide. Your back takes the brunt of the impact, your body tumbling with the child tucked closely into your chest. You hiss out a string of curses as debris scrape up your body, spilling your blood into the mix. After a moment, you smack into a wall, your
skull rattling your brain from the impact.

“Are…you okay…kid?” Your vision blurs for a second, the world of color blending into one mesh. It settles after a few seconds, focusing in on Chara’s concerned gaze. Her frame shakes slightly in the shoulders, but otherwise she responds with a nod. A few nicks of debris appear to have scratched parts of her exposed skin, drawing a little blood. A small streak of crimson stains her cheek, but otherwise appears to be fine.

“Good.” You smile, dusting the powder off her hair. You turn your gaze back to the explosion, a growl rumbling out in warning. Thick billows of smoke cover the newly added door, steam from the heater along with drops of water from the plumbing begin pouring out of various pipes in the wall. Two figures emerge from the rubble, their bodies outlined in the flickering flames behind them. One appears rather tall, at least six foot in height. Something red and orange flickers around where their facial structure should be, adding more smoke to the area. The other body is shorter, at least five foot but still utterly dwarfed by their partner. A blue light flickers around their eye area, the colors interchanging in the mist.

“CHARA?! ARE YOU HERE?!” A gruff voice shouts, the silhouette of two figures taking shape.

“CHARA?! ANSWER THE MAGINISANT SANS IF YOU CAN!” A slightly higher voice squeals, their voice carrying over the chaos. You feel Chara shift within your grasp, turning to the sound of the voices.

“They are here,” She whispers, her eyes widening. You stare at the two figures, watching their bodies appear from the smoke. The wind knocks itself out of your lungs, leaving you gasping and gaping at the monsters before you. Skeletal monsters stand in the clearing, skeletal creatures floating behind them as they search. The smaller of the two appears frantic, his blue cape fluttering in a nonexistent breeze. He appears ready for anything, his battle armor on, his bone weapon in each hand. The taller of the two looks as though he is ready for lounging, cigarette between his teeth and sweats making up his appearance. Their magic color corresponds to their creature’s eyes and their outfits: blue for blue, orange for orange.

Chara rustles out of your grip, dragging the metal box along with her as she approaches the skeletal monsters.

“Uncle Sans! Uncle Papyrus!” She cries, throwing herself at the duo.

“KID?!”

“HUMAN?!”

She launches her frail body at the taller of the two, her wails filling the empty space. You stare at the child, letting out your own breathy chuckle. The taller one kneels, his bones clattering with each movement. The smaller one bursts into tears as well, clutching the child like a precious item. Vaguely you can make out their stats.

**Papyrus**

HP 1 ATK 1 DEF 1

**Sans**

HP 680 ATK 20 DEF 20

The smaller of the two appears stronger than the taller, leaving a weird feeling in your gut.

‘So long as they protect the kid on their way out, the promise is fulfilled.’

You carefully begin to pull your body up, using the wall for support. Each movement is a little
painful due to the injuries, but nothing you could not handle.

“**And just where do you think you are going.**” A gruff voice growls to your right. You bounce to the left, spinning around to face the voice. A growl hums in the back of your throat, your mouth opening to bare your fangs. The taller skeleton chuckles darkly, his eye sockets darker than space itself. His hands remain within his pockets, the cigarette continuing to glow between his teeth. He cocks his head to the side, a crooked grin stretching across his face.

“You must be one of those people that hurt *our* Chara.” He begins to walk toward you, his shadow looming dangerously in front of you.

“After all,” he mumbles, removing his right hand from the hoodie pocket. You watch it, switching between his gaze and the elements around the room. Odds for a fight in this room may end in your favor should the structure hold up from it.

“Your LV reeks of a d.i.r.t.y. m.o.n.st.e.r. k.i.l.l.e.r.” His left eye socket begins to flame with orange, flickering with various shades of yellow and the tiniest bit of red. You leap backwards, avoiding a barrage of bones emerging from the rubble. Majority of them are painted in an orange glow, dissipating at his next attack. A few are semi-transparent blue shade, remaining a few seconds longer in the ground than the orange.

‘*I must watch out for them.*’

Another wave of bones fly through the air, at least twenty or so sailing in your direction. You dodge, bobbing your head around the assailants, jumping over a few aimed at your legs.

“Quit it!” You hiss, balling your magic within your hand. He appears to ignore you, sending in his dragon-like creature. It eyes you warily, sailing in after another stream of bones. You see it at the last moment, its maw opened as an orange light builds within.

“Shit…” you whisper, rolling out of the way. The beam triggers, encasing the room in a bright light for a few seconds. Rubble and dust fly out of its way, sailing across the room with scorch marks along the outside. The light dissipates for a fraction of a second, allowing you to examine the black tracks engraved into the floor. Vaguely in the background, you hear Chara screaming at her Uncles, the softer one cooing comforting words to her.

‘*Sorry kiddo, but your uncle is an ass.*’ You fling your fingers at the skeleton, watching the thick strands increase in girth as they sail into the walls. One moment he stood within the line of sight, the next, gone. You quickly retract the threads, leaving them out like a thick whip.

“Is that all you got?” Smoke fills your senses for a moment, his breath kissing your cheekbone. You growl, lashing out at the figure behind you. Your magic hits the dust, slapping into the ground miserably. You let out a frustrated scream, willing a pool of your magic forward.

“Let’s see if you can dodge this skeleton!” You scream, throwing your hands in various directions. It is quiet for a moment, your gaze locking onto the location of the appearing skeleton. A grin stretches across your face.

‘*I have him now.*’

You snap your fingers, the sound echoing the quiet space. A handful of threads shoot out from every direction, piercing through one wall and into another. It creates an uneven pattern of lacing threads, demolishing the room while reinforcing it with a trap.
“PAPS!” The shrilly voice screams. You only have a second to turn around to them when their own pet charges an attack. You try to roll out of the way fast enough, but it goes off before your body is completely out. Burning flesh fills your nostrils along with the smell of burning cotton. Pain erupts on your right shoulder, blood gushing from the wound a second later. You pant out labored breaths, your eyes widening as you assess the damage. The skin is completely torn apart, hanging on literally by a few strands. The muscles beneath scream at the touch of air, blood clouding their pores. You attempt to flex your right hand, wincing as it does not respond to the nerve impulse.

A bone smacks your other shoulder, drawing your gaze away from the short one. The taller spins a bone on his index finger, grinning like a maniac. Another bone smacks the injured shoulder, coating the end with your blood. The little guy stands protectively in front of Chara, a large bone club in his grasp.

“You see dirty monster killer, when you mess with the skeleton brothers,” the short one begins, his voice deepening an octave.

“You are going to have a bad time.” From every angle, bones explode, destroying your trap on their way to your location. You swing around the bones to the best of your ability, cradling the unresponsive arm in your good hand. Each attack gets closer and closer to hitting you, your agility slowing up as the battle progresses. You let out a grunt as numerous bones smack against your body, some within your chest, others within your abdomen. One after another the waves continue to roll, occasionally throwing in a blaster to change the pattern. Vaguely though the chaos, you hear Chara screaming at them, begging them to stop their attacks. Something about your HP bordering death? The skeleton pays no mind to the small human, their gaze determined to continue fighting what they feel is a threat.

‘Even though I am no threat to the child.’ You mentally growl, hissing as you roll the wound into the dust. You sit on the floor for a moment, watching sourly as blue bones spring through your body.

‘Looks like we finally caught you.’ The tall one growls, his body appearing out of nowhere. His face leans dangerously close to yours, a smirk gracing his dark features.

‘Only because I let you.’ You hiss, refusing to inflict damage on yourself over a stupid tactic. His beast creature moves forward, giving you one glance. It opens its maw at its boss’ command, the light building for the final time.

‘Any last words you monster killer?’ Little feet race toward your location from behind. A familiar angered voice shouting at the skeleton before you.

‘Uncle Papyrus! Stop it!’ Chara screams, her feet slapping loudly in the silence. You watch the skeleton’s face pale, sweat beading down the back of his skull.

‘Kid get out of the way!’ He shouts, glancing between the two of you. It dawned on you that second that he could not stop the charge, that the child along with you would be decimated right before his eyes.

‘FUCK!’ You scream, ripping your body apart against the blue bones. Your HP begins to diminish at a quick rate, but you do not care. Blood begins to travel in streams down your body, organs exploding within along with the puncturing of one lung. You did not care. Chara was in danger because of this fight, because of her fucking uncle, but also because of you. You hear the maw about fully charged, just about to release the blast on both of you.

‘Sorry kiddo.’ You mumble, lunging at her. She lets out a squeak as her body sails away from the attack. Time appears to slow as you watch her body tumble across the floor, her small pudgy hands
grasping the rubble to help steady. Chara looks up at you, her ruby eyes wide. You give her a patient smile, giving her a small nod as you feel the blast sear your flesh.

“See ya…k…i…d...” You close your eyes, holding back the screams desperately clawing at your throat. The beam strikes true, microwaving your body like a frozen burrito. The back of your everything begins to sear off, the heat slowly melting the skin off into a liquid puddle. The muscles are next as the beam strikes, their little fibers hanging on for dear life. If they had a voice they would be begging and pleading to remain on the bone. Tears freely fall down your face as the rest of your skin begins to follow suit, the burns incinerating your meaty being. You do not register the pain as your body is sent sailing through the air, the remainder of the light below. The sound of it dissipates, allowing the air to fight against your descent. You smack into the floor, shaking the room along with the crumbling building.

‘I am…?’ You attempt to pry your eyes open, only to be met with darkness. Your senses scream out in utter terror, the pain nearly causing you to collapse into unconsciousness. Despite it all, you attempt to stand, using the remainder of your energy to try seeking out the child. You had to make sure she is all right, that nothing hit their little head from the fight. You are determined to find them, to press forward through the darkness and blindly seek them out. You take one, shaky step, collapsing a second later into the rubble. Little patter of feet race in your general direction, their voice carrying but the words lost in the void. Someone is talking to you no doubt, their lips and voice moving a mile a minute. You sigh, wishing to hear the child once more, to hear them tell one more bad pun before you go.

‘Heh…not even dead yet and talking about moving on.’

Your mind begins to filter through all of your memories, leaving a bittersweet taste within your soul. If you knew all of this would have transpired, you would have done it all differently. Every wrong path, every wrong wording, everything done out of vain jealousy, would be wiped away to smiles and helping those less fortunate.

You feel the kid poking carefully at your body, her fingers desperately attempting to smear something in your face.

You shake your head sadly, your soul begging her to take the contents and run. To heal her uncles and herself, patching them up in case of danger. You feel her shaking her head at you. A blip of something wet smacks your face, a nearby soul raging in your general direction. Chara is persistent, shoving the contents of the jar closer to your lips. When you do not budge, you hear something clatter off to the side.

“You…you…fucking idiot!” She bawls. You feel shadows looming above, the skeletons most likely holding the child at bay.

“Language kiddo.” You hear the tall one speak quietly. There is a smack, a couple of hiccups, and stunned silence.

“DON’T YOU KIDDO ME PAPYRUS! YOU GUYS…!”

Your body struggles to function under the pain, the major organs filling your body will your life blood. An organ or two exploded during the struggle, the one lung remaining struggling to meet the oxygen needs of the still beating heart. Their voices drift away, like sailing on an open sea.

‘Heh. I think this is a…lost cause.’

Blood coats everything it touches, soaking what remains of your clothes and skin. You are vaguely
aware of the people standing over you, but it becomes difficult to distinguish what is going on. Your senses begin to go, your sense of smell fading to that of a clogged sinus. Your sense of touch is next, the nerves humming under the skin slowly die out at the constant exposure to the outside world. Within your mind, you feel your brain panic, sending out as many impulses in a vain attempt to keep your body alive.

‘Heh. So…this is how I go…’ Pent-up tears rush out of your ducts, coating your face in your salty bodily fluid. There is a small wince of pain as it touches patches of torn flesh, but it is nothing compared to that of your burn wounds. Your lips open, your voice scratching against the back of your vocal box, trying to get a final message out.

“S.m.i.l.e.”

You feel your soul within your chest begin to fracture and chip, the pieces falling apart after the damage sustained. It fills your destroyed cavity with its prickly glass shards, the essences slowly dripping out as it tries to hold onto every strand. Each flicker of light drips like dew in the morning, the circular blips of liquid descending into the dark. Cracks begin to splinter across the surface, digging deep as it flicks pieces off.

In the distance, you feel a force poking at an orifice on your body, the texture indescribable. Someone is forcing something into your lips, demanding, shoving it as much as possible within. A beat ticks by, then another, each second longer than the last. It is then you feel it.

A rush of power invades your cells, calling, poking, demanding, you to respond. Your magic gives a weak flutter, responding to the call of the other. Greens, blues, and purples begin to fill your vision, coursing through your body in its mission to repair everything damaged. It is a slow process, each little molecule slowly knitting together, sewing, and patching to make a stronger, newer product. More substance pushes past your lips, erupting into healing magic. Each thrust of the substance contains a bit of red, but it is only that little speck of red that fills your being with determination.

‘No…I cannot die. I made it too far to give up now!’

You feel your soul practically cry, the magic around it patching the outer layer with a thicker coating. The cracks remain within the soul, your own magic will require a lot of time to completely close the fissures the near-death created.

For a while you sit in your head space, taking special inventory as the magic works at fixing all the damage. It starts with the vitals such as all your organs. It surprises you how fucked up your internals really were. Your intestinal tract was splintered beyond normal means, the bile within the liver dripping out into the linings. The pancreas continued to spit out digestive acid, creating a pickle of a repair to reattach it back to its destination. Attaching the intestines through the diaphragm back up to the stomach was not a fun feet. The magic had to repair the diaphragm first, allowing a stabilized breathing pattern. The stomach rolled itself into the pit of your core, leaking out along with the intestines. The acid appears to have nicked the thin membrane lining, so that had to be repaired as well. After it was resituated, the lung came next. Carefully it inflated each cell, expanding it to its maximum capacity. It held the form for a few seconds, allowing it to deflate and reflate as to start the breathing process. That attachment felt godly once it allowed another organ to push oxygen through your body.

With the repairs of the internal, the external came next. You could not watch since your body refused to allow you out of the dark floating space, but judging by the smaller intakes of the substance given, it was clearly repairing the damage.

The first thing to come back was your sense of smell. Boy was that a wake-up call in of itself. Burnt
flesh, charred cotton, cigarettes, fecal matter, honey, iron…too many scents to name linger in the room and around you. The predominate smell of cigarettes and sweets mute majority of the other smells out and you are thankful for that.

Next comes hearing, although this process is slower compared to the onslaught of smells. It starts off underwater at first, various voices merging together into one blob of a noise. Then it begins to surface, one voice sticking out among the warble. Then another…then another. The creaking of the building fills the background, the alarms within no longer sounding. Rubble clutters in various locations, rocks skimming across the floor to reach an unknown destination.

“Kid, are you sure we should be letting them…ya know…” The gruff voice murmurs, a puff of cigarette smoke filling your nose. There is a smacking sound, the skeleton most likely wincing at the attack.

“Do I need to prove to you again why they are important?” Chara’s irritation is palpable through her voice, her body shifting more than the skeletons.

“We understand as to why you wish to save the human, we just don’t understand why they appear evil.” The voice is filled with worry and hesitation, the shorter one no less. You hear Chara sigh, her figure shifting as she adjusts to a comfortable position most likely.

“This place is cruel.” Chara’s voice holds no room for an argument, the tones going flat.

“I wish to wait until X awakens to talk about this.” Bones rattle on bones, the skeletons nodding you imagine.

“As you wish tiny human.” The short one replies. There is silence among the group once more, the occasional yawn or scoop of gel filling the tension. Touch comes next, your body flinching and curling at each little bit of magical intake. Any remaining flesh seared off begins to burn, your mouth opening to let a string of curses through.

“H…HUMAN! I, THE MAGNIFICANT SANS, DO NOT APPRECIATE THE FOUL LANGUAGE!” You wince, your body curling slightly in itself.

“S..w…aw…t w…up…” You groan, your hands moving stiffly to grasp your head. It feels as though thousands of bullets decided to have a dance party within your skull, or a bunch of rowdy drunk teens having sex everywhere…on everything.

“Finish this.” Chara’s voice growls, her tone leaving no room for argument.

“Cawn…t m…a…ke…s me.” Someone chuckles, the other humming in disapproval. She practically smashes your face with the goo, allowing a tiny amount into your throat. Slowly, your eyes do not feel like gaping black holes anymore. They feel fuller, wider, demanding to see the world once more.

You feel your eyes flutter open, instantly meeting the gaze of a familiar brunette with ruby eyes. A crooked grin stretches across your face, your hand slowly raising up to cup their cheek.

“Hey now. I’m here…” You coo.
“You…you…bonehead! You nearly…” She snorts up her snot, giving a rough cough off into her shoulder.

“I prefer knucklehead personally.” Chara gives you a dirty glare and you cannot help it. You laugh, pulling her down onto your face. She flails wildly at the grip, her voice pitching higher and higher with each passing second.

“Then again, you are dead accurate about one thing: that really was a ghost call.”

“OH. MY. GOD!” The shrilly voice screams, causing the three of you to chuckle. You allow the child up after a moment, pushing yourself off the dirty floor. Blood coats your backside, and front side, all the sides really. It completely drenches you, the cloth covering your body barely hanging on after the abuse. Your backside is void of fabric all together, leaving the blood to weld the front together. You begin doing an inventory of everything, checking each speck of flesh for scars or remaining wounds. To your surprise, everything appears normal it not newer feeling. Like slipping into a new skin of sorts. You roll your right hand, smiling like a child when it replies to the impulse. Your face pales as you slowly reach forward, ignoring the stares of those around you.

“Chara.” You begin calmly, your gaze never leaving the vile. The tubing is clear, remnants of a blue liquid collect in the crevices within the vile itself.

“It was in your box towards the bottom. It…matched your soul so I…” You hold a hand up, silencing the child. True, this vile contained your magic and hell part of your soul at one point. The boss had given it to you one day as a “welcoming present” as he called it. Something back then told you to keep it safe, to keep it hidden from others…

‘The doctor must have known…’

You shake away from the thoughts, looking up to meet the skeletons. They, like you thought, look odd in their opposite styling of clothing. The orange tall one appears lax, his body leaning slightly as he extinguishes a stump of a cigarette only to light up a new one. His facial features are long, pointier than the shorter one with a fine tuning of smooth across his skull and cheeks. He represents closely to what you believe a human skeleton looks like. From the corner of his eye you notice his sockets gazing down at you, a defensive aura flaring up around him. You openly roll your eyes at his behavior, flipping the bird behind your back and out of sight of the little skeleton.

“HUMAN! HOW ARE YOU FEELING?” He shouts, his gloved blue hand reaching for yours. You flinch, pulling it back slightly. It causes the little guy to frown, but you shrug it off. His shape is thicker, the body frame reminding you of a small child before puberty. Unlike the taller’s face, his is chubbier, smoother, and more expressive. Little blue rings make up his iris, allowing a black space within to create a pupil.

“Fine er…” You mumble, scratching the back of your head. The skeleton pays no mind to your awkwardness, standing proudly with his hands on his hips.

“FEAR NOT HUMAN! FOR I AM THE MAGNIFICANT SANS AM HERE TO SAVE THE DAY!” You scratch your cheek, glancing away from the skeleton.

“Right…” You mumble again, glancing at Chara with a raised eyebrow. You jerk a thumb at the smaller one.

“Are they bone related or something to you?” Chara snorts, covering her laugh within her hands. You merely stare at her, watching as Sans mimics her action without the laughter.
“WAS THAT AN INTENTIONAL PUN HUMAN?!” You shrug your shoulders, patiently waiting for Chara to answer your question.

“Not exactly. They…helped me while I was in the Underground.” Well…you didn’t expect that.

“Ah…I see.”

“You’re not going to ask?” It is her turn to quirk an eyebrow at you, pulling her hands away from her face. You shrug, standing up for the first time since you ‘died’. Everything pops on its way up, each muscle straining against the new weight, shaking the sleep out of your legs. Your knees pop as well as the bones attaching your legs to your hips.

“Hmmmm…” You moan, twisting your spine, stretching far above your head. A hand rests on your shoulder, halting you from further twisting. Your eyes travel up the length of the arm, the long orange arm holding you still while his face twists in the other direction.

“Knock it off.” You crack your knuckles out of spite, watching a shiver trail over his shoulders. You move out from his grasp, keeping a steady glare on him. You give Chara a glance, frowning at the scrapes lining her body. Without warning, you headlock the child, musing her hair into a chaotic mess. She grumbles under your hold, but does not fight.

“You didn’t take any of the meds did you?”

“No,” she grumbles in your sleeve, opening her maw. You feel her attempt to bite you in hopes of freedom.

“Such a troublesome kid.” You glance at your feet, noting the white container nearly empty next to the blood pool. A dollop or two remains compared to the full container, the amount enough for one person to heal. The two of you squat down, her due to your body moving. She notes the direction of your gaze, her body squirming in your grasp.

“You will take it child. No arguments.” With a solid nod from her, you release her head, pushing the contents toward her.

“What is this?” The taller skeleton hisses, kicking the contents to the side, away from the child’s grasp.

“Magic.” You shrug, attempting to stand. An invisible force pushes you to the floor, taking the air out of your lungs. You glare up at the looming skeleton, baring your own fangs in retaliation.

“Don’t toy with me.” He growls, his eye flashing the orange flames once more.

“B…Brother. Perhaps it is not dangerous as it looks?” The smaller one, Sans, mutters quietly. The meek look on the skeleton does not suit him, especially not in his battle armor. Slowly you back down, allowing your nerves to cool off into that of indifference.

“Look,” You draw their attention to you. “It is made of magic with a base of gelatin. Completely safe and edible to help proc magic self-healing. It is bitter as hell though.” To prove a point, you shove your finger in the gel, shoving it past the child’s lips before anyone could protest. She scrunches up her face, swallowing the bitter medicine through great determination. As if proving its worth, the gel begins to patch up her visible wounds, mending the skin back together. The two skeletons watch in wonder as the cells knit together before their sockets until her face looks nearly new.
“Who are you?” Sans mumbles in awe. You turn toward his direction, the question taking you off guard. You glance to Chara who gives you a nod of approval from the corner of your eye. An even breath whispers past your parted lips, your tongue darting out to wet them.

“My…name…is…”
Your mind drifts through a fuzzy fog, trying to dust the sleep off your mind. Dully in the background you hear an annoying sound, its loud beeping nearly driving you crazy. Your arms attempt to smash the alarm sound off only to be caught by a sting of pain. It throbs within the crevice of your arms jointing between your upper arm and lower arm. Something wiggles within the crevice, poking and scraping as you attempt to move once more. Despite the gentle tugging, it appears to be lodged into your arm well enough.

“Well this fucking sucks.’ Your mind huffs, dusting layers away as your conscious begins to surface. You slowly identify the annoying sound as a heart monitor, something they frequently used on your during those stronger injection phases. A dull humming of fluorescent lights murmur above your head, one of the sticks bouncing around to the point of popping within its casing.

“…will be tests…” A voice flutters in, the sentence weaving in and out through your selective hearing.

“Damage…building…died…” You sigh, glancing around the dark space. You vaguely recall your encampment collapsing around you, the rubble and metal seeking you out in its destruction. You remember a small child…Chara is their name, being taken away by two monster skeletons. You saved a few experiments like yourself and then…

‘Wonder if I am in purgatory awaiting to see where I will be sent.’ The thought causes you to snort, your body crouching down on the make-shift floor.

‘Yeah right. As if the greater being above would take in a murderer. Truly I took too many hits to the head.’ Your fingers fiddle with the torn clothing around your body, frowning at the various wounds. Blood coats your body like a second skin, your flesh peeling away to allow your own life to mix with the dried. It looks dark and crusty, reminding you of one giant scab.

“…Appears to be coming through…”

The darkness begins to waver, the black fading to a light shade of grey. The room remains empty of furniture, the four walls mocking you with a similar set up to your prison. You shiver, noting the excessive amount of blood staining the floor, the image wavering to include another body.

‘Chara…’

Your hands reach out to the body, the puddle of blood expanding beneath her. Her clothes have various tares and slash marks, allowing the marred flesh to stretch open. Her hair is shorter to the point of shaved revealing the top of her sun-kissed head. The sight nearly makes you vomit, your hands gripping tightly around your stomach. Her skull glimmers under the grey lighting, the blood cascading down in beautifully red rivers. The white is still in-tact with only a small fracture line horizontally.
“Chara…no…” Your murmur aloud, wincing as the weakness echoes back to you. Your hand shakes as it reaches for the child, carefully turning their body over. Your mind cannot process the scene before you, your stomach heaving all its contents onto the floor. Her face stares blankly at the ceiling, one red eye and one skull socket. Her lips are pursed in a gentle smile, her bony teeth structure showing through on a few slits. There is discoloration due to the blood stains, her flesh absorbing the liquid like a sponge. Her cheeks are rosier, full like the color of wine. The blood paints her lips in temptation red, demanding all eyes to notice her as she walks in the room. The rest of her golden glow takes on a pink-fleshy shade, like the skin of a marinating pig.

Her shirt is torn open, exposing her small ribs into the cold air. Her organs hover in place within the bony cage, the dull shades of purple-grey and pink-grey blend into the black fleshy background. Her arms and legs appear in the same condition as the rest of her body, various pieces of bone and muscle poking out to greet the world without the restraint of her skin. Carefully you pull the broken child to you, tears running down your face as you nuzzle her head with yours.

“I am so sorry…I should have protected you, should have come for you the second I was done.” Wet splotches of tears plink against her skin, running down her face in a poor attempt to clean it. Her blood coats your skin, but you pay no mind. You feel her blood smearing around your face as you coddle the dead child.

White lights begin to absorb the grey, bathing your body and the room until it no longer exists.

You open your eyes, the room blurring around you as they attempt to adjust. The monitors beep loudly next to your head, the dripping of some fluid filling you with the urge to urinate. Each breath hurts like a bitch as it expands your ribcage, the lungs sigh in relief when you exhale. You wince as the assault of something fowl wafts into your nose. It smells like death had a baby with a five-month-old gallon of milk and then proceeded to have a three-way with a bag of trash. A rush of clean air thrusts back into your nose, bringing the stink with it.

‘My breath is rancid as hell.’

You reach to take off the accursed face piece keeping the nasty breath within, hissing slightly as the pain within your arm erupts once more. Your eyes blink, slowly adjusting to the item interfering with your plans. A small intruding piece of plastic pokes happily within the crevice of your arm, a plastic tubing feeding down into it. Your eyes follow the line up to a rather large plastic bag hanging precariously on a tall coat rack of sorts. There is liquid within the bag, clear as water but thick looking like gelatin. You watch with fascination as it releases a small clear drop into the tubing. The little drop races down the various curves and turns of the plastic, heading straight into your arm. Once it imbeds into your arm, a cooling feeling overtakes your senses. It makes your arm feel like it is sitting in a bucket of ice, racing up your arm into your chest cavity.

‘Feels weird as hell. Could potentially be filled with nullifying agents.’

Flashbacks of previous experiences with the drip bag flood your mind, refusing to allow you to believe the writing on it to be this IV solution. With a quick rip, your other hand sends the piece of plastic across the room. It ticks against the wall, crumbling to the floor only to roll around in failure. Almost immediately your arm blooms with purple, blood quickly surfacing through the small invasion of the body. You shrug, tearing the thin bed sheet into a small band-aid. It is an easy fix to wrap around your arm, tying it into a little bow.

You stiffen, your mind recalling the vibrant memory moments before awakening.
‘Chara…Chara needs me!’

You growl, noting yet another annoying piece of plastic within your other arm. It immediately sails out of your arm, clanking against a nearby window. Fixing the same treatment as your other arm, you position yourself off the bed, your toes dangling over the floor. Each movement is painful, shifting something around inside that should not be moving. You pay it no mind however, wincing as your bare feet contact the cold tile floor. It sends a brief shutter through your spine, popping every pore into a small flushing bump. A cloth gown moves with you as you adjust to the pressures of standing, the gown barely covering enough flesh. It encourages you however through little caresses an inch or two below your behind.

‘Huh…they got rid of my old clothing for…this…’

You are a little upset that your handmade clothing is completely gone, most likely scrapped into little bits of dirty fabric. It took you awhile to obtain them and to have them completely ripped from you…

‘No…focus…must find Chara.’

You fully take in your settings, your eyes flickering between the medical cot and the blaring machine next to it. A clipboard hangs at the end of the metal bed, various stats and notes scribbled loosely on the paper. A television hovers above, playing a rather bad show about baby daddies not paying up for their kids.

‘It appears to be either a nicer lab or a hospital. I would not put it past those bastards to deceive us into thinking this is a hospital.’

You take a few more steps away from the bed, growling as some mess of wires hold you back. The machine next to your bed blares louder, a warning siren. You feel your heart beating within your chest, the stickiness of a suction cup sliding off with the nervous sweat. You rip them off as well, wincing as the machine blares a singular long note. You quickly scamper out of the room, not waiting around to figure out what the sound exactly means for you.

The metal door, as it appears, leads you into a hallway full of bustling people. Doors line a good portion of the wall on your side as well as the wall across from you, signs leading in different directions. Various people scamper in different styles of dress, some a color of seafoam green button up with matching pants. Others appear in long, white lab coats, yelling and screaming for orderlies to get a patient to surgery or talking with civilians. Instinctively your hand grasps the door knob behind you, awaiting the possibility that one may drag you off for their sexual pleasure.

You count to five within your mind, slowly exhaling a breath as no one appears to take notice of you. Your fingers let go of the door, pushing off with a graceful shove in a random direction. Your feet slap against the tile, each step sounding slightly slicker than the last. Nerves bubble within your stomach, twitching your head in each direction as a new person races past you.

‘Will they find me? Will they lock me back in that room? Am I…free?’

Fear breaks you out of a nervous feeling, your eyes darting back and forth for any sign of the little human child. Your feet begin to run down the hallways, glancing at the nameplates outside for any indication of the child. You hide between halls when you hear the orderlies chatting to each other, giving you little to no useful information.

‘She has to be here right? Is she safe? Is she hurt? Why am I…?’

A hand halts your body in place, the giant grasp covering half of your shoulder. You immediately
jump away, sending threads of magic in their general direction. A gasp escapes your lips as your body crumbles to the floor, your fingers kneading the pained flesh desperately. Your magic appears to miss the figure looming over you, the strands shot in any other direction but straight. You growl, your mind circulating various escape plans from the capture, your eyes darting for a sign of weakness.

“Child, are you all right?” The voice is soft, kindness and concern lacing the notes. They hang in the air for a few seconds, a few seconds too long. The intimidating shadow kneels, their face coming into view. You let out a quiet growl, struggling to situate yourself into a sitting position. A furry goat woman kneels before you, her amethyst eyes sparkling despite the crummy lighting. Her muzzle is quite large, displaying her emotions like an open book. Her fur is a vibrant sheen of white, each hair curled perfectly in place against her large form. Two little pointed horns rest between her floppy ears, the points polished to a shine. One of her massive paws reach out toward you, causing you to scoot back.

“S…stay back!” You wheeze, your magic humming dangerously under your skin. This goat woman sounds genuine, her concern appearing more realistic than most of the actors. That did not stop her from being a bad person however, here to collect you back to the industry so the boss would not lose all of his “precious work”.

“But child, you are unwell. I may be able to assist…” You bark out a laugh, the sound rough against your ears. You let out a few coughs, the motions rattling your rib cage. The whole time the goat woman hovers over you, her hand half extended out.

“You do not wish to help! You are like they are: all promises to bring up hope only to shatter them into the floor.” Her muzzle turns into a frown, something upsetting glittering within her eyes. Your words appear to hurt the giant monster.

‘Good. I’m not here to make friends.’

“Child, I do not know who you are referring to, however if you are not careful, your stiches will open. Come with me.” Her hand reaches close again, her fingertips gently brushing your cheek. The movement is enough to snap your control, allowing the dark thoughts to enter.

“YOU JUST WANT TO TAKE ME BACK THERE!” You hiss, the world around you slowly dimming around the edges of your vision. Black seeps in, only a faint glow of red highlighting the target remains within line of sight. Your magic pools within your hands, the threads dancing dangerously, begging for some action. A crazed smile creases your face, your head tilting to the side as you raise your hands up.

“Well let me tell you something…” A laugh escapes your lips, the crazed sound bouncing in every direction bringing the feeling of dread with it.

“I.WILL.NOT.GO.BACK!”

“My queen!” You lash out, growling as the target immediately disappears. The magic tares up the floor, sending a few medical carts into the walls and into a few people. A large crater-like line fills the hallway, dusting the floor around it with the hidden soil.

“ARE YOU OKAY YOUR MAJESTY?” A squeaky voice impedes your thoughts, casting your murdering glare into the darkened hallway. The goat woman nods her head at a small blue orb, her hands and snout talking a mile a minute, the words lost on your ears. The skull nods vigorously, their face set in a grim line. You giggle to yourself, eying up the intruder.
“Got you…” You whisper, lashing your hand up and down with a quick motion. Dust flutters up, obscuring your vision of the target and the intruder. Something within your soul shifts, pushing your weight into the ground at a high frequency of gravity. You grunt, wincing slightly as your ribs impact the floor along with your soul. You stand with a struggle, panting as your legs shakily fight against the gravity. It appears to apply more pressure, the force strong enough to knock anyone off their feet. The feeling slowly dissipates, the sound of the target and intruder darting down the hallway fills your soul with determination.

“They want a chase?” You cackle, brushing the bits of annoying rubble out of your legs. Your legs sprint down the opposing hallway, listening for their feet smacking against the tiles. It is not hard as they are not trying to conceal their presence.

“They will get a chase.” The two continue to dart down various hallways, shouting apologies to passing personal. Twisting and turning, the continue to run, the surroundings slowly morphing into an older style of hospital. As you round another bend, their forms appear before you, merely a few feet ahead.

’It appears that training was good for something after all!’

Bones begin to sail past your face, the ends inches away from contacting your face. You easily deflect them with your strings, wrapping a few around, sailing a few back at the thrower. Very few peons who remain within the ward immediately move out of the way, their screams filling your soul with delight. Equipment flies, computers crash, files obliterating into small shreds of paper and ash.

‘They will get what is coming to them! For doing this to innocent people! For doing this to Chara!’

You see the duo ahead, the small skeleton flinging attacks left and right while he runs with the goat. You fling a few strands at their feet, watching as they latch onto the small one’s ankle. You give it a good tug, smiling gleefully as the skeleton squeals in protest. The goat woman stops, her face twisting into one of pain.

“GO ON WITHOUT ME YOUR MAJESTY! FIND MY BROTHER!” The skeleton yells, his body inching closer by the second. He attempts to throw bones as he comes closer, each one dissipating into the wall behind you. Your magic weaves around his body, his arms and legs strung together like a caterpillar going into its cocoon. You giggle, the voice coming out sounding as deranged as you feel.

“Well well my little hero. Seems you are in a sticky situation.” He lets out a groan, his arms struggling to break out of the hold. You giggle again at his antics, placing yourself at the end of his feet.

“Don’t even try honey. You are wasting precious time trying to break out of that. Now. Listen up.” His cerulean eyes glance up at you, a faint trail of blue sweat dripping off his skull. Something within the back of your mind finds the skeleton familiar, but the darker thoughts push forward, reminding you they are part of the problem. You growl, hovering within the skeleton’s personal bubble.

“I need to know where Chara is. What did you bastards do with her?”

“LANGUAGE!” You frown, giving a swift kick to the cocoon feet. He lets out a gasp, a flood of baby blue tears pricking the corner of his eyes.

“Look. I don’t give a fuck if you walk or not. Honestly, I don’t like hurting people, but Chara is important.” You kneel, grasping at the front of the cocoon. You pull him to your eye level, your eyes narrowing into the skeleton.
“So tell me where she is.” Something sends your body flying, the air whipping around you as you impact a wall. It rattles your wiggling bones, eliciting a hiss from your lips. The force holds you in place against the wall despite your best efforts to move. You glare at the intruder, their skeletal eye socket flaming with a vibrant orange. His hand is outstretched in front of him, his gaze appearing laid back. Despite the laid-back attitude, the dark sockets thrum at you with the thirst for vengeance. Internally your soul shivers at the sight.

“PAPS!” The little skeleton cheers, his body wiggling within his encampment. The skeleton breaks off your staring death match, glancing at the wiggling form below. A singular eyebrow arch raises up on their skull as they assess the smaller one’s condition. He gives a shrug, kneeling to help break the smaller one out.

“It appears that you are…”

“PAPS DON’T YOU…”

“Wrapped up in the situation. Looks like it has spun out of control.” The smaller skeleton groans in annoyance, giving the taller one a thump on his skull once he is freed. The taller one chuckles, extending a helping hand to the little guy. You blink at the two, your head slowly cocking to the side. Your smile slips into a frown, your mind fighting against the dark haze coating your vision. Something about the skeleton duo appears familiar. The darker voices remind you they could be the villains, taunting you to attack, to fail. The rational side of your mind however, vaguely recognizes the voices, their stance for battle even more so. Through the haze of your bloodlust, a memory surfaces.

*Two skeletons stand in the blasted hole opening, their eyes searching for a child, their voices carrying a singular name.*

**CHARA**

You shake your head, your fingers fighting to reach the top of your head. They do with some pain, the tips grasping at the midnight strands. The pain gives a small tug away from the fight, willing your mind to truly assess the situation. The darkness surrounding your vision slowly fades into the recesses of your mind, the world slowly returning to color.

‘How did I forget? The blue one is… Sans. Sans the skeleton. The orange one is his older asshole brother.’

“Sans…” You mumble, the name rolling off your tongue in familiarity. You glance up at the two, your eyes widening at the damage around you. The walls are torn, the paint chipped away to reveal the wood underneath. Lights hang limply by a few chords, a few bulbs smashed into tiny glass shards. A window or two nearby has also succumbed to your wrath, the glass missing a few pieces due to projectiles going through them.

“Ah…” You feel the same gravitational pull of your soul, this time the feeling is lighter as though you weigh nothing. Your body flings forward toward the skeleton brothers, the taller of the two holding his hand out. Just as you approach, he shifts his hand to the side, flinging your body into the damaged wall. It shatters the remaining planks of wood, sending splinters and a shot of pain right into your ribs. You barely have time to gasp for air as he shifts repeatedly, throwing your battered body around the hall. After what feels like eternity, the gravy recedes, dropping you unceremoniously to the floor.

“Shit!” You hiss out, clutching your ribs. They feel tender to the touch, a few holding on by the barest of threads. Blood seeps through your bandages as well as other openings. Pieces of glass and
wood scrape against your body from the flight, allowing your blood to coat the destroyed floor.

‘Not that I didn’t deserve it.’ You mumble within, cursing at your weakness. Of course this is a fucking hospital. They wouldn’t keep experiments in nicer facilities unless the state or some bullshit inspector comes.

“LANGUAGE!” The smaller one repeats. You glance up from your face plant, blowing a few tousled strands out of your eyes. They flutter back into your face, only a few obeying your orders.

“Sorry…Sans…” you wheeze out, each breath harder than the last. The skeletal eyes crinkle in worry, his body shifting uneasily between each foot.

“Looking…for…”

“X!” A familiar child’s voice floats through the space, little footsteps crunching over the rubble. Your soul perks up, the pain subsiding as said child comes into view. She runs toward you, her little green shirt with a yellow stripe waving in her created wind. Her little hands extend forward, her ruby little gems glittering despite the missing lighting. You smile at the child, carefully releasing a hand from your broken ribs to reach her. Your fingers brush hers before an orange glow hovers her above you. The smile falls from your face, your soul breaking slightly from the distance.

‘Why…do I care? She isn’t even my responsibility…’

“Papyrus! Put me down this instant!” The child flails, her face whipping back to glare at her uncle. Sans looks as though he wishes to say something, but his brother reaches an arm out, halting his voice.

“Can’t do kiddo. Could be dangerous still.” The orange fucking skeleton shrugs his shoulders, whipping out a white box of cigarettes. Something about his attitude stirs something within your soul, a protective need bubbling forward. It feels…odd.

“Put…her…down…now.” You growl, carefully pushing your legs off the ground. Your body wavers from the change in gravity, your legs feeling like two noodles instead of muscle. Your arm remains securely wrapped around your ribs, taking delicate care not to anger the injury further. The skeleton stares at you for a second, his hand lighting up the cancer stick between his teeth. He takes one look at you, exhaling a ring. Papyrus laughs at you, the laugh void of any emotions. It sounds cruel, uncaring, like the assistants at the lab when they mocked you. Black slowly creeped its way into the edges of your vision, your mind slowly slipping back into fight mode.

Sans, appearing to sense the sudden shift in you, tugs at his brother’s sleeve.

“BROTHER! IT APPEARS THAT SHE WILL NOT HARM CHARA!” Sans hums, glancing between the two of you. Papyrus puffs out a ring of smoke off to the side, his gaze never leaving yours.

“She…she attacked because she thought we were harming Chara!”

“And what makes you believe…”

“She did not hurt either one of us! Her Majesty said she was having an episode!” The little skeleton stands proud, turning towards his sibling. “Like you!”

Your step falters for a second, your eyes slowly pushing the black away. ‘An episode? Me? Wasn’t the woman from before trying to take me back to the lab? Wasn’t that the reason she appeared to care so deeply? Isn’t that why Sans was trying to protect her? Because she employed him as a
“X…” You slowly turn your gaze to the floating child, her hands outstretched, waiting. Carefully you reach forward, holding back a string of curses as your ribs shifted in protest. Her little hands carefully grasp your fingers, trailing down to get a better grip around your wrist. They appear fuller, brighter, the skin softer and supple like a child’s. Her shirt bunches as you give the child a tug, her body carefully descending into your awaiting arms. You hold her at face level for a second, your eyes drinking in the sight. The wounds lining her face are nothing but a memory, a scar or two marring her otherwise perfect flesh. She is dressed in normal children clothing from her striped shirt to the glittery light up shoes on her feet. Your soul thrums happily at her well-being but you do not understand why.

“Chara…my dear sweet child…” You murmur quietly, rubbing the top of her head with your cheek affectionately. The hair tickles your skin, poking occasionally into your eyeball, but you do not care. You feel her shift to get a better grip around your neck, allowing her feet to rest along your hip bones. She lets out a sigh against the crevice of your neck, the hot air tickling your skin.

“You are…unharmed. Thank goodness.” You breathe, your arms circling around her gently. Her body does not feel like bones anymore, the meat below gaining more nutrients to regain its natural form. The child shifts slightly in your form.

“X…you know it was not nice for you to attack my mom like that.” You stiffen, carefully prying the child away. She looks up at you in disappointment, her eyes scrunching together as she attempts to be stern.

‘Mother? So, the goat woman is…’ You let out a sad chuckle under your breath. It squeezes something within your soul, the pain beating along with the pain of your ribs.

‘Of course, a kind soul such as this child should have a mother. It is…only rightfully so…’

“You could have hurt her or Uncle Sans, but…” She shifts slightly, her eyes widening as a bright smile covers her features. “I forgive you. You woke up in a strange place without any explanation or familiar faces. Especially a place that reminds you of…” She wrinkles her nose in disgust, not daring to mention the name. You are thankful for the sentiment. She taps your face, drawing your attention to her once more.

“My mom also extends her forgiveness as well. She realizes she may have spooked you due to her lack of introduction.” She giggles, nuzzling your cheek with hers.

“She has a bad habit of forgetting to introduce herself.”

“Chara!” The soft voice scolds playfully, causing the child to turn toward it. Chara giggles, wiggling within your grip until you place her on the floor. Chara sticks out her little pink tongue, making a soft raspberry sound.

“You know it’s true mom!” The goat woman huffs, crossing her arms to look angry. You see on her muzzle however the corners of her mouth twitching upward. She sighs, brushing the dust off her outfit. It is a beautifully crafted royal purple dress with a sweetheart neckline. Her chest appears to fit snugly within the fabric, giving just the right amount of cleavage to let you know, yes, it is all real. It extends to her ankles, showing off her sparkling purple matching flats. On each article of clothing, you note a gold triforce like symbol.

Someone carefully grasps your hand, drawing you out of examination mode. Chara grins broadly up at you, giving gentle tugs in their general direction. You glance between the child and the skeletons
in front of the goat monster, watching each shift uneasily.

“Oh boys, it will be all right. She will not harm me, will you dear?” Her gaze shoots up to meet your own, creasing your face in a warmth.

“N…no.” You stutter, mentally cursing at yourself.

‘You never stutter. Why the hell are you doing so now?’

Your feet walk hesitantly towards the trio, your grip on the child’s hand increasing slightly. She does not seem to mind, giving her own comfortable tug back. The two of you approach, the skeletal bodies flanking either side of the goat woman. Sans’ eyes noticeably shift to you, his gaze never leaving your face. Time appears to slow as you shift your gaze to the taller skeleton. His sockets glare into your own, a resounding warning growl echoing the small space. His teeth slightly part, allowing two small incisor teeth to poke out of the otherwise flat bone.

“I’ll be watching you.” He growls. Your mouth opens to retort back, but the moment you do, the scene changes. Time appears to stabilize, your mouth flopping open for no real reason. Papyrus lets a ring of smoke out through his teeth, his pinpricks mocking you.

“X, let me introduce you to my momster.” Papyrus and the goat woman giggle at the child’s joke while Sans groans about the two ‘tainting the human.’ The goat woman reaches out, grasping your free hand within her furry one. It is warm to the touch, heat seeming to radiate out of every pore on her hand. Like hugging a giant Shetland sheepdog with just your hand. You glance up, your face warming under her kind gaze.

“Greetings child. My name is Toriel…”

“THE MONSTER QUEEN!” Sans cuts in, his eye lights igniting into little stars. You take a step back, your frame shivering at the information overload.

‘The goat woman…the woman you nearly assaulted…is the queen of all the monsters… heh….hehehe…’

“Hehe…heh…” Your body collapses to the floor, the darkness taking out the events around you.

‘Well…shit…’
Sorry for the wait everyone! Chapter 6 is now up! This is a whopping 13 pages in Word, so it is a large chapter with a lot of moving pieces!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

-Beep-
-Beep-

You run down the hallway with the doctors, demanding to know what is going on with your mother. They shove you aside, muttering something about being a brat. Monitors flash, screaming out numbers and lines that you cannot process. You watch as you run, the faces of the employees shift into a panic. They break through a set of double doors, promptly closing them before you could slip in. One of the employees stands in front of the small windows, giving you a look of disgust as the metal clicks into place.

‘What…what did I do?’ You whimper, your eyes glazing over with tears. They walk away from you, leaving all the unanswered questions within your mind. Sadness slowly turns to confusion and immediately after into rage. Tears drip down the corners of your eyes as they squint to glare at the offending doors. You shakily raise your fists, giving the door a good slam.

“Let me in there! I need to help her! MOM!” You scream, banging your tiny fists against the wood. You do this for a few more thrusts, the hits slowing down as dread fills your being. The last hit sits on the door, unfurling into your five pudgy fingertips.

‘Is it…my fault?’

“Let me in...” You sob, sliding your palms down the door. They swing limply by your side, refusing to do anything but weigh your being down. A large hand carefully rests on your shoulder, causing your body to immediately recoil.

“What do you want?” You sniff, scrubbing your eyes with the backs of your palms. The skin inflames, the mucus membrane drying from constant impact. The offender does not appear to take your words to heart, a kind smile gracing their features. It is one look you know well: pity. You squint through your tears, glaring at them.

“Are you gunna prevent me from seeing my mama too?” You mumble, sniffing the snot back into your nose. You watch in wonder as the tall person kneels, coming to a perfect height level to talk. They shake their head, offering a kind smile and a gentle hand to you. You stare at it hesitantly, looking up into a familiar pair of eyes.

“Come my child. Let us sit and wait for her in the waiting room.” When their hand comes close, you allow it, snuggling into the warmth radiating from their palm. Their fingers brush a disheveled lock from your face, settling it behind your ear. You carefully take their hand, your smaller one immediately engulfed in the warmth and safety it offers you. You silently nod, your other hand clutching the rather large clothing on the creature. It swings as you both walk away, your fingers
unconsciously grasping tightly at the fabric like a lifeline. They do not protest, merely petting your head with their other hand as you make your way to the waiting room.

“Fuck…” You grumble, waking up to a familiar hospital beeping sound. Your head pounds, thumping like a rave party on its sixth day of non-stop partying. Your lungs struggle to let a breath in as they thrust painfully against your ribcage. As your eyes make out the room around you, you groan in protest at the excessive amount of wires they have hooked up. The offending IV needle settles in the crevice of your arm once more, a thick layer of tape holding it against your skin. There are at least three spiral wires running up your hospital gown, the chords chilly against the flesh. The world around you blurs, an immediate hunger following after the dizzy spell.

‘They must have taken blood.’ You sigh, fidgeting to sit up better in bed. Each movement is painful as you shift out of the laying position, specifically anywhere pertaining to the ribcage and up. The machine noting your distress begins to blare to life, the numbers rising rapidly on the little black monitor. The sound splinters through your mind, piercing the sore neuron meat beneath the skull.

‘Shut the fuck up!’ You growl, hastily reaching through the neck of the gown. Your body winces at the movements, twitching as you attempt to bend your arm in a flexible way. Your fingertips brush the top of one of the suction cups…

“I would not do that, my child.” You let out a gasp, everything flying at once. Your hand attempts to flail out from the odd position within your gown, jutting forward within your breast area. The dress itself makes a slight ‘rip’ sound, the neckline turning a little draftier than you would like. Your mid-section attempts to turn at the intruding voice, violently twisting the damaged bones. You let out a yelp, your IV hand sailing up to cover your mouth only to let a string of curses through your lips in pain.

“Who the fuck…” you hiss, your eyes finally focusing in on the voice. The threat dies from your throat, drying up like the desert. If air was difficult before, it suddenly becomes unbearable to breathe. You feel your body pumping adrenaline causing everything within your face to fuse up to a warm cherry red.

Her majesty stares sternly in your direction, her mouth curved in a disappointed frown. Her form is rigid, sitting erect and regal as every great monster ruler should. Upon her snout, little circular glasses lay, softening her features. Her giant paws reach up to them, carefully folding them into her lap. They settle above a book she appears to be reading. Something about snails?

“Language.” She states. Your eyes fall to the mattress, the blush rising on your face deepening to a nice rust red.

“Sorry,” you mutter. You hear her sigh, a furry paw carefully pushing a strand off your face. You stiffen slightly, untensing a moment later as her fingers brush over your mane.

“Oh it is all right my child. You have been through a lot these past couple of days.” You sigh, threading your fingers together within your lap.

“I…”

“I know.” She whispers. Your eyes widen, darting to meet her amethyst gaze. They are deep, the pools darkening with the weight of the world resting on her shoulders. Loss drifts in and out of her gaze, reflecting the years of suffering she silently endures.
“I understand that it was wrong for you to attack those close to me. It could have potentially put civilians at risk or possibly a better reason for monster hate groups to rise with a new vengeance.” Your eyebrows pull together in confusion.

‘Monster hate groups? That is a thing? I thought…’

“I can see it on your face: a monster hate group? I thought monsters hated humans?” You blink at the goat queen, your eyes widening slightly.

‘How did she know?!’

“I know many looks my child. Especially having thr…two of my own. However, that talk is for another day. Preferably when you are well.” You give her a nod, shifting slightly.

“Now, despite the circumstance, I am willing to let the fiasco go on the account of you taking care of my child Chara.”

“Chara is your child?!” A faint blush covers her white fur, her paw reaching up to cover her muzzle.

‘The queen’s child is Chara?!’ You blink, your mouth gaping like a fish out of water. Which, in this situation, you are. Her other hand makes itself busy messing with her civilian clothing, smoothing the wrinkles out. Jeans coat her large furry legs. A royal purple button up encases her torso, the fabric flowing loosely around her waist. Vaguely you can make out the golden chain hiding beneath the collar. You swallow nervously, your fingers twiddling with the new sheet. The fibers quickly unravel as you wiggle it back and forth, the string pile steadily growing. Tension grows between the two of you, your nerves causing the machine to freak out behind you.

“How are you feeling?” Her voice smooths out, concern lacing her words. You blink owlishly, a nervous blush brushing your face.

“F…fine.” You stutter, looking down at the blanket with a scowl.

‘What am I doing? She’s just another monster. Sure, she has a large title, but she could be as bad as the rest of ‘em. Who knows? She could be lying about the monster hate groups!’

Perhaps I should get the doctor…” She mutters mostly to herself, her gaze darting between you and something on the wall. Your mind pulls out of your thoughts long enough to notice a small beige button on the wall. It appears worn, some of the sheen washed away by various fingerprints. ‘CALL’ hangs directly above it on a slightly yellow paper, the lamination reflecting the lights directly into your sockets.

“I don’t need a doctor,” you grumble, whipping your head back and forth to dislodge her paw. She removes it, the frown remaining.

“Been fine up until now.” You snort.

“Yes, but until now you have not been properly cared for.” She states matter-of-factly. The queen of monsters stands, her book carefully placed on the nightstand next to you.

“I will be getting Doctor Undyne to examine you and to determine what measures need to be taken to ensure full recovery.” The queen leaves no room for rebuttal, her words absolute as the sky is blue. Still, your mouth hangs open, ready to disagree with her insistent need for a doctor.

“X!” Your fixation turns toward the doorway into the room, a bright-eyed Chara poking their head over a bundle of yellow flowers. The queen chuckles, her paw covering the smile growing on her
“Chara dear, did you get those just for your friend here?” She beams up, her little cheek apples crinkling into her eye space.

“You bet! Frisk even helped me!” You raise a quizzical eyebrow at the child, your head tilting to the side. The queen lets out an easy laugh, giving you a gentle pat on the head.

“I’m sure he did my child. Will you watch over our friend here while I go grab Doctor Undyne?” She nods eagerly, her head whipping around to something behind her. The words are soft, the sound lost among the louder ones dominating the room.

“You bet! Frisk says he will help too!”

“Well then,” The queen turns toward you, a patient smile tilting her cheeks up into a wide grin. “I leave you in capable hands.” She takes her leave, stopping momentarily to ruffle two sets of heads. When the door shuts quietly behind Chara, she rushes forward, dragging along another child. They look less than enthused to be here, their copper eyes drinking in the room, absorbing every detail. Their hair is cut short, shorter than the bob atop of Chara’s head, yet the color is an identical chocolate brown. His hair swings back and forth across part of his face, constantly struggling against gravity. The back appears follows down to a point, disappearing behind his neck.

“X! These are for you! Frisk and I picked them from our dad’s garden!” She whips the flowers onto the queen’s book, hiding the cover within the pile of golden flowers. You take a second to appreciate their golden glow, the energy humming within each petal, the ever so soft whispers each flower holds. It has been far too long since you last saw a living thing other than the peons and the experiments. Your hand reaches out hesitantly, halting a few inches from the closest petal.

‘What if it breaks when I touch it? Will it wilt? Will it survive?’

The child, sensing your hesitancy, grabs your wrist and carefully lays your tips into a bundle of petals. They are waxy yet easily slip through each fingertip like felt. Each pod gives off a smell you cannot quite identify, but it is sweet, reminding you of the first break of daylight announcing spring.

“Beautiful…” you mumble, ripping your gaze away from the flowers. The two kids look up at you, one with a bright grin and the other with a neutral expression.

“Thank you, children…it is…truly a treat.” Chara wastes no time climbing up the metal bed, happily situating herself within your lap. You wince as she wiggles her behind on a few settling bruises, but you do not show it.

“This is my brother Frisk! Frisk, this is X! The lady I told you about!” Chara animates, giving you a large grin. Her cheeks fluster slightly, the apples turning a tulip pink color. You glance at Frisk, noting his features remain stoic, only briefly giving you a nod. He wears a dark blue t-shirt and jeans, the pants slightly longer than his legs. It covers up the black sneakers below except for the little toe sticking out beneath. His skin is pale, paler than Chara’s by a good measure. It looks sickly, like off white paint with hints of pink beneath the surface. It accentuates the flecks of red within his copper hues.

“Come on Frisk!” Chara cheers from your lap, gesturing the free leg next to her. The child stares between the two of you, his eyes flickering back and forth. You give a hesitant nod, joining the child’s hand in the patting motion. His eyes widen slightly, a faint pink deepening on his cheeks. He joins his sister, climbing up the metal bed deftly. He gives you one more glance, his eyes flickering between the spot and your face. He appears pleased with what he is looking for, settling onto your
other leg.

“So Frisk,” you begin, watching the child through a steely gaze. He does not waver, returning a similar gaze unknown to his sister.

“How did you end up as Chara’s brother?” He stares, his eyes blinking slowly back at you. For a brief second, red flashes across his eyes, coating the copper with a sickly blood color. It immediately vanishes, a toothy grin stretching across his face.

‘Of course he knows what he did. Little bastard.’

His fingers twirl and move quickly, letters and bunny ears passing without a second thought. Chara giggles, her locks fluffing across her face. You cannot understand the exchange, your mind resurfacing the word for this type of talk only to come up short. A phantom hand of sorts startles you out of your mulling, poking and prodding at your soul. Crisp, like the crunch of the fallen leaves. A slight chill hanging in the air, absorbing the nightly sounds of feet crunching the leaves and the animals conversing. A deep, foreboding warning about the winter to come. It is a startling contrast to the warming glow of Chara’s soul.

‘This must be Frisk. Didn’t know the brat could talk with his soul.’

Your soul reaches out, encasing some of the chill into its form. Immediately you hear a male voice calling out to you, the sound echoing within your mind.

“Hey stupid creature. Can you hear me?”

You feel a growl rumble within the back of your throat, but you hold it down. It struggles to break free, to scream out at the child that you are far from ‘stupid’. Frisk’s grin widens, his hands moving faster than the eye could possibly see.

“I will take that as a yes. Now listen,” He pauses, his fingers slowing down.

“My sister is a precious child and I do not want the likes of you tainting her pure soul. So I am saying this once: hurt my fucking sister and I will ensure you die a slow, painful death.”

A chuckle escapes, startling the two out of their wits. Frisk glares at you, glancing to his sister giving her a gentle smile. Your eyes crinkle as the laughter continues, tears threatening to fall from your eyes.

‘This little brat is trying to threaten me?’

The two children continue to look at you quizzically, Frisk letting out a dramatic puff as his fingers rest within his lap. You calm down after a few beats, wiping the tears away with your good, not attached to the IV, hand. You ruffle Frisk’s hair, a grumble resounding from his little throat, his eyes piercing into your soul. His little hands smack your hand away, a faint blush brushing his features.

“Don’t worry squirt. I will take good care.” He huffs, nodding, but not before sticking his tongue out between his ashen lips. Chara giggles, mimicking the action through little fits of laughter. You roll your eyes, musing her hair as well. She continues to giggle, leaning into the affectionate touch.

“You two are odd,” You mumble, a slow smile poking at the corners of your mouth.

“HUMANS!” The door bursts open, the hinges swinging frantically from one bolt. The wall behind it holds strong, obtaining a few war cracks splintering up the wall from impact. The small skeleton stands in the light of the doorway, his hands around various plastic containers. A giant toothy grin
fills his face, a stark contrast to the moments of fear you have seen. His eye lights glow a cerulean color, the light brightening at the notice of the two children on your lap.

The little ball of bones rushes forward, his steps appearing to literally teleport to the side of your bed. Chara giggles within your lap, giving the small skeleton a wave. Frisk on the other hand growls under his breath, inching closer to lean against your body. You raise a quizzical eyebrow at the runt, but allow him to be. Behind the skeleton, the metal clips, the door groaning as it crashes into the floor.

“Heya Sans!” Chara bubbles happily, her hand reaching out to rub the top of the skeleton’s skull. He fuses in a blue blush, the grin stretching farther up his face.

“GREETINGS HUMAN CHARA! I SEE YOU BROUGHT HUMAN FRISK TO SEE THIS HUMAN!” She nods her head, giving your numbing leg a pat. The two continue to converse, well, more like Chara talking normally against someone attempting to win a screaming contest. Frisk refuses to say a word to the skeleton, tucking his head into the crevice of your neck.

“Fucking skeleton. Always so fucking loud and obnoxious.”

You sigh, gently petting the top of his messy head. You feel his body stiffen slightly, relaxing a moment later as you continue the soothing motion.

“Behave,” you mumble into his ear. “He is excitable not obnoxious. Let the two be. Your sister deserves that much after everything she has been through.” His voice is quiet, his mind mumbling incoherent things within your soul. You allow the child their privacy, watching in mild curiosity at the two interacting. When the skeleton isn’t threatening to hurt you within an inch of your life, he appears child-like, yelling and screaming when a topic is something of interest while keeping quiet to listen to their friend. He still wears his battle armor, the dents from the previous encounters popped back into place. There are some spots that appear painted over, attempting to hide the damage, but it is unnoticeable unless you looked for it.

‘Wonder if the kid has any other clothing than the armor. Or they are always on guard…not that it’s of my concern.’

‘….AND HOW ARE YOU FEELING HUMAN?’ You jump, glancing between the two. Chara merely giggles, covering her mouth with her hand. Sans stares expectantly at you, his arms pushing against the metal framing of the bed. He leans up slightly within your personal bubble, the happy-go-lucky face blocking a good portion of the room.

‘…Fine…’ You reply a little stiffly. The skeleton’s smile wavers for a second, the corners dipping slightly lower in the smile. Something flickers past his gaze, a memory of sorts appearing to surface. The brow ridge above his eye sockets crinkle slightly, the bone moving without hesitation. The little triangular nose bone within his face lets out soft breaths, the wind whistling quietly through the bone. There is a small fracture along the ridge of his skull, cratering around to the back where you no longer can trace it. Something within your soul twinges, the feeling of guilt bubbling up.

‘Did I…cause that? I mean, not that it truly matters. They were the ones to attack me first. It was out of self-defense.’

Your cheeks mold to the force of cold hands pushing them slightly inward. It purses your lips slightly away from the face while pushing the excessive skin up into your cheek bone. Your eyes squint nervously, your hands reaching up to remove the skeletal fingertips from your face. Each child, curse their sittings, hold fast to each hand, allowing the skeleton to do what it wishes with your face.
'Traitors.'

“Human, you are well…aren’t you?” San’s voice whispers, his cooling breath shocking the warmth out of your face. His boney fingers dig slightly into the skin, each digit giving a different pressure than the ones around it. They are cool, like ice cubes or your breath after chewing a piece of mint gum.

“’m fine.” You mutter, your gaze darting between the two children. They look up at you expectantly, waiting for something to happen. You shake your head out of the skeleton’s grasp, moving slightly back with the kids.

“Nothin’ you need to worry yourself about. I can take care of myself.” Your voice comes out harsher than needed, your soul fuming under the surface.

‘I am not broken. I do not need this fucking sympathy.’

The skeleton appears to nod, the smile painted on his face returning to the high points of his cheekbone. He turns toward the chair where he put the containers on mystery things. He pops open one of the red lids, allowing the scent to waft through the air. It smells slightly spicy, the notes of red pepper flakes, black pepper, and hot sauce coating the beefy undertones. There is a crisp smell as well, like things plucked from a garden. There is a tangy note within the air as well, something you cannot entirely place.

Sans turns around, holding out the food within his hand like a masterpiece. A singular corn shell taco settles within his glove, the mess magically avoiding staining his glove with its greasiness.

“BEHOLD HUMAN! A GET-WELL TACO THAT WILL SURELY LIFT YOUR SPIRITS!” Frisk snorts, his face shaking back and forth.

“I wouldn’t trust his cooking. Last time we ate it, we all got food poisoning after.” His voice appears to snort.

“I would check it for glitter first before eating it.”

You blink owlishly between Frisk and the taco, your face paling at the sight of the food.

‘Glitter? Who the fuck puts glitter in food?!’

“Well HUMAN? ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR TASTEBUDS TO BE TAKEN INTO THE MAGINIFICANCE THAT IS THE MAGIFICANT SANS’ COOKING?!”

“Um…” He eagerly shoves the taco within range of your lips, the smells assaulting your nose in temptation.

‘It surely smells like a well-cooked taco.’

Your eyes scan through the ingredients, looking for an out of place sparkle between each layer of meat cheese and condiments.

‘Certainly looks like a taco.’

You glance between the two children, avoiding the eager gaze of the skeleton before you. Chara gives you a thumbs up, a bright smile remaining on her face. Frisk on the other hand slowly shakes his head, his eyes begging you to refuse the morsel. Your stomach growls in retaliation, telling your mind to shut up and eat it already. It is the first real food you have had in a long time and
opportunities such as this should not be wasted. Your mouth parts, inching forward to bite into the crunchy shell. Vaguely through your chewing you hear a ‘mwehehehe!’ but it is lost as the flavor assaults your tongue.

The meat is slightly burnt, an undertone of bitter charred meat slaps at your tongue. The sauce coating it hits like a truck next, the burning spice flaring up your sinuses to expel anything evil floating around. The flavor is robust however, the notes of pepper and hot sauce working together to create a purré salsa texture. The sharp strands of melted cheddar cheese slap next, bringing the shredded watery strands of lettuce along with it. They help equal out some of the heat encasing your mouth, allowing the rest of the bite to be pleasant. The dollop of sour cream is the last to smack down, nullifying the flavors within your mouth into a tart, creamy cavern.

You let out an involuntary moan, shaking the children’s hands to grasp the taco out of the skeleton’s hand. It may not be the best damn taco you have ever had, but right now it felt like it. You scarf the whole thing down in a matter of seconds, your stomach shivering involuntarily at the prospect of real food. It quickly fills you up, pushing away the gnawing hunger for the time being.

“I AM GLAD YOU LIKE IT HUMAN FOR I, THE MAGNIFICANT SANS, HAVE BROUGHT MORE FOR YOUR SNACKING PLEASURE!” You blink at him for a second, eyeing the various containers situated on the chair. Your eyes glance back at the skeleton, a true smile splitting across your face for a second.

“I could fucking marry you right now.”

“LANGUAGE!” His voice shouts, a blue tint dusting his cheekbones.

“Knock knock.” A tapping sound fills the room from the doorway, a shadow looming over the fallen door.

“Whose there?!” Chara immediately answers. You feel Frisk muttering under his breath, his mind vocalizing his thoughts through Sans.

“BROTHER DON’T YOU DARE!”

“Wooden shoe.”

“Wooden shoe who?”

“Wooden shoe like to hear another joke?” Chara bursts into a fit of giggles, the sound drowned out by the two male counterparts groaning.

“TERRIBLE! SIMPLY TERRIBLE PAPYRUS!” The taller skeleton smirks, the waft of his lit cigarette making its way over.

“You’re smiling though.” The short skeleton stomps his foot, crossing his arms. The corners of his smile twitch anxiously, attempting to keep a full-blown grin down.

“I AM AND I HATE IT!”

Papyrus saunters over, his elongated strides clicking against the tile floor. Behind him, a tall blue woman scurries in, her head absorbed into the clipboard she is holding. He stands in attention next to his brother, his hands stuffed loosely into the hoodie pockets. You glare up at the taller skeleton who in turn glares down at you, the white pinpricks dimming within his socket.

“O..oh! I see you are a…awake.” The shaking voice draws your attention around the skeleton
brothers. The blue woman shifts nervously back and forth, her webbed fingers tightening and loosening around the wooden clipboard within her hand. Little blue three point fins stick out around her cheek area, brushing just under her fiery red head of hair. Part of the hair covers nearly half of her face, the large lock hiding the other eye no matter how often she shifts. The rest of it appears pulled back behind her head into a high ponytail.

“M…my name is D…Doctor U…Undyne. I t…took care of y…you when t…they b…brought you in.” Her speech impediment irks at your nerves a fraction, the shaking wording along with hesitant pausing leaves little to the desire with this one.

‘She still helped you in some weird way. Probably best to let her be…for now.’

You give a small nod to the fish-like woman, watching her cat-like eye scan over the information quickly. They are bright, bright as the yellow flowers the children have gathered for you. Within their brightness however, flecks of a rich gold rim around her elongated pupil, and the tiniest hint of copper dotting the surface. She flicks her mouth open in a shaky smile, revealing a rather impressive rowing of piranha sharp teeth.

“So w…what is y…your n…name?” You stare blankly at her. She wiggles within her spot, her fingers nervously itching around the board, her gaze sweeping the room. The room reeks with awkward conversation, clinging to your skin like damp clothing: uncomfortable and cold. Undyne notices the change as well, beads of sweat falling down the side of her visible face.

“A…ah th…that is ok…kay.” She gives you a nervous smile.

“C…Chara…F…Frisk…w…would you p…please?” She gestures the floor, the underlying meaning hanging on her motion. The two go to move as per her command, but something within settles uneasily within your soul. Your hands involuntarily wrap around the small midsections, carefully pulling each form further into your lap. Your lips curl upward, your teeth baring defensively as a growl rumbles the back of your throat. The tips of the room blur, blood red seeping into your vision.

“You. Will. Not. Take. Them.” The room fills with static as magic all around activates, sparks visibly flying in the open air. Various wisps of color swarm around the bodies, each one holding a hidden ability within. You feel your own magic flare at the challenge, your eyes darting between the smaller skeleton and the taller one. The fish gives off faint magical residue, but it like her personality, is meek. A red aura illuminates to your right, flaring brighter than all within the room. Your eyes cast a glance to Frisk, his eyes alight with a luminescent red. A wicked smile caresses his face, a murderous intent lying within his gaze.

“That is quite enough of that my child.” A regal voice breaks the tension, her authoritative tone dispelling the magic. Each body around you visibly relaxes, their stiff forms slouching into a normal posture. Frisk ebbs his magic flow down, a pout marring his face. It takes you a moment longer than the rest, your eyes closing as your body wills it away.

“You are in trouubllee.” Frisk’s voice echoes, taunting and mocking you with a ten-year-old smugness. You give his side a poke, earning an immediate wiggle. You slowly open your eyes, your body stiffening as it attempts to erect the perfect posture. Queen Toriel enters the room in commoner clothing but it does not lessen the powerful aura she gives off. Each step of her sneakers echo through the mostly silent room, each stroke of her stride rustling the jeans her legs sport. The purple top, no longer wrinkled from sitting looks pressed, the lines crisp without a single wrinkle. Her eyes give you a passing stare as she stops next to the fish woman, placing a gentle paw on her shoulder.

“How is she doing doc?” Undyne’s face sets to a professional mask, the weird nervous twist of face relaxing.
“Her physical wounds are healing at a rather quick pace. This may be due to the numerous colors within her soul or her natural magical abilities. It is hard to distinguish but my hypothesis leads to her natural ability. Her ribs will need a few days to reset back into place, but otherwise she should be good to go in roughly five days.” The goat queen nods, her concerned gaze fixating onto the skeleton brothers.

“Sans, why don’t you and Papyrus take Frisk and Chara to the garden outside? I hear it is quite lively with other kids.” Sans turns around, his body armor back pressing against the metal. Excitable energy radiates off his form, giving the bed a slight rattle.

“WOWIE! MORE HUMANS JUST LIKE HUMAN CHARA AND FRISK?!” She gives a patient nod, a small smile curling on her lips. Before you can protest, the children are dragged off your lap much to a disgruntled Frisk by a pair of skeletal hands. You blink, the children disappearing within a few seconds. Vaguely you hear a scream down the hall, the footsteps halting for a second while a rather loud apology rings through. A puff of smoke washes into your face, the nicotine charring smell causing a fit of coughs to shake your lungs.

“Guess I better make sure they don’t destroy the hospital further.” The gruff voice mumbles, his footsteps slapping against the floor in a slow, steady walk. You glare at his backside, resisting the urge to flip him off under the watchful eye of the queen and the “doctor”.

Undyne approaches slowly, crouching bellow the bed to pull out a few medical supplies. They are of the basic wellness variety: a blood pressure pump, a temperature reader, and a bright as hell laser white light to blind you. You take a slow, steady breath as she prepares, pushing yourself outward to ignore the examination. She starts with the boa constricting cuff, wrapping it securely on your bicep. It squeezes as she pumps the little rubber bubble, the red needle plinking up the twenty incremental numbers. Like a breath, it releases the needle, the numbers rapidly decreasing back to zero. You watch her scribble with a bored expression, your gaze staring aimlessly.

A startling bright white light spooks you out of your drifting, the light receptors within your eyes begging to shut it out.

“Just follow this light with your eyes.” You do without a word, your eyes watering at the prolonged exposure to the air. She clicks the annoying light away, scratching once more onto her board. The tests continue as such, taking your weight, which is a startling 90’ish pounds, your height dubbing you a medium five foot six person. Everything points to malnutrition due to your captivity, not that you are remotely surprised. The two monsters turn slightly, their lips moving in a quiet conversation. You make out bits and pieces of the conversation, your eyes casting at the blanket your fingers have taken up in destroying…again.

“I…am surprised she still functions.” Undyne whispers. “She appears to have suffered from numerous precise incisions, the cuts nearly gone except for a few scars.” Toriel gasps quietly under her breath, a paw resting at the tip of her muzzle.

“Are you sure they are not…?” Undyne shakes her head, her hair flowing easily behind her.

“They are too clean and precise to be self-harm. They look calculated, planned, hitting major arteries or organ locations.”

You mentally snort, the newly acquired blanket nearly in scraps like your first.

‘Of course they were precise. They wanted to see the fruits of their labor first hand.’

“Furthermore, her soul…” Their whispers die to a silent conversation, your ears struggling to hear
even the smallest morsel of information. You know your soul is probably the ugliest piece of shit, tainted with those who have fallen for some person’s sick thrills. The colors and cuts a solid reminder of why the bastards must pay.

“Undyne, could you please leave for a few moments? I wish to talk to our new friend for a moment.” Your eyes snap back in attention, shock clearly filling your mind. Undyne nods, flipping through various papers on her board.

‘The queen wishes to…speak with me? About what?’

“O…of c…course. I have a f…few patients t…to che….eck on.” The fish woman gives you a gentle wave, her steps racing out of the room as her name pages over an intercom. A quiet lull falls over the room, the sounds of the monitors falling into a silent hum in the background. On the outside, your facial expressions are neutral, your fingers mindlessly playing with the strands of fabric. Internally however, your mind begins to panic. Sweat coats your metaphorical hands, the air growing a few degrees warmer over the comfort threshold.

“The children have taken quite a liking to you.” Toriel nods, her hands clasping in front of her, her back straightening slightly. You shrug, your eyes meeting her patient gaze.

“Guess so.” The silence fills back in, the apparent awkwardness residing on both sides.

“You know,” she begins, her mind drifting to a far-off time.

“When the first child fell into the Underground, they were almost like you. They did not trust easily, often resulting into violent lashes to keep people away.” She shakes her large head, a small laugh escaping her muzzle.

“My son took quite a liking to them regardless, proudly proclaiming he will be their friend. To show them that there is good in the world, for you see, the child’s soul was dark.” Your body stiffens, your mind flashing to the soul chart the “doctors” had you study to better assess a target. Each human soul is bright and colorful, each one holding a meaning and a locked ability. As human’s age, the colors can morph and change, dulling the natural powers they possess. Children however, hold the brightest of all the colors, sticking to one solid color. Red means determination. Blue means integrity. Indigo means curiosity.

‘A dark or black soul… is an indicator of deep hatred to the point of encasing the true color with a sickly tar color. A fate resigning the host to a swift death.’

“One day, the child came into the house, their face a sickly color. They immediately collapsed onto the threshold of our household, dying there a few seconds later. It was my child that found them after their departure. He did not appear shocked as we were, merely scooping the body up. I can still hear his words, “Mom. They wanted to see the sunset one more time. I will grant their last wish.” He promptly left to the surface.”

Your brows crinkle together, a giant question mark floating through your mind.

“I thought monsters could not leave due to the barrier?” The queen nods her head in agreement.

“A monster soul could not pass the barrier, this is true. A monster soul joined together with a human soul holds enough power to do so.” You nod your head, your mind reeling with numerous questions.

‘How is it possible to absorb whole souls without injection? Is it possible that our souls linger after death? What about monster souls? Are they unstable whole?’
“He left with the body, heading toward the human’s home village. Unfortunately, he was met with a crowd…” Tears bubble within the corner of her eyes, the glassy surface replaying the memory as though it is still fresh within her mind.

“The crowd was of humans who did not feel monsters should live. Seeing the deceased child within a monster’s hand only solidified the hatred. They…attacked my son. He refused to fight back, choosing to flee than to prove them right.” She takes a shaky breath. Tears begin to pool out into her fur, dampening the erect strands.

“He managed to return home to us…before promptly turning to dust right before our eyes.” Your eyes widen, a deep breath exhaling through your lips. Images of her friends, of those experimented on, pass through your mind’s eye, each giving you a look before their body explodes into a pile of dust. They would hand you a broom, demanding you sweep up the losing ashes to be disposed of.

“In one day, we lost two children. It was…still is painful to think about even to this day. My ex-husband and I would fight constantly about how to approach humans from here on out. It led promptly to our divorce soon after.”

“I am under the impression you did not take to humans very well since then.” It is a direct statement, your words hanging a lot of weight with no emotional attachment. She gives you a slow nod, her gaze shifting back to your face.

“I wished to free my people by any means necessary while my ex-husband wished to help the humans who fall.”

‘Ah…so he is what the doctors would call a defect who immediately is eliminated.’

“I had five souls from previous children who have fallen, some from succumbing to the same sickness as my first human child. The others either succumbed to death through a monster in the neighborhood or at my hands.” The air stills around the two of you, the information sinking in. She implies the great burden, choosing to not vocally state it and you are glad for that. Like her, you constantly feel the weight of the world pressing into your shoulders, trying to snap the bones beneath. How much easier it is to succumb to the pain and end it. How hard living the life knowing all the sins you have committed hang over your head every day.

“A long period of time passes, tensions rising as I push on my top scientist to gather some sort of result. When everything appears to fall apart at the seams, whispers of two humans falling fills the town. It renews their hope, lifts their spirits, their actions and jobs within life seeming to bubble for a purpose not for mechanical means. You can guess how this story goes.”

You give her a nod, filling in the missing children. You vaguely recall hearing some of the “doctors” talking about children constantly going missing, the curse of the Mount Ebbot mountain taking lives. There was a search party for the missing twins, the search ending promptly a week later with a shrug.

“The two of them did not take easily to us monsters at first as you can imagine. Over time however, they warmed to us as we have to them. Enough to the point of listening to their ideas in regards to breaking the barrier and well…” She makes a gesture, a proud twinkle within her eyes. You allow her to bask in the warm glow of her children’s accomplishments, taking note of the light glow within. Her soul, with various cracks and bruises shines brightly against the gaping blackness within, fighting the demons of despair away. The corners of your mouth frown.

‘I do not wish to bring down her happy parade, but I need a question answered first.’

“If you do not mind me ask…”
“Oh!” Her paw flies up to her lips, her eyes widening a fraction at something. You crane your neck up to the wall, noting a cheap, plastic clock. 4:58.

“Look at me here chatting you up! Visiting hours are almost over and I have yet to ask the important question!” She faces her entire being in your direction, the sparkle intensifying within her gaze. It illuminates brightly, shining just as bright within to the point of blinding. You wince, sending a hesitant gaze up to hers.

“I understand that you do not have any notable family to return to and well…the children have taken a shine to you. I was wondering well…how would you like to have a family?” Time stalls around you, everything appearing in slow motion. 4:59.

Your mouth falls open, gaping idiotically like a fish out of water. Your eyes bulge out slightly, pressing dangerously as though they would roll out and away of your body. The fabric within your grip tightens, the remaining threads straining against the sudden change.

‘A...family?’

5:00

Undyne comes into the room as the clock strikes five, her hands scribbling quickly on the clipboard.

“I am sorry Toriel, but visiting hours are now over.” The goat woman turns toward the fish woman, an apologetic smile resting on her lips.

“It is no problem Undyne. Will I see you later this week? The kids have been talking about anime night for the past week.” Undyne blushes, the color dotting her cheeks with a purple-red color.

“N…no doubt!”

“Mom!” Two sets of feet bolt into the opened room, nearly knocking the goat woman into your bedside. Chara chats happily up at her mother, explaining something too quickly for your brain to process at the current moment. Frisk signs along with his energetic sister, occasionally casting you a glance and a smile. The two skeletons follow behind, Sans running up as energetically as the children. The asshole’s skeletal frame shrouds a piece of the room with his shadow, his body leaning up against the door.

“All right everyone, it is time to leave the patient alone so Doctor Undyne can make her better.” The room fills with sighs and whines about staying over for the night, however the queen immediately shuts it down with promises to return after they return from school. The children each give you a hug, Frisk hesitating before following his sister’s lead. You numbly hug back, your eyes watching the goat queen intently. Sans gives you a gentle wave, running off to join his brother within the doorway. The kids follow suit, each talking excitedly with Papyrus as they make their way to the exit.

“My child,” Her voice draws your head slowly to meet her gaze once more, her words fighting their way into your mind.

“You do not need to decide now. Please, take all the time you need.”

Chapter End Notes
Chapters from now on will be coming out irregularly as I have started to take up more hours at work. I apologize for this >~~< Please continue to comment with anything your heart desires and thank you all for checking out my story =)
Okay this chapter is very slow and I had trouble writing it >_< I am sorry if it is not as good. Also will try to post another chapter tomorrow (today it is like 4am) to compensate for the lack of. Again thank you everyone for your comments and support as I write this. I really cannot express the amount of gratitude I have for every one of you even if the story is only given a glance. =)

You stare out the window, your mind at peace for once since your capture. Light filters in through the open blinds, revealing a warm, inviting world. Flowers poke their petals toward the rays, opening wide to allow their various colors to shine. The grass sways with the wind, dancing with glee in the pleasant weather. A couple of hospital patients make their way around the garden, the white gowns swaying gently with each step. A frown creases your face, your eyebrows crinkling into your forehead.

“...are you r...ready f...for your ex...am?” Undyne mutters nervously, her feet clicking against the tiled floor. You give her a nod, your gaze never strafing from the window.

‘Sunlight...how long has it been since I have seen you? It all feels...too good to be true. Like a distant dream or fantasy. Heh. This is quite pathetic. Getting excited over some stupid gaseous ball of fire. Yeah...totally...stupid...’

You sigh, shivering as the bandages release your chest into the air. They perk instantly, the fleshy nubs attempting to keep the heat within the fat. The wires have since been removed, their sweaty imprints immediately swept away by your skins natural elasticity.

“Everything is looking good. There is slight discoloration at the breakage sight, but otherwise your body appears to have set it back into place. Although I would like to address the…”

“No.”

A cold silence fills the air, the faint hum of the television filling the air with white noise. You glance at the fish woman, your lips pulling down into a frown. Beads of sweat coat her face, the little purplish droplets smacking down onto her crisp jacket.

“Oh...okay. Perhaps...another t...time.” Undyne packs away her medical equipment in the bin beneath your bed, the loud clattering filling the otherwise empty room. She gives her clipboard a few more scratches as she makes her way to the door. Her steps falter within the doorway, her webbed fingers grasping the metal tightly.

“Ms. Dreemur...wishes to s...speak with...y...you.” Undyne’s gaze remains within the hallway, a slight blush covering the tips of her cheeks. Her mouth is set into a straight line as she struggles with being professional and herself.

“Please...allow her in.” She visibly relaxes, her shoulders falling an inch. A comfortable smile warms the air considerably, causing a small twinge within your soul. She gives you a brief nod, walking out the door into the bustling hallway. Her name pages robotically over the air quickly, her
voice following it with a slight air of annoyance. You smirk to yourself, a huff of laughter resting within your chest.

‘The most anti-social, anime spazzed stutter bug is a prestige doctor at the hospital. Truly the world is ending.’

Still, you could not complain about the results. With the help of monster magic and magic infused food, the wounds gave you little to no problems, often replenishing your body’s own reservoir. The nurses often gave you a sedative at night after voicing their concerns about your lack of sleep. Everyone is exceedingly…nice. You are not sure how to process all this sickly kindness thrown at you all at once.

You slide off the annoyingly itchy cot, tossing off the seventh or eighth blanket the hospital provided for you. The staff did not understand what you had to do to survive, resulting in the fabric tearing beneath your fingers as you thread the strips into crude outfits. At first, they would take the material and the newly crafted outfits away, but after a certain…mishap, they allowed you to keep the scraps. A few even being so kind as to bring in a sewing kit and some dye.

Your eyes glance over at the small pile of clothing as you bend and stretch out your sore body. Each bone sets as the muscles test out their strength. Cartilage and bones pop, releasing a nice shot of endorphins throughout your system and a moan through your lips. After a couple of seconds, your body feels tuned, the muscles feeling a hint stronger from your previously weakened state. You carefully walk over to your small bounty, grasping the metal bar every time your body sways out of alignment.

‘Stupid “doctors” telling me I had to remain bedridden to heal. Can’t even fucking walk right now.’

It takes too long for your liking, but you finally arrive at the pile of clothing. Various shades of tie dye colors glare up at you, some brighter than the rest. Different needle thread colors sew the scraps into bands of cloth, their stitching prominently displayed for the world to see. You grab one of the tie die tee shirts, the fabric made a little baggier to hide your lack of bandaging. Strips of blue and red splatter against the white, nearly covering the offending blankness with various hues ranging from rose pink to navy blue. A few hits of the color mix into a violet color, nearly covering the whole thing in purple due to the expanding nature. You throw that over the railing a few feet away, watching as it smacks against the railing only to fall to the floor with a soft ‘thud’. You groan at the misfortune, but continue to rummage through the pile, pulling out a blue stained skirt. The color, a deep royal blue, stains most of the white fabric, leaving only small hints of white and ocean blue to circulate. The skirt ends roughly above your kneecaps, covering most of the important bits. A little strip of black velcro closes the back of the article, allowing easy removal. Although the article is not your first choice, it is the only choice of leg wear you could make without it practically being glued to your body.

After scraping your shirt off the floor, you make your way to the bathroom. You pop out into the bustling hallway, watching for a few moments as nurses and patients alike mosey. A few nurses and patients greet you in passing, cheerful smiles on their faces. Your nose wrinkles in disgust, but taking the high road you give them a curt nod. Very few ask you if you need assistance, but you shake them off, growling about needing to see a restroom to get rid of “these fucking, itchy rags”. A couple paces down the hallway, around the corner, and a few rooms up, a locker room of sorts greets your senses.

It smells like overly done bleach and bathroom cleaner followed by an underlying smell of urine. The lights shine brightly above your head, illuminating the white walls to a blinding white. White tile grouted in white grout, slightly off white walls, it all tunnels into a softer room that catches you off
guard. The room within is nothing like the white monster building, opting for a softer shade of colors. Tropical green coats the walls, basking the room with a touch of green lighting. Brown leather couches hang out in the middle of the room, a small coffee table standing proudly in front of the L shape arrangement. A television hums high on the wall, subtitles turned on for those wishing to watch during a particularly loud moment. Various plants ranging in color and size scatter across the room, although much to your disappointment they are fake. The tiles sadly retain their white brightness, only dulling in color by the shadows of the furniture. Lockers stand a few feet from the homely ensemble, the metal coated in a light beige color. Various black locks cover a few of the lockers, the clear majority wide open for use.

You throw your scraps of clothes into one of them, making your way to the bath portion. This room continues to boggle your mind even after using it multiple times during the week. It is large and overly done, feeling more like a small apartment than a hospital bathroom. Still, you cannot pull yourself to hate it either. As you round the corner, two hallways branch away from the main hub. A hallway to the left leads to the shower stalls, towels and laundry baskets lining the outside. To the right, the bathroom stalls with overly elongated mirrors stretching over the numerous marbled sinks. Your bare feet slap against the tile floor as you make your way to the showers, snatching the top towel off the precarious perch of fluff.

The tiles revert to their white hues, the light reflecting off the grey metal encasing of the showers. The room is large, larger than the living hub a few feet away with at least a good dozen showers evenly spaced. Each shower stall contains small soaps and shampoos in various brands you have some recollection of. A few of the permanent resident’s showers remain locked, their bath needs in a disarray behind the glass door. Shower curtains line the outer perimeter of each shower, various prints and designs giving the room a lived-in feeling.

You take the first one on the far end, humming quietly to the instrumental music playing through the speakers. The distance takes away the nervous possibility of someone snatching you out of the room, dragging you away to some unknown place…. Your body shivers, willing the dark thoughts away.

'Relax. Surely they would have captured you by now. You are safe. But...what if they are lying in wait? What if...'

Your fingertips graze the marred flesh, flicking the offending material off your shoulder. Despite the abuse, your skin feels incredibly soft, like a newborn baby. It feels foreign as well, the rough bumps flashing the reminders through your mind. The hospital gown crumbles to the floor into a small heap, your foot pushing the offending material as far away as possible. The brisk chill of the room coats your body in goosebumps, allowing the pores to puff out to retain body heat. You pay the reaction no mind, shoving the glass door out of the way to allow you into the shower. It is quite large much like the rest of the room, the stall having a possibility to bathe at least three people in one sitting. A drain as large as your head sits directly in the middle, the large metal showerhead above pointing directly at it. A large plastic bar sits at the very back for personal clothing or bathing towels for those afraid to dress in public.

You hang the towel at the back end of the spacious shower, taking your time as you unravel the new set of hygiene products. The soap holds a beautiful smell, something you always inhale when prompted for a shower. It smells vaguely like rain water in a jungle, the dew hanging off honeysuckles. The shampoo follows a similar suit, the white liquid smelling of freshly cut grass after a light shower. You slowly make your way to the showerhead, glancing around every so often. When it appears no one will disturb your shower, you flip the metallic switch up. Cold water immediately assaults your flesh, splashing everywhere and everything. You shiver involuntarily, quickly going about your business. It often takes too long for the water to heat during your quick showers, so you tend to finish before it becomes even remotely warm.
Shampoo spills onto your head, the bottle quickly returning to the floor to allow your fingers to work. They kneed the follicles, spending no pleasantries as they assault your scalp with quick strokes. You toss your head under the water, making quick work of the suds within your hair. Once the water runs clear, you grasp the soap bar, scrubbing like your life depends on it. The scent washes away as it lathers on down into the drain. Once satisfied with the cleanliness of your body, you flick off the water as the heat finally penetrates. You walk over to your towel, wiping the gathering droplets around your body. As you wipe your face, a memory surfaces, drawing your stare to the white walls around you.

“Hurry it up in there! The boss is waiting!” You sigh, yelping quietly as the ice water splashes your warm skin. The blood immediately trickles down the drain, coating the floor in a rose color. The bare minimum of supplies sit next to the metal pole of a shower, the bottles dusty and underused.

‘I really wish I could warm the water more.’ You shake your head, quietly cursing as you lather the lifeblood off your skin, a few patches staining the top dead layers. Halfway through the slow scrub, the water begins to warm, causing your senses to perk up excitedly. As quickly as the warmth touches your ice skin, it immediately turns off, your arms in mid scrub. The angry guard storms in, not bothering to knock. His boots drag the outside soil in, grinding it into the dirty tiles.

“I told you to hurry up in here!” He all but growls, grabbing your long locks into a tight fist. You squeal in pain, your hands instinctively reaching up to claw at the perpetrator. He laughs at your misfortune, dragging your stumbling feet out of the room.

“Next time you are rewarded, you do it quickly. Understand?”

Your eyes refocus to the room around you, the shack walls fading back into the white tiles. The smell of sulfur and rust dissipates into the relaxing smell of a soap. The sounds of someone showering nearby drawing you further to the present. Your fingers clutch desperately at the cotton material, relishing in its comfort and softness.

‘It all feels so long ago...Like a distant dream...’ You shake your head, running the towel over your head to catch the offending droplets. You think back to the day the building around you collapsed. All the burning bodies mutilated and alive. All those people you saved in the chaos, including a small child hiding within your cell. The skeletons thinking you were an enemy, the building crumbling to ashes as you think of your last breath only to wake up...here. It has been at least a week or so since the events took place, and yet everything still feels like a fictitious fantasy that will vanish if you blink. Flashes of memories stain your mind behind closed eyelids, often prompting the night staff to pull you back into the waking world. They suggest something ridiculous as therapy, but you know better. The kind smiles of the passing personal twist something awful within your gut, as though the smiles will turn wicked, harboring pain unto you the moment you drop your guard.

You blink, noting how your body has moved you over to your locker. How long were you within your mind for? A few minutes? A few seconds? Hours? You did not like this space headedness your mind appears to go. You shake away the fog, hastily throwing the clothing on between each wince and jolt of the healing wounds. After a few seconds, there is nothing more with the small black space. It stares mockingly at you, reflecting the hidden thoughts within your mind.

‘Don’t worry. They will find you. After all, you are their most precious, hard-working, experiment.’

You glance around the room, noting the room slowly filling with other patients alike, their bright smiles exaggerated by sinking flesh. Nurses follow closely behind, chatting along with their counterparts while helping those smaller than the age of five out of their clothing. You brush by the crowd, keeping your eyes glued to the tiles. One person brushes against your arm, causing you to


stiffen. You spin, ready to voice your complaints when you note a small child grinning up at you. “That is some neat clothes miss! Where did you get them? Did you make them? Is the place magical? I bet you got them from a wizard, right? Right?” A little boy beams, his lips moving a mile a minute as his mind attempts to spew out his thoughts. His eyes spark to life with mischief and wonder, the brown orbs relaying his excitement. His head is shiny with a little peach fuzz covering the dome, although it appears to halt in its growth. You sadly note a tube of some sort poking through his arm.

A faint blush covers your cheeks, your mouth falling open slightly as a little girl races over, her blonde pigtails fluttering in the breeze. A mechanical sound fills the air as her robotic legs help propel her body forward. She stops within a few inches of you much like the boy, her storm cloud eyes thundering with excitement.

“It isn’t from a wizard you dummy! I bet she got them from a unicorn or a fairy god mother! Or maybe she went on an epic adventure, saving the world and they bestowed these in thanks!” The little boy puffs out his cheeks, his arms crossing over the truck hospital gown.

“It is obviously from a wizard who casts spells on her causing a colorful explosion! I mean look!” He points a pudgy finger up at a circle on your stomach, the branches of red mixing with spikes of blue creating a perfect purple ring around your belly button.

The little girl stomps her mechanical foot, a growl escaping her lips. Her face ignites into a light flush, her fits clutched dangerously at her sides.

“Is not!”

“Is too!”

“Not!”

“Too!”

They go on like this for a while, each side increasing in volume along with the density of your blush. The two continue to inch forward, each body slowly growing closer to your own personal bubble. Their faces flush in a dark red, concentrating around their cheekbones. If they were magical, lighting would spark between the two, practically keeping the hospital wired without much effort. Without thinking, you lay a hand on their heads, immediately stopping their useless argument.

“I…had help from a wizard…” the boy smirks at the girl who in turn huffs. “and a fairy. They helped me make my outfit so I have clothing to go home in.” The two stare awe, their eyes staring excitedly between you and each other. They begin to prattle on with each other, their excitement palpable in the air. After a few more seconds, a nurse calls for each child, earning a collective groan between the two. They each give you a wave, grasping the other’s hand as they make their way across the room to the awaiting nurse. He gives you a small wave and sympathy smile, crouching down to talk to the excitable children about their encounter. You take this opportunity to slip out of the room, the blush refusing the cool. A small smile slips its way onto your face, a small thrum of happiness coursing through your soul.

’Well, it should be okay to humor them a little.’

You hum quietly under your breath, making your way back down the hallway.

’After all, I could not save the friends I have made within that…place. Maybe, just giving a little bit of hope…’
You shake your head in disbelief.

‘No. Hope does no good in situations. It comes down to a simple role of the dice and your personal skills, nothing more.’

You walk into your assigned room, your thoughts racing a mile a minute.

‘After all, had I not shown potential, I would not be here right now. It is a kill or be killed situation, a matter of survival.’

“Glad to see you are up and about my child.” You gasp, your body twisting funny as you lose balance. Your behind smacks against the cold floor, eliciting a hiss through your lips. You glare from your position on the floor up as the goat queen comes into view, her hands hiding an obvious smile.

“Oh my! I am…terribly sorry! Are you all right?” She stifles through her giggles, worry and mirth dancing in her eyes. You roll your eyes, grunting as you feel a prominent bruise slowly begin to form.

“Just peachy.” You grumble, struggling to get your bearings.

‘Quit laughing and help me up, would you?’

“But of course.” She giggles, offering a warm paw in your general direction. Your mind screeches to a halt, a familiar fuzzy feeling coating the outside of it. Your eyes widen as you stare up at Toriel, a warmth covering your face immediately.

‘How did she know that I thought that? Did I say that aloud? Do monsters have mind reading abilities?’

You grab her paw, hoisting yourself off the sterile floor and into proximity of the queen. She does not seem to mind however, giving a careful step back to allow you some space. The notes of cinnamon and crisp leaves fill your nose in her wake, filling your soul with a weird warmth.

“Your soul practically screamed at me.” She states as though she is talking about the weather. The blush darkens further, the feeling of wanting to disappear through the floor fills your thoughts.

‘How? Is it something with being contained within a magic barrier? Is it part of the monster evolution? Do they die after some time other than from pain? Can souls really “speak out” like she clams?’

“My you are awfully curious today. I promise you every one of your questions will be answered within time. There is however, a more pressing matter to attend to.” The warmth dips out of the room for a second, allowing its colder counterpart to slink in. You feel the weight of her words baring down on your shoulders.

“I realize you have…a particular feeling about us. The world has not treated you kindly and thus caused you to experience things you may not have wished on even your worst enemies.” A sharp knife twists in your gut, butterflies hum in small swarms within your chest. Your mind fogs over with prickles of anxiety as her words settle like weights into the air.

“You protected my child when you could have let her suffer alone. Myself as well as our friends are all thankful for this. She seems quite taken with you as well, Frisk throwing out little hints that he likes you as well which is quite…uncommon. However…”

You swallow a heavy lump in your throat, the wet chasm going dry as the nerves further descend
through your body.

“I have some…rules if you should choose to live with us.” At this, she stares directly into your eyes, the loving look long gone from her gaze. It is steely, hard, one that reminds you of an authoritative figure giving a set of rules that, should they break, harbor dire consequence. You give her a timid nod. She smiles at you, a small trace of the motherly love sinking in.

“First, you must not attack my friends. I understand that the first time was under unique circumstances. I will not tolerate harm unless a life-threatening criterion is met. Two, you may not murder anyone unless it is the only options. This includes taking into consideration of hostages and their position. And three,” You wince, your eyes squinting shut reflexively.

‘This is it. This is where she tells me I am an abomination. That her creepy friends will get to experiment on me. There is no true freedom just one encampment to another.’

“You will be treated as one of my own children.” You continue to squeeze your eyes shut, your mind running away with your thoughts.

‘I knew this was too good to be true. A monster wanting to take an experiment with no name in? Hah. Sounds like a poorly written…’ A hand brushes the top of your head, causing you to jump in fear. Your eyes shoot open, your body instinctively bouncing back a few feet. You pant, your eyes scanning the room. Toriel brings her hand down to her side, a small smile on her snout. She takes a careful step toward your franticness, then another, taking a few seconds between each step to gauge your reaction. Warmth envelopes your body, a white wall of fur blocking your line of sight. Immediately you go to push away, your body struggling against the massive grip. A sigh brushes the wet locks above, a quiet hum fills your ears as you press against Toriel.

“I know you are scared my child. Having your life ripped away only to have a too good of an offer handed to you. It must all seem like a dream.” You stiffen, your hands tangling into the fur. It feels soft, threading easily though without a tangle. The fall scents that is Toriel slowly fills your senses, the spices warming your body into a relaxed state.

‘I am safe. I am fine’

“But I promise you, this is not a dream. My family wishes to take you in as one of our own should you wish. I cannot guarantee that all the times will be pleasant, but I can guarantee we all will love you with everything we have.” You attempt to look up, craning your neck to catch a glimmer of Toriel’s face, to read it for the truth. You cannot see from this view, however, something within your soul knows it will be safe, warm, everything your previous encampment was not. You push away, breaking out of her shocked embrace. Your hands instinctively curl around your sides, your body hunching slightly. You eye the giant goat monster skeptically.

“Hah…a home? To be one with a family? What are you getting at here?” You growl.

“No one has wanted something for free, so tell me Queen of the monsters, what do you want from me?” Toriel stands in shock, her pupils dilate at the accusation.

“I do not wish…” You hold a hand up, your eyes squinting.

“Do not finish that sentence.” The air chills further, magic brushing the edges of the room in anticipation.

“Tell me what you wish to gain from this.” Silence fills the room, your heart hammering within your chest. It squeezes painfully along with your soul, threatening to spill tears against your brain’s better
judgement. Seconds tick by painfully slow, her voice suddenly mute.

‘Hah…I knew it. She does want something from me. After all, what good would I be without a purpose?’

“A child. I wish of you to become my child.” Her words hang heavily, emotion biting the tips of each letter. Slowly, your eyes widen, skimming to meet her amethyst eyes. They tear slightly, the water glassing the surface. You lick your lips subconsciously, your hands squeezing the flesh between your ribs and hips. Toriel sighs, turning her head to the side but not before you catch a tear falling from her eye.

“You remind me so much of him: stubborn, strong willed, but there is a light deep within. An urge to help those who have a hard life. You have a hard exterior unlike my previous child, however, I know deep down, you wish for a family, friends…things normal children wish to have. Someone to call when you are down. Someone to take you out shopping for that first date. A true family.” She directs her gaze toward you, determination rushing through her gaze behind a swarm of tears.

“I wish to give you what you and many others do not have: a home. So please…” She extends her white paw out, a pleading look on her face.

“Please say you will come home with me…with us.” Her words hang in the air holding her hope, her determination, her sorrow. You peak through your disheveled hair, watching the queen’s gaze. A bark of a laugh escapes your lips, brushing roughly against the back of your throat.

“I…don’t think you want me your majesty. I am merely a tool. A weapon of mass destruction. A… threat to your family. It is better if you let our paths part.”

‘It will be kinder in the long haul. Her family will not be brought down by my monstrous nature and I will find a way to survive.’

Something coats your vision, the room swimming in a thick fog.

‘I don’t…need them…’

You blink, the film leaving for a few seconds allowing a moment of clarity. It fills back up with the fog, the stream a continuous thing.

‘I…don’t…’

“I…” Your voice waivers, the sound refusing to come out from behind a lump in your throat. Little hiccups escape in its stead, accompanied by your nose leaking a thick liquid at a rapid pace.

“I…” A warmth covers your features, hiding your face away into a pit of darkness. Something pats the top of your head, gently brushing front to back before resetting into its first position.

“It is okay to cry.” Her voice whispers soothingly. Something within you breaks, a dam of pent up emotions flooring through your system with no barrier. Anger: how could your parents forget about you? How could people do this to so many creatures living on this Earth? Sadness: How come no one came when you called? Why didn’t they stop them when they demanded so much of her? Disgust: How could they defile a child? Defile her? Why did she feel like that is the only way for her to cope now?

You do not know how long the flood gates remain open or how vulnerable you are at the current moment. For a quick second, your brain does not care, wishing to sleep against this comfortable wall. You decide against it, pushing against the goat queen. Your eyes sting at the direct impact of the
hospital lights, the nerves feeling as dry as a desert. Your nose is stuffed with mucus, the gross goo drips down the back of your throat. Despite it all, you give the goat woman a small nod, carefully moving against the wobbly gravity to gather your clothing.

Toriel is patient with you, opting to walk away for a few seconds to sign off on your release. There is not much to bring with you, a handful of handmade clothing, a plastic container, and a pressed yellow flower which resides within the plastic container. You shuffle nervously, your weight shifting between each leg as you wait for Toriel to return. It does not take her long, her shadow encompassing most of the doorframe. You wait for her to laugh, to turn around and tell you it is nothing but a sick prank. When she makes no move to do so, you shuffle slowly forward, watching for any indication of change.

“Let us get going my child. Frisk and Chara will be most excited to hear your decision.” Her smile is warm, inviting, as she carefully places a paw onto your back. Not pushing or shoving, just guiding you down the correct path. Numerous hospital staff and patients wave their goodbyes as you leave, a few bowing to the queen. A few guests within the waiting room give the queen a pleasant smile and bow, a few sneering behind her back. You shoot your gaze over your shoulder, giving the rude ones your own special brand of glare. They shiver as they make contact, the room suddenly dropping in temperature.

“You conquer the world…has not changed much since that day…”

You lean back, your fingers twitching nervously within your lap. You feel anxious being within the metal car, having it been years since you last rode in it. The safety mechanisms you know are in place do nothing to soothe the nerves causing your body to twist in odd positions.

“Is everything all right my child?”

“Fine.” You mumble, your gaze shifting to every little detail outside the glass pane.

‘Relax. It’s a fucking car not a metal monster. No one is going to gun ho blow you up for accompanying a monster.’
‘And I’m trying to find that peace of mind’

‘Behind these two white highway lines’

You snap your attention to the radio, the music spewing from the speakers sounding familiar yet foreign.

‘When the city goes silent’

‘The ringing in my ears gets violent’

Your eyes widen, the familiar song from Fall Out Boy playing passionately through the car. You smile quietly to yourself, your lips forming the words you think they are saying.

‘And I remember “Baby, come home”’

‘I remember “Baby, come home”’

Toriel takes small glances over to your form, her lips forming the words as she sings quietly to herself. You cannot help but love the way her voice muses with the male voice.

‘Waiting for me in the downpour outside’

‘She’s singing “Baby come home” in a melody of tears’

‘While the rhythm of the rain keeps time’

You cannot help but turn toward Toriel, her gaze flickering between the road and you. She gives an encouraging smile, her voice shooting up in volume as she rounds for the final chorus.

‘And I remember “Baby, come home”’

‘I remember “Baby, come home”’

‘I remember “Baby, come home”’

‘I remember “Baby, come home”’

The notes drift from the end of the song, concluding the sad tones into the instrumental drift. Toriel smiles at you, her grin spreading wider across her face past her snout line. You blink, a smile working its way onto your face.

‘Stupid! Stop smiling! It looks wrong and is probably creeping her out! Besides, you barely know the woman other than her nobility status!’

Your lips pull out of the starting smile, twisting into a scowl as you lean back into your seat. A huff escapes your lips at the stupid twitch of the muscle, your mind chastising you for all the stupidity you suddenly possess.

It is a large passing of time before she pulls you from your thoughts, her warm fur resting against the chilled flesh from the air conditioner. You frown, glancing up from your musing with a raised eyebrow. She merely smiles, shutting down the car in front of a house. It takes your brain a moment to switch gears, lazily taking in the outside before it sets in. Your eyes bug slightly out of your head, your jaw practically slapping against the floor.
The house is a decent size, the grey stone tiling the outside of the building, the bricks packed tightly by white grout. The lawn stands in a stark contrast against the dull coloring, flowers and shrubs shimmering with vibrant greens and primary colors. Each hedge is trimmed with a ruler straight edge, the flowers caressing the ground rather than the wall. A couple of thin trunked trees dot the front yard, giving the first-floor windows some privacy. You duck your head, attempting to get a view of the upper floor from the position through the windshield. The bricks continue on toward the ever-changing blue sky, similar white windows dotting the upper floors as they do the bottom. A faint tip of black dictates the color of the roofing, but even the tip of it is obscured by the car frame. You sit back up, shock lining your face, your thoughts attempting to process the information. Slowly, your head turns toward Toriel who, much to your displeasure, giggles at your expression. She makes a move to unlock her door, releasing yours as well with a resounding ‘click’. With one smiling glance over her shoulder, she exits the car, her words poking your face for attention.

“Welcome home my child.”
Huzzah for two chapters! Okay so I will admit I suck at writing little things like day to
character goes shopping? Brick wall right there. This bit is a little long as it explains the
housing arrangement and some shopping boredom. I hope you all enjoy it regardless =0

“Toriel you do not have to show me the way you know.” You mutter, your feet carefully striding
across the wooden floors. Up until this point, Toriel the ever-gracious woman, proceeds to give you
a grand tour of the large estate. There are eight bedrooms, six bathrooms, a rather large kitchen that
leads to the backyard, a laundry room, a living room that takes up two stories, and at least a dozen
hallway closets. You gape at it all, your mind having a hard time comprehending all the objects
before you. It is a stark contrast to your previous life as well as the imprisonment. Like going from
poverty to a multi-million overnight. You shake off the initial shock, using the time to draw a mental
map out of the place, noting any air ducts and wall passages.

‘After all, should they wish not to have me anymore, appalled by my mutated self, it will be good to
find a way into a warm house again.’

“I know I do not have to my child, however, I wish to show you. I want you to be as comfortable as
my guests and children.” She glances over her shoulder, a look within her eyes that you cannot
distinguish. It sets you on edge, the air around you chilling a note. You go to rub your arms,
hesitating for a second, then placing them back at your side.

‘Why are you acting so shy and vulnerable? This isn’t like you. This is what will get you killed.’ You
scowl at the floor, tightening your fingers into a fist. Toriel continues to have a polite conversation,
her words explaining the different floors and where things generally are kept. Occasionally, she takes
a glance back, meeting your gaze for a split second with the unreadable emotion before returning to
her tour. There is a hint, almost like a promise, that she will not abandon you to the recessive pit of
hell. That, despite the direction being further away from the common areas, you will not have to
resort to previous means to survive. You huff but say nothing, your fits curling tighter within your
palm to prevent a show of weakness. Fear settles deep within your gut, racing through your body
with its icy fingertips.

‘It is obvious she still fears me if my room is this far. Probably thinks this is the best place to put
someone who could potentially wipe out her whole family.’

“Ah! Here it is!” She proclaims loudly, her voice bursting through your brooding. The two of you
stop in front of a door surrounded by two other doors. The other doors are completely blank, the
floor disappearing under a thick border of darkness. The doors take on a sandy appearance with a
golden knob, their colors blending naturally into the molten cake color walls.

The sand color door softly clicks open, the hinges protesting quietly at the sudden use. Toriel spins
on her heels, giving you her entire attention.

“Are you ready my child?” You give her a shrug, glancing off to the side. You hear her hum above
you, carefully wrapping a hand around your eyes. You stiffen for a second, the instinct to flee prevalent within your nerves. Her scent assaults you quickly, your body relaxing as she guides you into the room.

“Viola!” The darkness recedes, allowing your eyes to slowly open.

‘Oh my…’

To say the room is beautiful is an understatement. It is quite large at least three times larger than your cell. A giant bay window overlooks the backyard, pointing directly into the woods behind it. Two smaller windows flank either side, illuminating the afternoon light into the room. There are an addition two windows on the left side of the wall and one on the right, giving the room an open feeling. The beige wooden flooring follows into the room, bumping up against the white trim lining the room. The walls are white, vaguely reminding you of the hospital but you push those thoughts aside. Despite the room’s large size, it is bare, the floor adding any livelihood into the room. There is a beige door on the right-hand side leading into a small closet.

“Well? Do you like it?” Her voice is calm with undertones of excitement. Her soul radiates behind you, knowing the answer but wishing to hear it from you, for your approval. You give a slow, timid nod, your fingers trailing along the wall as if to memorize the feeling. It is rough yet smooth, occasionally snagging into a hard callouses in the wall. Without thinking, you open each window as you pass, allowing the spring air to filter in, the breeze singing as it enters the room.

“We still need to select out furniture so for now, you may sleep in a guest bedroom or the couch in the living room.” You hum, her words reflecting off your thoughts. Your soul begins to vibrate happily within your chest, spreading a giggly warmth throughout your being.

‘Definitely a lot of wiggle room with this. The walls must go, possibly a blue? Maybe an orange? I wonder if she can get an easel in here? And pillows. Lots of pillows on that windowsill.’

“My child?” You gasp, bumping into the goat queen. A deep heat blooms on your face, tinting it and your ears with a bright red. She giggles at you, attempting to hide it behind her palm.

“Of course not, my child.” Her voice waivers slightly, the hints of giggles poking through the words. The first door directly across from your current residence is locked, the knob jiggling under your grip to no avail. Your eyebrow quirks up, your fingers attempting to open it once more. Locked.

‘Quite…odd. It should be fairly simple to break into this.’ Your eyes drift to the side, the queen’s presence looming next to you.

‘When she is not around of course.’

The room at the end of the hallway is easier to open, the knob complying immediately under you command. You wrinkle your nose at the onslaught of indescribable smells. It smells like sweaty laundry and fruit had a baby and that baby decided to mate with a gallon of honeydew. The concoction of indescribable smells and aerosol nearly cause you to gag, but you press on into the bright room, resisting the urge to plug your nose. The room is blue, like metallic silver blue. The same beige flooring enters through the room, immediately engulfed in a navy shag rug taking up majority of the space. Windows dot around the wall, the white contrasting against the translucent silver curtains tied around them. A large bed plasters itself directly against the front wall, a large canopy overtaking the bed with its silver mesh. Little flecks of pink shimmer when the light hits it, giving very little contrast to the theme around it. The bed, much like the room, is overly done with
various shades of blue with accents of black. Your eye twitches.

'So…much…goddamn clutter everywhere!'

A large vanity hangs to the left wall, the giant bulbs surrounding it reminding you vaguely of a movie you once saw. Make up of various sizes and colors litter the desk making the workspace cluttered and most likely dirty. Across the room, a rather impressively sized stereo hangs out, the slick silver bands reaching halfway up the walls. Two large CD stacks line up next to it, various artist names and genres filling the space to the point of overflowing. A similar beige door like the main one resides to the right wall, but you are afraid to go near it.

'If it is like everything in this goddamn room, it will eat me alive with its craziness.'

“This is Napstaton’s room. He usually is very busy with touring and his gigs, but sometimes he comes to visit the kids when he has a moment.” Toriel fills in, the wood creaking behind you as she leans into the wall. You give a curt nod, your eyes beginning to water. You back up out of the room, taking a good extra couple of feet away. You gasp, your lungs filling with the clean air.

'Good fucking god! Remind me to never go in that room again!' 

“Come my child. We should pick out some furniture for you.” She moves off the wall, carefully grabbing your hand as she continues her journey down the hallway. You allow her this one time, the feeling vaguely reminiscent of a memory.

“Where…is Chara and Frisk at?” You ask nonchalantly.

‘Stupid! Why the fuck should you care about the kids now? It is not your job. They are home now.’

“They are attending school right now. They should be there for a couple more hours.” She hums for a second, lost in her thoughts.

“I do believe this is the day they have a playdate with Sans so the brothers will be picking them up.” You feel your body stiffen, everything locking into a stiff position.

“Ah…” You reply. Sensing some distress, your magic floats to the surface, humming beneath the skin. Not reaching as far as the air, but just enough to remind you you are not that weak child anymore. The two of you make your way to her car once more, silence passing between you two as you watch her prepare for the journey ahead. She locks the front door once more, clicking the small key fob. The car blinks its bright lights at you, the sound of gears shifting unlocks the passenger door for you. You freeze for a few seconds at the metal monster, an irrational fear coursing through your nerves.

‘Stupid. It’s a fucking car. Highly doubt this is a bigger threat than the numerous creations I fought…’ You shake off the fear with a growl, climbing into the metal beast. Toriel joins you a few seconds later, slamming her door. It rattles the car slightly, but you do your best to ignore it, snapping on your seatbelt.

“So, we shall do furniture shopping first to get at least the essentials for your new room. If you are hungry by the time we leave, we may stop somewhere for a quick snack or grab something within the mall food court. We will also be stopping at the mall to gather you some…appropriate clothing for the season. It is warm today but spring can get rather chilly.” She muses on, her body instinctively setting the car in motion. The large house appears to expand upward as we back up, completely disappearing a few seconds later as the car travels further away from it.

“By the time we are done, Frisk and Chara should be back with Sans and Papyrus. Although, if it is
anything like last time, they will wish to spend the night.” The radio hums in the background, the songs flickering between pop, country, and rock. You take mental notes of songs you enjoy, blocking those that outright annoy you, and mentally make up the lyrics you think you are hearing.

“Although, with your arrival, the kids may come home early.” You see her smile from the corner of your gaze, the thoughts of her children floating through her memories. You give her a nod, turning your gaze to the passing scenery.

‘Will definitely have to scrounge up an i-pod or something from the dumpster when I get the chance... I wonder if people even still use the small devices? Maybe it is obsolete and they use their phones now?’

The car ride is silent for the most part, Toriel often pointing out different buildings, tacking on a little bit of history based on human lore. Since she is the queen, she tells you various names of passing monsters and which ones run which businesses, along with a funny story of how she first met the creatures. You quirk little smiles here and there, but otherwise keep your gaze lingering out the window.

‘I wonder how long they will wish to keep me. I know how Sans and Papyrus see me, but the queen is adamant that she wishes to be a family. She mentioned Chara and Frisk wishing for me to join as well.’

You bite your lip, your eyes squinting out the window as though something offends you.

‘It does not make any sense. It is obvious she is putting me up due to saving her child, but for what end outcome. Does she feel the need to repay me? Does she actually wish to be a family?’ Your eyes glance in her general direction, taking in her neutral expression. Her features, even when expressionless is soft, the lingering kind aura radiating deep within her soul. Her face looks weary, as though the strain of the world bares on her shoulders alone. Her eyes are lack luster in the current moment, the shimmering jewels from earlier hiding behind a black curtain. You cannot help the twinge within your soul as you stare at her, wanting to do something and nothing at the same time.

‘What...does she want from me?’

“What about this one?” The saleswoman gestures, her smile straining against the elastic within her face. Despite the attempt at a kind smile, you feel her nerves radiating in large waves, anxiety creating a permanent bubble around her being. Scared is an understatement in this woman’s book.

You glance at the bed presented before you, giving it a simple shrug like the last handful she attempted to sell you. It is a complex queen size bed complete with a foam mattress and quilts galore. It, much like Napstaton’s room, has a canopy holding thick luxurious white curtains framing it in an angelic glow. The three of you begin to walk to another showing, following the woman’s stiff posture across the floor. You trail ahead of the pair, your gaze barely sweeping over the mediocre display models of cheap furniture for astronomical pricing. The saleswoman lets out a string of curses under her breath, your ears picking them out as easily as breathing.

“Fucking monsters and their goddamn kind. Hurry up and pick a goddamn thing so I can help real patrons.”

You swivel on your toes, standing still until the woman contacts you body. A sick feeling fills your soul as it gazes inward, the woman’s soul tainted with a thick, black tar and a dulling of color. You
cock your head to the side, a sudden smile appearing before the two of you. Toriel appears to be looking at something on the sales floor, her mind tracing over the details.

‘Good. She does not need to see what I do to people like her.’

“You know, she is here because of me.” You state, staring directly into the woman’s eyes. They fill with a sudden shock and bewilderment at the sudden interest you have given her. Your footsteps begin to slowly circle the woman, your eyes assessing the prey with little interest.

‘She is quite weak, only a level three with little hit points despite the increase. Frail and thin her body could not withstand a small handful of punches.’

“I am sure a woman like you is quite busy.” You watch her carefully, a blooming shade of red dabbing the tip of her ears in embarrassment. Little beads of sweat rise from her pores, nesting in her hairline for the perfect moment to fall.

‘She looks afraid...good.’

“But let me get something straight here.” You stand at her level, your eyes boring into her dull grey eyes. They frantically dart between someone off in the distance and you, never holding attention of either long. You feel a sick smile caressing your face, the edges of the room tinting dangerously red. A dark feeling washes over your mind, erasing the logical thoughts with ones meant for machines, for programed responses to threats. It gives you a sudden burst of energy, the magic pooling within your gut.

“She is with me. Dare say one more word you fucking piece of trash, any word, about their kind and I will ...”

“My child!” You back away from the woman, growling. At some point, you had grabbed her cheap five-dollar button up, the fabric bunched around her breast area. All color from her body pales to ashen, tears threatening to pour out from her eyes. Toriel’s hand rests on your shoulder, dragging you further away, the woman stiffly walking in the opposite to some unknown direction. You growl at her backside, your feet attempting to dig into the floor.

‘Just one more minute! I need to solidify the threat so she truly knows the meaning of fear! She will not no total fear until...!’

“This is normal behavior my child and it would not do you any good to attack every creature that makes leud comments about our species.” The red slowly dissipates, your mind and magic pulling from the dark recesses of your mind.

‘Fucking Toriel! Why did she take me away from that bitch of a saleswoman. Calling monsters a thing. Obviously, she has never seen a true fucking monster.’

“Knock it off.” Toriel growls dangerously, smacking the back of your head with a handful of paper. You glare at her from under your lashes. She continues to stare at you, her scornful glare putting yours to shame. You turn away, a faint pink dusting of embarrassment sprinkling atop of your face.

“Sorry…” You mumble, quickly walking towards a giant room reading ‘Clearance’. You do not hear her following you, but you know should you slip up once more, she will know. The knowledge both pleases and frightens you, yet you do not know why.

The room is large and bright, smelling like a dusty attic than a furniture store. Various articles of furniture litter the warehouse flooring, blinding yellow tags poking out from each thing. Not a soul
greets you as you enter and after the last interaction with the sales woman, you are happy they keep their distance. You slowly walk around the room, observing and picking up price tags of things that hold some interest. After a moment of observing, you scoff, allowing the piece of paper to flutter back down to the furniture.

'I highly doubt a hundred dollars off a thousand-dollar item is really a fucking clearance.'

The two of you shop around for a while longer, hours feeling like minutes, the room appearing to suck the time away. You decide on a dark brown computer desk, the surface scratched up in a few places for a hundred dollars. There is a matching colored bookshelf as well, the shelving warped slightly due to the fluxes of temperature costing about fifty dollars. A small, nearly child size dresser is next, the white paint chipping all over the place revealing the light wood beneath. It contains six long drawers, resting closer to the floor pricing at about ninety dollars. You pick out a simple metal bedframe, an older model than the ones on the floor, another hundred dollars to the pile. It took a few minutes longer than the rest of the set to pick out a mattress, flexing the price differences within your mind and their percentages off. After much debate, you go with a queen foam mattress, liking the way it molds immediately to your body. Toriel carefully takes each tag from your hand, giving them to the male working the sales desk back here. He assures the two of you they will be able to ship them in a day or so but it can vary depending on how much the guys do in one day as well as the weather.

"Take you time,” Toriel responds, her ever kind smile melting the man’s expression. She gives the young man a wave as we leave, his eyes lingering on our forms until they disappear behind the wall.

“You have to be f… kidding me,” You growl, staring at the offending material gracing your body. The fabric is soft but a little itchy. The thin straps wrapping around your shoulders dig into the space between bones, irritating it to no end. The fabric flows down your body, the baby blue color overrun by a vast number of brightly colored sunflowers. The hem swings below you knee caps, brushing with each turn and movement. You throw the curtain open with one hand, the other clenching dangerously by your side. Toriel glances up from her magazine, her eyes widening a fraction, a smile tugging at the corner of her lips.

‘You have to be fucking kidding me with this shit right now.’

“Bullshit! It looks like shit on me! And what the hell is up with all these flowers?!” You hiss, bending over to grab the hem of the dress, flailing the fabric as if to prove a point. A decent amount of wind flutters under the dress as you attempt to not rip the putrid thing in half.

‘Fuckin g sales woman. Do I look like a goddamn pansy?’ You huff, reaching for your clothes when your reflection catches your interest. The mirror stares back at you, reflecting your form for the first
time in what feels like forever. Your hair is short, bordering on the crisp edge of a pixie cut. The strands look broken and frayed to various degrees, the black tresses attempting to repair the damage. If you and a ghost stood next to each other, people would mistake the two of you as cousins or siblings. The baby blues you have vague memories of are completely wiped from existence, the mutation of eye colors swirling within your iris. Deep purple bruising surrounds the bottom of your sockets accentuating the dark, sunken in colors of your face. Scars mare a few pieces of flesh, those that did not heal after the inflictions. Shadows of all the scars appear within your mind’s eye, turning the porcelain skin into a sewn-up rag doll.

The cool glass of the mirror sends a shiver through your naked body, the air around it stale with the smell of unfiltered air conditioning and sweat. Your hand heats the glass, causing a small fog circle to outline around it. The face within stares back at you, familiar yet foreign.

‘Heh. I knew I looked like shit but this…’ You stare longingly in the mirror, grasping at straws. Screams from the past walk forward, filling your mind with images best forgotten. The blood, the screams, the pleas, the wish of death, granting the final vows before taking a life within your palms.

‘This…is me now. I cannot change it. Only seek out vengeance on those who have wronged me.’

“Is everything all right in there my child?” Toriel’s voice hums through the cracks, the plastic walls amplifying it a fraction. You take one last look at your reflection, carefully pushing away.

“Yeah. I am fine.” You reply, turning your back to the mirror as you throw your clothes on. You emerge a moment later, the sales woman nowhere in sight. Toriel looks up from her position on the chair, her fingers stilling on her phone.

“Can we go to another store? I don’t think this one will have what I need.” She hums for a second, the sound thoughtful. The phone within her grasp clicks shut, the plastic electronic slips into her purse as she stands up.

“All right my child. I think I know of a perfect store for you.” You glance around the store, your mind hell bent in looking for the incompetent woman. She appears halfway across the sales floor, her kind smile and light touches interacting with a young couple. Your gaze narrows in on her, her spine erecting as though feeling your glare running down her backside.

You see her shiver slightly, her arms twisting around to brush the cold off. The customers ask if she is all right, their eyes piercing into hers as she glances around the store. Your eyes lock with hers for a second, realization crossing her features. You give her a polite wave and smile, smirking within your mind as you practically feel her chill where she stands.

‘She is lucky Toriel is here to protect her. God give her mercy if she tries putting a goddamn dress on me again.’

The two of you walk out of the generic store, the bright red ‘M’ illuminating into the busier side of the mall. Echoes of voices resound from every which direction, footsteps of lost prevention and civilians alike scurrying about looking for deals or simply browsing. The colors of the mall are as generic as they get: beige walling running from one end to the other with off white tiles, the color long gone from over use. Various types of food stalls and stores line the two floors, escalators, and bathrooms nearly around every quarter mile of walking. A couple of patrons stop to talk to the queen while others sneer behind her back, whispering grotesque statements. Toriel lays a hand on my shoulder each time the comment perks my anger, giving a silent look to ignore.

“I just don’t get it Toriel.” You mumble, your eyes constantly surveying the area around the two of you.
“How can you simply ignore the voices talking around you? All the hateful comments about monsters and personal insults.”

‘If they were where I was imprisoned, that sort of attitude got you tortured in the most painful ways. If you were lucky…you would die.’

“It is the nature of life right now. Humans are still acclimating to monsters integrating into society and their own minds attempting to wrap around the idea that their folklore is true.” She states, her eyes gazing over each person for a few seconds, quickly dotting from person to person as though absorbing their faces.

“I take no personal offense to it as we are halfway through the process of making more things legal for monsters to own and do. Did you know, at first, the humans would not allow us to make settlements?” You halt in your tracks, your eyebrows scrunching together in confusion.

‘Monsters couldn’t set up in the beginning? I thought they were over expanding in the area, pushing humans out of their homes thus becoming a problem?’

“No, we did not quite do that my dear. The humans fled at the moment’s notice, either riling up to run us out or leaving with all their things to a new location.” She sighs, her mood dipping into a sad territory.

“Those were…not good times.” She perks up a little bit, flashing a smile down at you.

“But things are getting better and I can only hope they will continue to do so.” The two of you continue your trip down the upper level of the mall, Toriel often pointing to places that catch her interest. You shake your head to each one, the store either refusing monster’s service, looking too brightly colored, or just that right away ‘no’ feeling. It takes you a few feet down to find a store that calls to you immediately, the white walls reflecting streams of pinks and blues cascading down from the ceiling. Above the double glass doors, a picture of a ghost jamming out with some headphones.

“Toriel, can we go in here?” Not waiting for a reply, you begin your journey within, marveling the interior setup. An herbal smell assaults your nose upon entering, the scent reminding you of rain water and freshly cut grass. It does not over-power the room, rather settling into the backseat of your mind. The walls are white, but not in a bad way nor in a way that reminds you of other places. Bars race across the room, the wavy pattern creating peaks and valleys for notes to settle on. The lights above, as you have predicted, spotlight down in shades of pink and blue, occasionally spinning around the room with different swirls.

“Welcome!” A pink ghost appears out of thin air in front of you.

“Shit!” You throw a punch at the ghost, your fist phasing right through their midsection. Your footsteps back up into a solid body, instantly whipping your frame around to face both of them, your steps frantic.

‘Shit shit shit shit shit. This is not good. The thing isn’ corporal meaning normal attacks won’t work. It appears to disappear and reappear at will as a normal spirit will. They did not train me for this. Shit I might have to use my magic to keep me safe.’

“X…Calm down.” Your eyes flicker to the goat monster, her hands steadily raised in the air. Her eyes are soft, her frame giving off a submissive posture. No magic floats between the two nor the air, both remaining still. You close your eyes, taking a slow, shaky breath.

‘Okay. Breathe you dumbass. You are with Toriel not the fighting dungeon. This ghost is probably a
‘monster who you socked your fist through.’ It takes you a few more breaths before you are capable of opening your eyes. The ghost floats by Toriel, their form small and traditionally shaped like the Halloween ghosts. A big white eye is outlined with a thick black liner but you cannot distinguish if it is make up or natural. Their hair, which surprises you the most considering the ghost has hair, flips it over their one eye, effectively covering it.

“I am terribly sorry Hapstablook. X is still adapting to monsters.” Toriel brushes over, giving the floating monster a kind smile. They smile widely in return, their little ghost arms waving back and forth.

“Oh, it is no big deal! I mean, she did try to punch me but it went right on through!” The voice is feminine, the tones light like a trickle of windchimes. There is excitement underlining their tone, an air of perkiness a constant cloud surrounding them. Their form turns in your general direction, a wide smile covering their little ghost face.

“I am sorry for scaring you! I forget sometimes that humans are more prone to random scare occurrences than monsters.” They float a little closer, giving you a half bow.

“My name is Hapstablook! I run this little shop sometimes with my cousin Napstaton sometimes when he isn’t on tour!” You stare at the ghostly apparition and blink. You blink again, a wry smile forming on your lips. Something bubbles within the back of your throat, passing over your tongue as your lips part. A deep laughter rings out through the room, causing both sets of eyes to look over. You are laughing, the shock and apparent chipper ghost throwing your beliefs for a loop. Ghosts, as far as you remember, are nowhere near friendly let alone pink.

“I…I’m sorry!” You wheeze through the laughter. It sounds a little crazy now, your body having a hard time dispelling it.

“I…I can’t…even…!”

“Is she okay?” Hapstablook whispers to Toriel who puts a paw up to contain her own laughter. She gives a nod, patting the top of the ghost’s head.

“It is probably because you shocked her. She might be having a meltdown in a healthier way.” The ghost nods, staring on as you collect yourself together. Tears gather within the corners of your eyes, but refuse to fall out. Your eyes harden, the giggly emotion brushed off to the side as you right yourself up.

‘How embarrassing. Having a literal meltdown over some little shock. That would have killed you. A moment of weakness. What would the ‘boss’ think if he saw his ruthless creation in a vulnerable, comprisable situation?’

At the thought, your body straightens, cold feeling settling within your nerves. It numbs you from the inside, reminding you with flashes of memories about the consequences for being weak and exposed. You turn away from the two, ignoring the stares as you walk down a random isle with multiple sets of headphones. You hear the two monsters chatting behind you about something, however you pay no mind, opting to throw a random pair of headphones on. They cover your ears completely, the sounds around the room shrinking to the size of the sound of a drop of water. A giant blue ‘play’ button glows on the panel along with a few others, a random album in place.

‘The normal’s, they make me afraid’

‘The crazies, they make me feel sane’
Mad Hatter flashes across the small digital screen, the beat sped up with a remix of sorts playing in tune with it. You hum in approval, glancing at the pricing for the random set of headphones. The box is large, the plastic container super-sized compared to the set within. A thick black coating covers half the box, a picture of a blue translucent dragon snaking around the blank space until its head turns toward the viewer. *Spirit Dragon Headphones* is written eloquently across the black and clear, the words wrapping with a stylized script.


You flip the box over, your eyes briefly scanning over the blue scrawled history along the back, aiming for the white box in the corner.

‘All for the price of…holy shit!’

The headphones sail off your head, smacking down into the stand as your hand hastily places everything back.

‘Three hundred dollars for some headphones?! What has this world come to?!’

“Have you found something you would like my child?” Toriel’s shadow looms over your shoulder, her eyes scanning at the headphones before the two of you. You hastily shake your head, glaring at the overly priced piece of plastic.

“Ah the Spirit Dragon headphones are awesome aren’t they? Very popular but a tad expensive.” The specter’s voice appears to your left, your flinch whittled down to a small jolt of shock.

“I’ll say.” You mumble, your eyes gazing over everything with a disinterested look. Various headphones do half of the functions these headphones do at the cost of possible low quality material or lacking sound proof cushions.

‘It is true what they say: once you have something good, nothing else can compare.’

“Would you like them?” Hapstablook gestures the sleek set, her eye gazing intently at you.

“I think anyone would like them, but they are extremely expensive.”

‘Especially since I am not paying for anything.’ Your thoughts bitterly reflect. The ghost hums for a few seconds, her vocal chords changing pitches as though humming a song.

“What do you think Queen Toriel?” Toriel waves her hand dismissively in front of her face, pulling out her wallet.

“Please just Toriel Hapstablook. Hearing my old title brings back…memories.” The little ghost nods in understanding, patiently waiting for her answer.

“I do believe I can afford those for the child. They are well made and do not cost more than one of Frisk’s gaming consoles.” Your mouth drops open, your head shaking rapidly back and forth as you attempt to dispute the item due to its costing.

“My child, you are part of this family now and as such deserve the best that we can provide. If these headphones will make your transition smoother, then I have no qualms with buying them.” She smiles, gesturing the display in front of us.

“Go on and pick a color out.” You hesitate, your hands outstretching to the box.
“I...they are quite expensive your majesty. I could not possibly impose more than what you are already buying me.” She gives you a motherly look, her hand carefully pushing you toward the display. Your eyes glance between the display and her face, your body trembling.

'I couldn’t possibly have something as nice as this. Just the bare essentials is needed. Why is she insisting this badly if they will send me away soon?'

You shakily reach out for a pair of navy blue, the outer rims dotted with tiny opaque stars. A giant red sticker pushes out against the clear plastic with ‘Glow in the Dark’ written in a bold print.

“Excellent choice my dear! To show no hard feelings, how about we get you an i-pod to go with it? My cousin just came out with a new line of them that he is dying for people to try out!” The phantasmal arm reaches out, the warm air brushing your arm hairs as it passes through. The little ghost giggles for a second, clunking herself in the head.

“Oh yeah! I forgot that I cannot touch humans! I just phase right through them!” She giggles again, her free hand brushing her bangs back into place. You stare numbly at the spectral monster, Toriel having to pull your body toward the new display of i-pods.

‘Why...why is everyone being so nice to me? Do they pity me? Do they know my story? Did she tell them or did the news highlight it? It is like the hospital all over again.’

The ghost’s lips move rapidly as she talks, her voice drowned out by the thoughts within your mind. Vaguely you are aware of your arm selecting a matching navy blue square, neon orange lightning bolts piercing through the otherwise solid color.

‘I just...don’t understand. Why are monsters so kind? Aren’t monsters supposed to be bringers of evil? Terrorizing humans out of their civilizations and burning them to the ground? Why aren’t they hell bent on causing me harm? Why all this nicety?’

Toriel and Hapstablook bring you to the front, happily chatting between the two about one thing or another, your mind refusing to function past the thought. They ring up the purchase, Hapstablook throwing in a few other accessories for the headphones and i-pod, wrapping it all in a 60’s looking plastic bag. She says a few more excited words to you, wishing you to come visit her whenever you visit. Toriel sends her goodbyes as well and the two of you set off down the mall, new loot in tow. Things pass you in a blur, sounds swimming underwater within your ears. You note the only stable thing holding you to this plane and not allowing you to ascend to your thoughts is a furry warm hand that smells of cinnamon. Your eyebrows scrunch together as you assess the situation over the past few hours, everything coming to a stubborn wall you cannot pass over.

‘Why are they being so nice to someone like me?’

Chapter End Notes

Anyone else ever go furniture shopping? They are really pushy and do not find it humorous when you wish to jump all over the furniture. I honestly did not know which way to write all of this and would rather get back to all the action but its the calm before the storm! Also for those keeping count this is 86 pages for 8 chapters...I have a problem.
Chapter Summary

It has been awhile and I apologize! I hit a bit of writer's block on how to proceed but here it is! I hope you all enjoy it~

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The car drive home is uneventful, your fingers fussing with the plastic box on your lap, your eyes staring at the numerous bags scattered across the space. Shortly after leaving the first store, Toriel dragged you through various clothing stores, throwing objects over the wall with gusto. Half of the items you outright refused to try on due to their pricing while others looked ridiculous on you.

“Money is no object my child. You will need clothes to commend your first steps into the world. Do you really want to wear the scraps that remind you of the past?” At her comment, you sigh, trying on everything with little to no complaint. There are a few pieces of clothing on the pile that do not fit nor meet your needs, the two of you agreeing that it is not your style. Her eyes light up at the sight of you wearing the nicer clothes, but she always asks if you like it. You shrug your shoulders, your feet absentmindedly kicking at the floor.

“Sure.” Toriel smiles at you, her kind, tired eyes reflecting her emotions to the world. You return to the dressing room, hanging the discard pile on the rack while handing Toriel’s top picks for her to pay.

“Why don’t you look at a few of the racks. See if anything captures your interest.” She gestures you toward the large store, the isles stretching as far as the eye can see. Humans and monsters alike pick through the racks, some with nosy children throwing stuff to the floor, others doing the throwing themselves. Your insides flutter into a panic, your eyes scanning the canvas of area as though assessing a threat. You take a deep breath, shaking your head.

‘It’s a fucking store, not some deadly pit of snakes. Seriously, finding one piece of fucking clothing shouldn’t be hard at all.’

A few minutes of asking around, stumbling into the wrong parts of the store, and occasionally tripping over the children running through the racks, you find yourself back in a small corner. A giant red sign with white text hangs above multiple rows, each little topper holding a percentage off. You smirk to yourself; a personal victory cheer ringing through your head.

‘See? This task is mediocre at best. Truly undermines my performance and skill set.’

You fingers deftly move over each piece of fabric, your mind flicking over each one uninterested.


With a sigh, you proceed to one of the last few racks, your mind bored with the searching game. After the fifty-ish piece of clothing, your fingers drag along something smooth. Curiosity gets the better of you as you slowly untangle the article from the rack, nearly fighting with the damned thing
as another shirt attempts to hold it back. With a grunt, you give a final pull, detangling the prize from the monstrous rack. A light purple hoodie swings on its hanger, the material softer than cotton. The outside is simple, a large cylinder pocket, two tightly wound drawstrings for the hood, and a large floppy hood that looks like a small blanket. The size of the hoodie itself is laughable on your frame, the material resting above your kneecaps rather than the typical waist length. You fidget with the garment in your hands, sacrificing part of the grip to poke inside the fabric. Immediately your eyes light up upon the discovery of the plush material within, the soft silkiness rivaling that of Toriel’s fur. You hum contently, wiggling your fingers through the inside while your other hand makes work at finding the tag. A dull brown tag hangs inside of the hoodie, the price twisted as it moves with the size tag. At a glance, the normal pricing makes your mouth run dry, your eyes nearly bugging out of your sockets.

‘Relax…that is the normal pricing. The rack it is on says sixty percent off. Surely it is more affordable…’ Your eyes scan the for the little red clearance sticker, the confident feeling immediately plummeting into your gut.

‘Seventy dollars?! Did the city decide to take drugs while I was gone? The price of things is astronomical!’

Your lips twist into a deep scowl, your fingers absentmindedly toying with the sleeve’s fabric. It is beautifully simple in its own way, the piece calling to you like a long-lost friend. It would cover your unholy blemishes while remaining comfortable, the hood covering the monstrosity that is your face while you walk around the world.

‘On the one hand, I could take this up to Toriel who is more than willing to pay for it and then I will be the proud owner of this luscious hoodie. On the other hand, she has paid for everything this shopping trip and asking for something as expensive as this for one article of clothing is a bit…much.’

You stare at it a moment longer, sighing as you place it back onto the rack.

‘I should be grateful for the things Toriel is buying me now. I have taken far too much money from her than I deserve to.’

You shake out of the sad feeling as you turn around, walking toward the goat woman tapping rapidly into her phone as you approach. She notes your approach, finishing her line of typing before she throws her phone back into her purse. Her eyes gaze at your empty arms, a frown tipping the corners of her mouth, but decides to say nothing. You give her a shrug of your shoulders, your eyes scanning for your bags only to come up empty. The floor in which they sat is bare, the tacky red carpet staring back at you. Your eyebrows scrunch together, your mind recalling the electronic bag residing with the goat woman. In fact, none of the newly acquired merchandise is anywhere to be seen.

“I had the sales associate run them to security along with your electronics bag. We can pick them up at the end of our shopping trip. This way, we do not have to keep track of the bags as we shop!” She carefully grasps your arms, dragging you to the next store all the while talking about something wanting to try a new recipe with you. Something involving snails?

You shake your head, your mind dispelling the thoughts of the day.

‘If I think any harder about how much money was spent, I might wish death upon myself.’

The car comes to a stop, the motion jerking you out of your thoughts. You sigh, glancing up warily
at the familiar building, its gaze glaring down at you through its window eyes. A nervous feeling tugs within your gut, an unpleasant feeling taking refuge within your mind at the sight. You shake your gaze away from the staring match as you climb out of the car.

‘There is...an odd number of cars in the neighborhood at the current moment.’

You slowly load one bag at a time onto the bicep of your left arm, your eyes taking in the scene from your periphery. Cars of various makes and models squish together in the cul-de-sac, the clear majority of them lining along your row of housing. Most of the models look fancy, the paint glistening in the setting sun, the shiny silver metal reflecting the various beams of light. Your soul shivers in fear, flaring your magic up in defense. Something about all the cars being here strikes a shard of fear.

‘It is similar to that day...Maybe...maybe the monster is done with her ruse? Maybe they are here to...’

“Are you all right?” Toriel’s voice snaps your head in her direction, her worried tone dispelling the rabbit hole thoughts. You give her a curt nod, carefully tugging your spine to an erect position. The bags hold a heft to them, the size undermining the weight they carry. It causes your body to tilt at an odd angle as you make your way to the other side of the car, throwing it open to gather more bags. Your hand moves like a snake piercing through each available loop of bag, dragging it up your right arm in a similar fashion. Over the rustling of the bags, you vaguely hear Toriel muttering about watching how much you are carrying, but makes no move to stop you. The second time standing takes a little more effort, the bags shifting with each little movement of your body. More than three-fourths of the car is clear once more, the sea of white revealing the tan underneath. You grunt, the weight offering a pleasantly painful distraction, keeping your mind from your wandering thoughts. Toriel reaches over your wobbling form, grasping the remaining bags with one of her massive paws. She shuts the car door, locking it with a rather loud ‘beep!’

“Are you sure you are all right with carrying all those my child?” Toriel glances down at you, her face etched in worry. You give her a nod, watching her eyes follow the trail of bags up your arms before reconfirming with your face. You take a moment to look as well, noting the plastic imbedding into your arms with red, angry welts. You give them a little shift, allowing some of the skin a break from the strain. The two of you walk up to her door, her hands fiddling with the keys rather loudly. If you did not know any better, it appears she is stalling.

“Are you sure you are all right?” She turns to you once again, her brows scrunching deep into her fur.

“I’m fine,” You gruff out, lifting your arms out of the ‘T’ stance into a ‘V’ stance. A few of the bags crinkle as they slide down your arm, bunching like a vice grip at the start of your shoulder. Angry red bag welts line the newly exposed skin, your skin holding a wet feeling as the pores drink in the fresh air like a starved man.

‘This weight is literally nothing. Is it heavy? Sure, but whining about it gets you nowhere. Besides, I should carry my own shit in after she went through the trouble to buy it all.’

“All right...” She mutters, returning her attention to the door. The key slides into the lock with success, the gears turning as she slowly unlocks the door. She pulls the keys out, replacing them with the golden knob on the door. The door breathes out a sigh of relief as she opens the home, the hinges creaking open in a greeting. The setting sun allows some light into the otherwise dark room, illuminating your shadows onto the hardwood. You poke your head to the side, your eyebrows drawn together in confusion. Balloons and streamers line the dark space, squeaking and shifting at the change in pressure. A giant ‘Welcome Home’ banner hangs a few feet in front of the two of you,
the lettering looking like a two-year-old drew them with multiple colored markers. The furniture appears to have arranged itself during our outing. The flat screen remains stationary on the right wall under the staircase, the small sandy end table filled with various video looking cases. The seafoam green couch appears nearly dead center in the space, the space in front of it converted into what looks like a small dance area. One of the small dresser desks for the living room bares a white cloth over it, various colorfully wrapped boxes a top of it. The bookcase remains against the left wall next to the bathroom and the plants in the corner appear untouched. Through the archway into the kitchen to the left, a faint glow of some sort of fire flickers, the orange flames lapping at the bottom of something. Vaguely you smell something spicy on the air, the scent immediately intermingling with a sickly-sweet smell. The combination on top of a burner smell causes your nose to wrinkle in disgust. You hear a chatter of soft voices whisper and hush at each other, a giggle passing between them as one of them counts.

“1…” You tense, your hand reaching towards Toriel as though to protect her. The hairs on the back of your neck tense in anticipation.

“2…” More giggles, the sound bubbling into the recesses of your mind, the tone slinking into a sinister sound.

“3!” The lights flicker on, stunning your eyes by the sudden brightness. You hiss, attempting to keep them open with no avail. Your soul hums anxiously at the lack of sight, fluttering like a bird attempting to escape.

“SURPRISE!” Voices ring from all directions, causing your body to respond immediately. With a growl, you jump back away from the doorway, the bags of clothes scattering across the green grass surrounding the household. Your soul appears before you, the tips of your sight dyeing in deep scarlet. The world shifts and changes around you, black slowly seeping in to reveal the various colored souls before you. You shift into a fighting stance, your body crouching low, shifting your dominant foot behind you in a launch position. Sparks of cyan and beige whip out from your curved fingertips, lighting the fading room with its intensity.

‘It is a set up! They have all congregated here to do harm! It is all an illusion! A false sense of security! The room falls into a hush of silence, the small growls escaping your throat echoing through the vast space. Your heart pumps blood furiously through your head, deafening any other sounds behind the frantic bloody beat. Back and forth your eyes flicker, giving each nervous creature a glance through slits. Their magic is palpable in the air, the different tunes circulating in fear. Anger ticks in the back of your mind, your mouth opening to bear your sharp teeth at the intruders.

‘How dare these people invade my new home! Why are they here? Are they here to take the queen? Hah! They will have to pry her body from my cold, dead…’

Your body jolts at the sudden touch, your head whipping around with a snarl tainting your lips. A hand rests on your shoulder, your hand swinging up wildly as your body turns toward the brave attacker. You still in an instant, your eyes widening as the familiar goat woman encases your view, the sun setting shadows along her face. Toriel stares down at you, the shadows intensifying the dip of the corners of her mouth, the crinkle within her brow, the fire behind her eyes. Her furry hand on your shoulder tightens a notch, the pain dully registering within your mind. You jerk slightly as her digit digs painfully into your collar bone connecting the shoulder to the rest of you.

“I do think that is quite enough X. Put your magic away right now.” Her tone is harsh, bitter and threatening while relaying her concern for the sudden shift of attitude. It throws you for a loop, your mind snapping back to reality.
‘No…Toriel knows these people…they mean no harm…well, no harm as far as she knows…’ The edges of red recede quickly, the growling fading to a faint hum within the back of your throat. The souls fade into their host, your own returning to your chest as the black recedes back to color. The vocals vibrate from the sudden use, the back of your throat drying considerably. You take a steady breath through your nose, scowling to yourself at slip of control.

‘You are a monster. Nothing more than a fighting machine. A small jolt such as this triggers you. How irritating. A dog is better trained than you.’ You spare a glance at Toriel’s face, your face laxing into a neutral expression as you wait for approval. The disapproval slips slowly into a thin, neutral line across her snout, her gaze watching for a change in your behavior. You give an agitated huff, shuffling awkwardly in place. The faint hum energy within the air dissipates to its respectable host, vibrating on the surface of their skin. Toriel gives your head a gentle pat, her fingers brushing the back of your head as her presence disappears from behind you. You spare a glance over your shoulder, watching as the goat queen picks up the plastic bags with an ecstatic skeleton and…

‘Wait…when did they get here?!’

Papyrus and Sans, well, mostly Sans helps the queen pick up the discarded baggage, the taller one flicking his ashes into the grass from his lit cigarette. You squint at him, your eyes meeting the voids within his sockets.

“X!” The voice gives you two seconds before they impact your legs, breaking off the staring contest with the asshole. Tiny arms wrap around your waist, squeezing the air right out of your diaphragm. You let out a soft ‘oof!’ as a body collides with your side. You spare a glance down at the offending figure, your soul immediately softening at the sight of Chara. Her dully colored teeth grin up cheerily at you, the front tooth missing from the bunch. Her hair shimmers with the natural highlights of the sun, the red hints shining brightly against the brown. Faint traces of pink dot her fuller cheekbones, the sun kissed skin looking warm compared to her previous state.

“You finally made it! Did you have a good time at the mall? I heard you saw Hapstablook! I really like her! Oh! And her cousin Napstaton!” The child continues to happily ramble, her strawberry lips throwing phrases, comments, and questions all at once. It is enough to give you a headache, but you continue to listen to them, relishing in the fact she is well on her way to recovery.

“Oh my gosh!” Chara gasps, her body detaching as she flings herself back into the house with the crowd. Her hair is fixed to a cleaner cut, the locks remaining long toward the front while the back clings closer to the base of her skull. Two pink monarch pins hold the longer strands out of her face, attaching to the top of her head. She sports a pink petal dress, the fringe of the dress swishing at her ankles. You note the thin shoulder straps digging into her flesh due to the constant movement, but she pays no mind to the red angry welts attacking her skin. Flickers of silver scars catch your eye on her skin, but she wears them proudly like battle scars, a complete contrast to how you feel. Blue and yellow butterflies line the bottom of her dress in various sizes, the cluster cascading upward in a cyclone pattern until it reaches just under her breasts. Her fingers curl up to her lips, the circular digits painted in a deep rosy pink completing her outfit. You raise a quizzical eyebrow at her, watching silently along with the onlookers.

“You are here. The bags, the party, mom’s text…does that mean you have decided to…” Fat droplets of tears form in the corner of her wide ruby eyes, her fists clenching together in anticipation. You feel a hand gently push your body forward, your feet nearly tripping over the corner of a particularly round bag remaining on the floor.

‘What the hell is she talking about? Surely this party is not for me, after all, it is only a matter of time before they rid of me. Still…’
You crouch slightly, your body balancing expertly on the tips of your toes. Your head tilts to the side, your brows scrunching in confusion.

“Why are you crying?” She giggles to herself, the laughter hiding behind her clasped hands. Tears blink down her full face, dripping to the floor silently. Each step forward causes her little red shoes to speak with the floor, each step drawing her closer to your crouched form. She takes careful steps, giggling when her foot snags with the other one causing her to stumble slightly. Chara stands before you, her grin wide across her face despite her best attempt to hide it behind her hands. The tears stain her face with salty trails, attempting to coat her rosy cheeks with no avail. You can see little freckles dot the bridge of her nose, the specks reappearing in time for the spring. Silence settles between the two of you, the room tensing behind the two of you. You pay no mind, your eyes engaging in a staring contest. It goes on for a few seconds, your eyes searching for the cause of her behavior while her eyes scan yours for the answers she holds.

Without warning, she throws herself at you, the sobs escalating past sorrow and into joyous. You thankfully catch her falling body, awkwardly rubbing her back as her tears stain your clothing. She blubbers incoherently for a period, wiping her snot and tears all over your shoulder. You shiver internally, feeling the mucus dripping out of her sinuses through the thin fabric and onto your skin.

“You...you came. That means...you want to be...our big sister...” Chara blubbers out, laughter along with sobbing filling the space. You watch as the patrons of the party start to whisper once more, the sound slowly raising in volume as they allow the two of you a moment. You barely pay attention to them, your gaze widening on the shoulder of the child. Your hand stills on their backside, clutching a small piece of fabric in between your fingertips. Something within your soul flutters at the words, filling your being with warmth despite the cold reality your mind settles on your shoulders.

‘She...she said sister. Does this mean I...’

‘Of course not! She is merely a child who feels that she owes you something for saving her! Just like her mother!’

‘But there could be a chance...right?’

‘Don’t let your thick headedness get attached to this lot. The moment they are done with you, you will be disposed of just like the rest. You are nothing. You do not belong.’

You carefully push the child upright once more, your arms holding carefully at her waist, keeping her a small distance away. You feel your eyes widen, your mouth wishing to hang open and smack through the center of the universe. You feel her soul hum with happiness, love, and determination although you are not sure as to why. Your arms retract from her sides, hanging limply on the tops of your knees.

“This is great!” Chara suddenly cheers, her arms flying into the air above her head. She looks at you, her eyes bright like a warm campfire, her smile brighter than any star. Excitement radiates off her like a beacon, beckoning the strangers from the party forward. As the bodies come forward, congratulations and hands softly pat the child, some going as far as to hug her in greeting.

“So...you are our big sister now....” Your head whips to the left side of Chara, the legs of strangers parting for the other small child to walk forward. Frisk’s frame comes into focus behind his animated sister, his arms stuffed into his jean pockets. Unlike his sister, Frisk dons himself with a basic black polo, the collar slightly bent at the corners. Navy blue denim hangs loosely around his legs, the pants obviously one size too large for the child, the material covering the sneakers beneath it. His copper eyes look around the room with boredom, a frown plastered across his sunken skin.
“Though it is quite unheard of for monster royalty to potentially take in a weapon so hey, you are making history here. Naturally an annoying amount of bodies show up to sneak a glance.” Frisk grumbles, the corners of his mouth edging further downward.

“I wish they would all just leave already.” A giggle makes it up your throat, your voice immediately squishing down the feeling before it can escape. Instead, you raise a quizzical eyebrow at the child, cocking your head to the side. He huffs, moving his way forward until he stands in front of you, a few inches away from Chara who currently has her back turned. She animates excitedly with the bunny monster, her fingers and lips working at a fast pace.

“Don’t do well in social situations, do you?” You mutter under your breath, your own uneasiness giving way. He huffs out another irritated breath, shifting his feet as his eyes gaze back at you, the tips of his eyes scrunching down.

“No. Really? And here I thought I was the highlight of this otherwise drab party” You pinch the skin of his cheek, watching in amusement as a faint tint of red blooms across. His face struggles to take the grip off, but you hold fast, wiggling the elastic material for a few seconds longer. After you feel satisfied, you let go, watching his hand immediately smack up to the affected area, a scowl resting across his features.

“What the fuck was that for?” He grumbles, rubbing the area in a poor attempt to dispel the color. He fails miserably at it, causing the red to extend across the small bridge along his cheekbone. You open your mouth, a witty reply on the tip of your tongue, when a faint hum within the background increases in volume.

“-AN!” The familiar excited voice gives you only a second to turn around, a second you register too late as it slams into your backside. You grunt, pushing your palms into the floor to stabilize yourself. Pain vibrates from the base of your spine to the tip of your neck, the area around your lower back erupting into broken vessels and discoloration most likely.

“WELCOME TO THE FAMILY OF DREEMURRS HUMAN! I, THE MAGNIFICENT SANS, WELCOME YOU WITH OPEN ARMS!” A pair of skeletal hands wrap around your midsection, the digits digging painfully tight into your stomach. There is a faint ringing within your ears from the sound, your brain wincing at the intense volume of the skeleton monster.

“THIS IS SO EXCITING! WE CAN HAVE FRIENDSHIP TACOS AND SLEEPOVERS AND WE CAN WATCH THE MAGNIFICENT BUT NOT AS MAGNIFICENT AS ME NAPSTATON AND…!” Frisk slaps a hand over the skeleton’s chattering mouth on your shoulder, effectively silencing him from the screaming tirade ringing in your ears. You shoot him a grateful look, carefully dislodging yourself from the embrace as you turn to look at the skeleton. Sans mimics your squatting position, the action causing the already short skeleton to shrink even further. He rocks back and forth in his bright neon blue sneakers, the neon orange laces catching your eye on more than one occasion. Gone is the battle armor you have seen him in the three or so times you have seen him. Instead, he sports a nice ocean blue button up, the material cleanly pressed to the crisp angles of his collar. The sleeves are expertly rolled up two notches, the fabric holding together by a small brass pin exposing the bones he possesses. Black suit pants cover his legs, the material flowy around the ends of the cuffs, effectively covering most of the mismatched sneakers.

“Sans!” Chara shouts, her form attacking the perching skeleton. The two topple to the ground, giggling and laughing as they roll through the crowd. Their laughter dies into the background of the chattering crowd, their bodies disappearing through the various sets of legs. You blink, shaking the confusion from your mind as your eyes seek out Frisk’s attention once more. A bemused smirk tugs at the corners of his frown, the corners twitching in vain against the muscles.
“So…is that normal?” You stand, brushing the nonexistent dust from your skirt.

‘You haven’t seen nothing yet. This is as tame as it gets.’ He blows the hair away from his face, combing his fingers through his hair.

‘Your biggest concern is the lanky smiley trash bag. He holds grudges like you would not believe.’

“I figured that much out.” You grumble, your eyes scanning the crowd for the skeletal asshole. The bodies cluster together, the voices growing in volume as the party slowly increases. Monsters begin to leave the kitchen with red plastic cups, a few swaying as their lips move with the slurs. You note a chipper cat monster with a depressed bunny, Toriel talking with a collective group of guests with wide gestures and smiles. Sans and Frisk’s voices carry over the crowd, their vocals belting out a country tune over the original singer. Fire looking monsters illuminate a small corner of the room, their lights casting a shadow over a tall spider monster.

You breathing begins to pick up, a small panic building under the surface.

‘There are so many anomalies here. Are they all good as the Queen says or are they plotting a downfall? Do some recognize me from the paper? From the lab? Exactly how many of them are survivors like yourself? I bet none. I bet they are plotting to harm the Queen and the children, especially those two over there…’

A hand threads through your own, the icy fingers pulling taunt at your digits. You glance down, tilting your head in confusion as the child refuses to look at you in the face. You can vaguely make out a small tint of blush creeping up the side of their neck.

“Come on. There are some tacos in the kitchen and Muffet might’ve brought some pastries.”

As if on que, your stomach rumbles to life, an embarrassing blush flushing your face. Frisk chuckles under his breath, carefully pulling you through the eyes of the crowd. A few monsters part as the two of you walk, their hands pulling up to their face as though to hide their gossip. Others eye the two of you wearily, their eyes flickering between your face and their talkative companions.

“I hear she is a survivor of the laboratory collapse.”

“She is a great weapon according to some hidden reports.”

“Been missing for years now. Her family must be worried.”

“Great…another human added to the monster ranks. Hopefully this one doesn’t sell out like the last one.”

You turn to the one monster spewing hate about humans, your lips opening to protest their ludacris ideals when Frisk’s hand gives yours a sharp tug.

“Ignore them X. They are a bunch of paranoid, conservative, pussy monsters that cannot tell a friend from foe.”

“Doesn’t give them the right to trash talk like I am not here.” You mumble, your tone dropping an octave.

“If we were back at the lab, those who talk trash about another meet in the middle of the arena. Winner leaves with their life.”

“Sounds like a fun time.” The child hums, his soul fluttering at the mention of death and destruction.
You snort.

“Yeah, \textit{real} fun kid.”

Frisk snorts as well, his other hand coming up to cover the smirk growing on his face. You note their eyes flicker to life, the copper hues igniting the golden color beneath to a shimmering brass color. We nearly make it to the kitchen, the weird smell assaulting your nose as you grow closer.

“Oh! My children! There you are!” Toriel pushes through the crowd, her white furry head a couple of feet taller than most. She flashes the two of you an excitable smile as she approaches, a handful of monsters trailing behind. Her hand ruffles the smaller child’s head, a faint blush forming on their face.

“Frisk, are you showing your new big sister around?” He gives her a timid nod, his eyes refusing to meet hers. Something beats painfully within the child, as though looking at the goat woman physically makes him hurt. You try to focus in, to take a gander at his soul, but Toriel’s voice snaps your concentration.

“That is adorable my child! But please, do go enjoy the party for now. I wish to introduce X to our group of friends.” He nods, releasing your hand as though it is made of acid. As he backs away, you notice a smirk growing on his lips, Toriel’s chattering voice blends with the noise of the background. Frisk gives you a sign with his fingers before disappearing into the crowd. Toriel replaces his hand with hers, leading you to a small collection of people behind her.

“Now, I am sure you remember Doctor Undyne from your stay at the hospital. This is her girlfriend Alphys….”

The antics below quiet, a few voices floating through the home, the smell of coffee lingering in the air. The rough shingles beneath your backside grate at your new tank top and shorts, the cool night air kissing the exposed skin as it welcomes you to its domain. Your bare toes curl around the edge of a gutter, stabilizing your body from the effects of gravity. Your eyes gaze around the neighborhood in wonder, the scene brushed aside to watch the night sky. The stars above twinkle down on the world, smiling and watching as life unfolds. They vary in sizes, brightness, and color; each one just as beautiful as the last. The nightlife differs from the daytime, creatures ranging from bats to grasshoppers call upon their breatharian to create their own special symphony. The moonlight shines down in little beams of brilliant luminescent light, the various colors flickering through the air as they descend to the mortal realm.

‘It has been…quite a long time. Has the sky always looked this brilliant?’

You hum quietly to yourself, the sweet spring air filling your lungs with the promise of warmer, brighter days. The breath exhales through your parted lips, the unspoken question thrown into the air with no true response. Exhaustion eats away behind your eyelids, pleading with them to shut down for the night, but you refuse. You will not waste a single precious second away from this masterpiece for a simple bodily function. There is plenty time for that, but only a once in a lifetime opportunity to witness the first night.

‘Do you think we will ever see the sky again?’ You sigh, having heard this question pass through various lips. The talk of freedom, the possibility that all of this is a ruse and that they would return home. You glance at the teen, her big doe eyes staring back at you expectantly. Bright vibrant greens dull to a singular color, the life draining out of her every day she remains trapped. Smooth chocolate
skin crackles to ash, various cuts marring her once perfect complexion. Her frame is a little more voracious than what they normally bring in, but her midsection shows her descent into starvation. As it marks the sign of an experiment. She cries in her sleep, begging for her brother to come save her with no avail. It is enough to drive you insane with your own desire to be rescued. On those days, however, you remind yourself why you must remain strong and not give into mundane feelings.

“I do not know, nor will I have an answer anytime soon.” You simply reply, giving the bandage a tug for good measure. She winces, but says nothing, thankful for her body to have some sort of sleeve to repair behind.

“Don’t you think of it though?” She continues as if she is talking about the weather.

“Don’t you ever wish to see the sun again? To feel the fall leaves break under your feet? To feel the warming effects of a warm blanket after a chilly day?”

“Mundane feelings will not help you here.” You reply curtly, your hands sliding the fabric over her body once more. You see her chapped lips part, a confusing remark wishing to escape. You shake your head, shoving her to her own bed with a forceful push. She stumbles slightly, grabbing the rail of the bunkbed for support.

“Now hush. Should they hear you, I am afraid I will not be able to assist you further.”

She nods, climbing into her cot without another word.’

You remember vaguely a few days later, the guards coming to take her away never to be seen again. At the time, they had very few creations, often bunking them into small lockers of six to ten. Most kept to themselves while others attempted to plot against the captors. They were immediately taken care of, leaving a trail of fear in their wake.

‘If she had only heed my warning, she may be here now. Enjoying the answers to her questions.’

You yawn, the action bringing small tears to your eyes.

‘It is not my place to say any What if’s anymore. Now, it is about making sure that organization of bastards fall.’ You listen as the front door opens and closes, the hyper-active couple leaving for the night with promises to visit later. Their car engine revs to life, breaking the silence as they shift into gears, leaving the serenity of the night.

‘Good riddance. I’ve been around that creepy “doctor” enough at the hospital. Wouldn’t want her to experiment on me while I sleep.’

A sudden shock races down your spine, your magic triggering as someone steps over the small barrier you have placed. The latches to the window below you pop open, the plastic with glass sliding up with ease.

“Hey sis. Whatcha doin’ up here?” You huff, carefully propping yourself up. Frisk’s hair hangs with gravity, the locks shooting straight to the ground. Half of his body leans out the window, his fingers searching for a better grip.

“Squirt you really shouldn’t be trying to do adult stuff. Could get hurt and whatnot.”

“And you are okay with getting hurt and worrying mom?” You snort, laying back down.

“I have way more practice than you kid. Highly doubt I could bust my ass unlike your short stuff.” You hear him huff, most likely fighting off the urge to pout. The window shifts below you, the
sound of flesh slapping against the side of the house as he attempts to climb. Before you could react, he hauls himself over the gutter within a few seconds, a smirk settling onto his normally barren features.

“**Well it looks like I have proven you wrong.**” You roll your eyes, casting him a fleeting look.

“Guess so.” You hum. The night continues to hold your attention, the lull of silence allows your mind to drift as though in a fog. Frisk settles down next to you, his body stiff as it sits awkwardly along the slanted roof. Once he settles after a string of curses, his eyes poke at your form, questions building but never escaping. The prodding continues for a few seconds more, the intensity of the stare causing a growl to escape the back of your throat.

“What kid? Just spit it out already.” He fidgets with his fingers, his eyes glancing around as though the answer will appear from thin air.

“I was wondering…If you would…ya know…let me lay on you?” The question shocks you a fraction, your head lifting to get a good look at the child. Under the moonlight, he looks like a doll, his eyes wide, his hair perfectly combed into place. His pajamas consist of a basic white t-shirt and red plaid stripes over an inky surface. His feet are bare much like your own, but they appear thicker, the ends branching wider than the base. When you meet his eyes, a shocking blotch of purple lines under his eyes, a history flashing through the orbs that you cannot decipher.

‘He looks like he is in pain. Like something is eating at his mind until he goes crazy. The situation feels similar…’

You glance down at yourself, a frown forming on your face. You give him a curt nod, carefully hauling the body over until he resides comfortably next to you. You both proceed to lay down, his head resting on your collar bone, his eyes glancing toward the side of the building. A thin arm snakes its way across your stomach, clutching onto your hip bone. A soft shudder races through the kid, the anxiousness leaving him as quickly as it came. Your fingers begin their work, one wrapping securely around Frisk while the other curls around your front, brushing the stray locks from his face.

‘He reminds me…’

“You know this doesn’t mean anything, right? I just need a soft place to rest is all.” Frisk huffs, a yawn escaping through his lips. You roll your eyes, flicking him on the nose.

“Whatever kid. Just go to bed or not.” He nods, his fingers clutching the bone tightly. A few minutes pass by, your fingers toying with the silky strands atop his head, your eyes switching between the sky and the child. His breathing slows, the huffs shallow as sleep overtakes his body. It is then you take a better look at the child. Pale scars, nearly invisible, mar the right of his eyebrow, another one darting across his nose. The moonlight accentuates the child’s natural glow, giving them a glamour like an overly done vampire. Deep purples and blues intermingle far beneath the child’s eyes appearing to be a permanent fixture to his face. Something within your soul swirls, the overbearing feeling of protection crossing over it more than once. It feels similar to a sense of kinship, a broken soul holding itself together, surviving the only way it knows while it learns.

‘He reminds me… of me…’ You sigh, mentally shaking your head, your arms instinctively clutch the child close.

‘What have I gotten myself into?’

Chapter End Notes
I am thinking of trying to post at least one chapter every Monday or every other Monday depending on my schedule. If it works to be every Monday than huzzah! If not, then the chapter posted every other Monday will be either two chapters or one really long one. Thank you all for your patience! Special thanks to those who comment, especially those from the beginning of this! You guys help push my slow ass along especially when I am down~
Heyo! It is Monday everyone and you know what that means!~ As promised a long ass chapter will be going up and I will try to stick to the schedule. Enjoy =)

A figure stands before the rubble, the police tape long gone only to be replaced with large yellow construction vehicles. The grass surviving around the charred remains sways unsteadily within the night breeze, majority of the pieces crisped to a pale-yellow color. Cars whizz by on occasion down the road, the time of night far too late for any normal civilians to be strutting about. His black cloak covers most of his tall frame, the hood pulled over his face to hide away from the moonlight and any unsuspecting visitors. He sighs, kicking a stray pebble out of his way.

‘It was truly only a matter of time before I was discovered. It could have been one of the scientists. It could have been one of the missing children’s family.’ His boot crunches on something other than rubble, the charred remains of an unidentifiable object smearing against the sleek black. He continues to slowly walk around, observing.

‘Regardless, what’s done is done and nothing can change that.’ He lets out a soft sigh through his nose, his hands rummaging through the heap.

‘If only I had a few months more to perfect the artificial determination. A way to implant those who contain it to bend to my will. A contradiction I am sure, but throw in a few other feelings into the mix and well…’

His hands come up empty save for a few scratches and soot. He grimaces, wiping the offending material away onto his coat. He could easily throw this one away after this adventure and still have plenty to spare. A few remaining limbs of the deceased that were not charred out of existence poke through some of the blocks, arms outstretched with fingers missing due to ravenous animals or the building’s destruction. He could not be sure of which.

‘No matter. The only true experiment that I require survived as per told by the television crew. A stupid lot of humans if I ever saw one.’

He hums to himself, staring up into the night sky. The moon is at the half way point, the lunar tides signaling a New moon on its horizon. The stars stare down at him neither judging or praising him for his efforts. His line of work is a thankless job, working tirelessly with lesser beings to strive toward the final goal.

‘I should go now before the cops circle around once more.’ The creature turns away from everything he has worked for, a sick smile forming upon his face.

‘When the time is right, I will come for you, my precious little prodigy.’

‘One…Two…Punch!’

‘One…Two…Kick!’

‘Punch…Punch…Kick!’
“All right everyone! Good job! Let us keep up the pace now! Ready? Here we go!” The instructor on the television set thrusts her fists forward, the bodies behind her glimmering under the lights as sweat drips off various orifices. Each fist and kick they throw forward, you mimic with practiced ease, the steps weaker than your previous training regimen. As they pick up the pace, you match the hits, irritation muddling your mind due to the lackluster pace. With a growl, you stop mid swing, slapping the power off button. Silence fills the home once more, the sound of a wall clock in the kitchen keeping a steady rhythm as time progresses forward. Your eyes skim to the front windows, the soft scents of spring bringing a warm tinge to the air. More critters emerge from their winter slumber, filling the night with various noises and sounds. Trickles of talk and laughter fill the house for a few seconds as the neighbors pass, their clothing shrinking as the heat intensifies. You roll your eyes at the weak fleshy neighbors, silently judging their calm, leaned back demeanors.

You make your way into the bright corn flower kitchen, grabbing a chef’s knife off the block as you target in on the basket of apples. Your bare steps slap against the checkered tiles, the sun’s afternoon rays reflecting off the polished surface. You reach the basket in record time, snatching an unwilling fruit from its home. With a growl, you nearly slam the offending fruit onto the grey cobblestone countertop. Your arm raises the knife high, the light reflecting down the blade, accentuating the sleek, sharpness of a well-made kitchen utensil. It sails downward, the blade cutting through the air, causing the molecules to scream in pain. It lands with a ‘thunk’ into the countertop, one half trapped under the knife, the other attempting to get away. With quick, precise cuts, you slice up the fruit, watching the wedges swivel and swing as they break away. The metal clacks against the polished stone, occasionally cutting through the air as it readjusts to a firmer position.

‘Why is everyone so weak?! There is not one goddamn show I can work out to while everyone is away to keep in shape!

The cuts become erratic, the blade swinging as wildly as your thoughts.

‘At this rate I’ll…!’

You slam the knife down onto the counter, the sound ringing through the space. You stare at your hand, the fingers splayed across the flat blade. Your hand matches the length of the blade, the digits dipping just a hare beneath the sharp tip. Little pricks of scars line each digit, a faint silver clean line crossing between your thumb and forefinger. The nailbeds look horrible with the skin cracking in various spots, dry callous spots lining the ridges of each digit. Blood rushes through your ears, the thumping matching the rhythm of the clock. A hidden feeling worms its way into your soul, the feeling causing the small being to shiver. You hang your head over the counter, your frame leaning heavily onto it.

‘At this rate I’ll…’

You shake your head, pushing away from the counter. You groan in slight frustration at your miniature meltdown, cleanliness completely trashed into oblivion. Apple wedges litter the counter, a few falling to the floor, ruined. A good handful remaining on the counter rock unsteadily, a few tilted onto their sides allowing a good portion of it to expose itself to the air. Cores lay in disarray around the cutting area, bits of bitter casing and seeds litter the blade as well as a few of the apples. The steel knife lays in a pool of apple juice and cores, the liquid staining the counter and the blade in a sweet, juicy stickiness. In the center of the chaos, a shallow cut skims through the gloss, exposing the rough rock beneath.

‘Great, yet something else I am sure Toriel will ban me from doing.’ You grumble, sparring a glance at the wall clock. The third hand clicks in a steady rhythm, the large hand moving down a peg as the third hand laps around the twelve.
You sigh, glancing at your mess once more before deciding to clean up the evidence. The cores and skins get a toss out the kitchen window into the garden, the animals and parasites having a field day upon impact. The knife is next, the sucker getting a gentle treatment of hot water and a soapy cloth. You stay clear of the ridges, carefully polishing the utensil dry. You go to collect the bounty when you frown, your eyebrows pulling together.

‘I need a plate before I can clean the countertops. Otherwise I will likely drop the apples or soil them.’ Your quest begins with pulling all nearby cherry oak cabinets, finding nothing more than a few cookbooks, some cleaner, and a collar with the name “Toby” on it. After a few seconds of pulling open every individual cabinet, which feels like twenty-some cabinets, you find a stack of ceramic plates to throw the apples on. The little wedges begin to oxidize, turning a slight brown color at the location of the connection to the core. You halt the browning process with a little bit of lemon juice from the fridge, squeezing it over every apple.

‘Still seems too simple for an afternoon snack. I should add something to this.’ You head to the pantry, your eyes scanning the shelves for something to add. You note a half used peanut butter jar, the bright blue lid slightly unhinged, the sides of the jar slightly transparent in certain spots. Sitting next to it rests an all-white jar with a red lid, the lid littered with tiny specks of marshmallow. You take both, grabbing two spoons on your way back to the countertop. You place the condiments on the L-shaped counter, carefully moving the wedges next, before moving to clean up the sticky spill before it settles into a hard mess.

You give your hands a good wash before opening the jars, stabbing a tablespoon into each. The peanut butter spoon falls halfway into the jar, the handle smacking against the only side still containing peanut butter. The marshmallow spoon squishes into the mass, standing perfectly erect. You shrug, throwing your hand into the peanut butter jar first, the ground up nut immediately taking to your skin. The spoon is slick and gooey under your fingertips, constantly moving along the ridge to gather more peanut butter on its tip. Eventually it complies, taking a rather large dollop out with it. You carefully smack that onto the bare side of the plate, using your clean finger to wipe any remaining peanut butter out of the crevice. The marshmallow stuff is a lot easier than the peanut butter, the condiment giving away to a simple tug with a suction cup sound. Little air pockets fill the empty space as a good chunk leaves the mass, the contents giving a small amount of resistance as you push it off the spoon. It sticks to your fingers, multiplying its white fibrous tendrils the more you struggle with it. After fighting with it for what feels like an eternity, the misshapen mass remains on the plate invading the space of the peanut butter. You give a glance at the clock once more, throwing the offending spoons into the washer before setting to wash your hands.

‘3:15pm the kids bus should be dropping them off at the stop a few houses down. Which means they should be coming in at any moment.’

The front door rattles to life as if on que, a key slipping into the handle eagerly. The tumblers turn, giving the door a few seconds before it bursts to life by a set of skeletal hands. The door makes a loud ‘bang!’ as it smacks into the door stopper, the hinges whining at the sudden assault. Sans stands in the doorway, his body adorning the usual battle armor, cape flying in the slight breeze. His left hand holds a tea green knapsack carefully, the strap attempting to tear at the seam. Chara clutches the small skeleton’s skull, her legs draped over the shoulder padding. Her hair is slightly windblown, the tendrils poking in various directions.

“HUMAN! I HAVE BROUGHT THE SMALLER HUMANS HOME!” Sans cheers excitedly, Chara giggling along with the skeleton’s enthusiasm. Sans places Chara onto the ground, handing the giggling girl her anime themed backpack.
“Please tell me again why he insists on coming to pick us up?” Frisk grumbles as he comes in behind the other two, his sky-blue backpack hanging lazily off his left shoulder.

“HUMAN! DID YOU MAKE SNACKS AGAIN FOR US?!” Before you could respond, Sans and Chara rush into the kitchen, Frisk tossing his bookbag into a small nook between the door and the long rectangular table. Their eyes eagerly search the large space, their bodies vibrating in excitement.

“Of course she did you nitwit. She always does.” You ignore Frisk’s comment, opting to answer Sans’ question.

“Yup. Just cut up a few apple slices.” You point to the ceramic plate a few feet from the pair, grabbing your own apple out of the fruit rack. A few slightly beaten apples remain compared to the bounty from earlier, the red color drastically fading into a maroon color.

‘I should make a run for some more later if this proves to suffice.’

“Thanks sis!” Chara chirps, grasping the plate away from the greedy skeletal hands. She giggles as his face contorts into a frown, whining ensuing shortly after. They bicker for a short second, Chara walking away with a victorious smirk while Sans whines behind her trail. The two make their way into the living room, immediately flipping on the television to some Napstaton show they watch every day.

“Hey Frisk. How was school today” You nod in his direction as he makes his way to the kitchen, throwing his bag along with his sisters. He answers you with a level stare, the orbs tinting red or a second before fading to their normal chocolate spread. You shrug your shoulders, gesturing the fruit basket next to you.

“Did you want some apple slices or something else for a snack?”

“Doesn’t really matter.” He murmurs, the thought nothing more than a faint whisper. You sigh patting the island stool. He shuffles forward, hoisting himself up onto the orange circular bar stool.

‘He looks tired, like he did not sleep for the past few days and decided to get his ass whooped.’

You gnaw into the apple again, your teeth plunging dangerously close to the center of the core. Bitter tough pieces grind together with the sweet ones, the taste making your taste buds wince. You finish off the offending fruit, tossing the core into the garden with the rest. Without another word, you grab your cleaned knife, giving it a quick look over. It remains sharp from the earlier antics, sharp enough that you could potentially cut through the counter…again.

‘I should probably use a cutting board like a proper person.’ You grumble, glancing at the offending piece of plastic next to the sink. Deep gashes line the white surface, the plastic having seen better days. Still, you did not wish to leave any more dents in your track record of destruction.

Frisk’s eyes stare into your backside, watching you from his position as you flutter around. There is a lingering curiosity on the edge of his soul, but he makes no move to speak as you work. You grab another ceramic plate and a small microwavable bowl, setting it on the counter along with a fork.

You hum under your breath as you walk across the room, the spinster’s mechanical voice talking through the television, Chara and Sans chattering excitedly about the robot. Despite his popularity, you could not get into the machine’s fan base much to the disappointment of Sans and Chara.
‘Frisk however seems pleased that I find no joy in the robot.’ You smirk quietly to yourself as you make your way to the pantry. The pantry holds a lot of dry, long shelf life foods from sugary cereal to cans of cranberry jelly to dietary bars. Off in the sugar corner designated for the children, you manage to scrounge up some milk chocolate chips, your eyes glaring at the offending peanut butter jar as you pass. You take a stop at the countertop with the fruit, mulling over your options of chocolate dipping fruit. The choices are vast: bananas, apples, oranges, pears, and a rather large grapefruit. Vaguely in the background, you hear Frisk rising from his seat, his footsteps scurrying over to the countertop.

‘Probably to steal the knife again.’ You reason. Ever since you began residency within the Queen’s home, you have noticed a lot of scolding towards the small child about wielding knives. Although Toriel is justified in worrying over her child playing with sharp things, she should let him learn.

‘You watch dully from the stands, your hands clasped under your chin as the battle ensues. The two rookies punch and kick at each other, occasionally flipping away from an attack only to attempt a magic shot shortly after. The minutes tick along the wall, the “boss’s” pen tapping in perfect rhythm. He too appears annoyed at the lackluster performance, his hands never once turning toward the board for notes.

“Truly pitiful.” You hear him mumble under his breath, the tone displeasing. He turns his hood in your direction, gesturing with his free hand to the floor. You did not have to see under the hood the glimmer within his eyes, the prospect of a plan formulating as he speaks.

“Do be a dear and show them how to do things.” Your stare dully back at him, the will to fight fleeting. The men last night were hard on you, throwing slang as each took turns defiling your very being. There was no lube on either end, the penetration as tearing as the knife against your skin. They left you a numb sack of garbage on the floor, seamen and blood intermingling with the waste of the garbage room. It could cause infection as well as other complications if you stayed there a moment longer.

‘Try to leave.’ Your mind begged, your body did not respond, your soul slightly cracking beneath your surface. It remains quiet in your suffering, allowing the last of your tears to dry up on the floor. You sigh, standing from your position on the stand, jumping down into the pit with practiced ease. The two turn toward you, their faces paling as the “boss” allows them a choice of weapon in a futile attempt. They knew they would die by your hand in any manner the “boss” deems fit. Even as you knew this, you let the slaughter begin, their cries smacking off the mental barrier you erected long ago.

You shake your head out of the memory, focusing at the present task at hand. You relinquish the sad last apples to their fate, grabbing them along with a few bananas as another alternative.

“Frisk, would you like to help me make your snack?” You walk to the knife block, sliding out a smaller paring knife with your free hand. Silence settles between the two, his sudden silent gasp for breath the only indication you have of him being in the room. His footsteps steadily walk forward, the knife clacking against the countertop at its rightful home. There is another beat of silence, his thoughts racing internally while a calm air resides around him. You carefully walk up to the cutting board, laying your bounty around it. Frisk stares up at you in wonder, his lips parting as though he wishes to speak. He snaps them close immediately, his head twisting to look at something over his shoulder.

“…You aren’t mad that I took the knife?”

“Not really.” You shrug, eying the child. His face remains stoic as the standard emotion, but there is
a light flickering behind his eyes, shock weaving through his iris.

“You going to help or what?” He shakes out of his stupor, shrugging his shoulders as he stands next to you, his hands toying with the handle of the knife. You allow him to cut with the large knife, opting to use the paring knife for the annoying fibrous skins. The two of you cut in silence, the knives slapping into the counter as skins fall and pieces dislodge. You watch in the corner of your eye at Frisk as he handles the sharp instrument expertly, his fingers curl as he holds the fruit, his dominant fingers wrapped completely around the handle as it slices through the fleshy pulp.

“Doin’ pretty good with that kid.” He stiffens for a fraction of a second, his blade down in mid swing. His head adjusts at an odd angle, his eyes nearly hidden by the fringe of his hair. Frisk continues to cut as if nothing happened, his head staring intently at his work. You shrug, finishing your small pile of fruit.

“…Thanks…” Frisk whispers, his grip tightening on the handle.

The rest of the snack goes in silence occasionally broken by the other two cheering about something. It takes only a few minutes to clean up the scraps, and less time to melt the chocolate morsels to dip them in. The smell of butter, cocoa, and the underlying hints of fruit linger in the air, the presence in the kitchen warming at the homey smells.

“Sis! Is that chocolate I smell?!” Chara bursts into the room, her arms flinging around your waist in a giant hug. You flick the eager girl in the forehead, watching with a flicker of amusement as she recoils with a pout. Sans rushes in shortly after her, mimicking the same action. You flick him in the brow of the skull, watching as he too recoils away with a small whine.

“Relax. We still need to decide if they will be dunked and eaten or frozen.” Stars twinkle in Sans’ sockets, his gloved hands clasping together excitedly.

“YOU CAN FREEZE CHOCOLATE TO FRUIT HUMAN?” You give him a simple nod.

‘Sans is not the bag guy in this position, but that does not mean I fully trust him.’ Although the Queen assures Sans is as truthful as they come, you keep an eye on the hyperactive skeleton, keeping him and the others out of trouble.

His whole body reacts, jittering and jolting as the information processes.

“WOWIE HUMAN! THAT IS INTERESTING THAT YOU CAN FREEZE A COCOA BASED PRODUCT TO A MOSTLY WATER-SUGAR BASED ONE!” He picks up Chara who, upon touch, squeals happily. Stars appear in his sockets, a feat you are told that only he can do.

‘The fact he even has eyes in the skull without the flesh material is unnerving.’

“DID YOU KNOW THIS HUMAN CHARA?” She giggles, giving him a vigorous nod.

“Yeah! You can freeze almost anything covered in chocolate!”

“EVEN MY MAGNIFICENT FRIENDSHIP TACOS?” Your face pales a fraction, your stomach doing summersaults as the flavor combination worms its way into your mind.

‘Chocolate, ground beef, lettuce, tomato, sour…blegh. I am not going to think of this any further.’

“Not quite Sans.” Chara pats his skull, silently asking permission to be put down. You turn your back on the two, stabbing a piece of fruit with the fork. You note from the corner of your eye Frisk watching you intently.
“Chocolate can go on anything if you try, however, there are flavor combinations that are better!” You slowly descend the fruit into the chocolate bowl, watching as the small rivers of rich milk chocolate cascade over the fruit in small ripples.

“For example! Fruit can be used because it is sweet but not overly sweet! They can be savory as well!”

You carefully pull the fruit back out, slowly twirling the fork to dislodge any extra chocolate back into the bowl. Once the fruit stops dripping, you carefully lay it onto the plate, using the tip of your finger to dislodge it. You eyes glance over to Frisk who gives you a determined nod, grabbing your fork from the board. You grab another one, repeating the action.

“Like this one time, a kid in class brought in Mexican chocolate! I thought it would be super sweet but it was really spicy!” You hear Sans gasp dramatically. Frisk gives your arm a tap, directing your attention to his form. He holds a piece of fruit on his own fork, gesturing for the chocolate bowl. You slide it and the plate between the two of you, quietly continuing your work.

“CHOCOLATE WHICH IS SWEET CAN BE SPICY?” Chara makes an affirming noise, causing another gasp to escape the skeleton.

“I MUST TELL MY BROTHER THIS! PERHAPS TRY IT IN MY NEXT CREATION!” The two of you are halfway done with the fruit, Frisk’s looking a little worse for wear with giant chocolate prints in the top. Still, the child remains determined to finish the project, eyes locked onto his current fruit.

“What about Alphys? Maybe she can put more passion and fire into that new recipe she is teaching you!” Sans once again gasp, his bone rattling in excitement overload. Chara squeals behind you, your body pivoting just enough to see her from the corner of your eye. Sans picks her up once more, swinging the small child in a death grip spin.

“OH HUMAN CHARA! ALPHYS WILL SURELY LOVE THAT! SHE WILL MASTER IT MUCH LIKE FIGHTING AND THEN TEACH ME HOW TO BECOME THE MASTER OF CHOCOLATING AS WELL! I CANNOT WAIT UNTIL OUR NEXT COOKING LESSON!” The two of you finish the fruit, drizzling the remaining chocolate over the tops. You opted to throw them into the freezer while Chara is distracted, Frisk splashing water into the small bowl to prevent his sister from going into hyper-chocolate mode.

A faint rapping at the door grabs your attention, the sound nearly lost by the commotion.

“Knock Knock.”

“Great…he’s here.” Frisk grumbles. You silently growl under your breath, your eyes glaring through the door to the skeleton behind it. Sans groans at the sound of his brother’s voice, his vice grip releasing Chara just to clutch at his side. He stamps his feet over to the door, throwing it open in the same amount of power as earlier.

“I WILL NOT TOLLERATE YOUR HORRIBLE PUNS WHILE AT THE QUEEN’S HOME BROTHER!” Sans huffs, crossing his arms over his breastplate. Papyrus leans in the doorway, his hands stuffed in the dingy tangerine hoodie. A cigarette situates between his teeth, the smog making its way into the house. You crinkle your nose in disgust, your glare never once leaving his sockets. You place a firm hand on Chara’s shoulder, your fingers digging slightly into the child’s flesh. She shakes you off, her doe eyes squinting up at you with disappointment before she rushes for the door with her skeleton counterparts.
“She is nearly or as dumb as that hyperactive skeleton.” Frisk sighs, leaning his form into your side. You wrap a protective arm around the child, giving his shoulder a sympathetic squeeze.

“No…she is too forgiving for her own good.” You mumble under your breath, breaking the staring contest to watch the small girl. She interacts with the skeletons happily, her eyes crinkling at the corners as a wide smile pushes past her lips revealing her nearly adult toothed smile. Her hands talk along with her, occasionally tapping at Sans or Papyrus. The two stare at the child with amusement and wonder, the louder skeleton often giving the girl hugs that could rival the best cuddlers or the best mixed martial arts fighter.

“Hey Sis! We are going over Sans and Papyrus’ for the weekend! Isn’t that awesome?” Chara jumps eagerly in place, her hands clasping around your forearm. You stiffen at the news, your finger pausing the soft flowing music from your i-pod. Toriel wished to buy you a new computer for any needs that technology could provide, but you outright refused, opting to use the family computer to download music. The soft flows of the nature soundtrack were doing nothing to calm your erratic soul.

“What do you mean child?” She huffs.

“Every weekend mom allows us to sleep over the skeleton’s house so long as we get all of our homework done Friday night! We watch movies, eat tacos, play video games and complex board games…” The child continues to ramble, her excitement fading away as worry creeps in.

‘The queen allows such…monsters around her children? Is it by force or willing? Chara appears eager to go, but I do not understand why. After all, they are the ones who attacked us.’

“Sis! You aren’t listening again!” Chara whines, her lips twisting into a full pout. You sigh, ruffling her hair.

“Sorry kiddo. What were you saying again?”

“Well I was talking about…”

“ARE YOU READY TO GO HUMAN CHARA?” San’s voice breaks your thoughts, your mind hazy at the over exuberant amount of memories lately.

‘Perhaps this is something I should bring up to the Queen.’

“I just need to get my bag from my room! Frisk! Come on!” Chara rushes over, grasping Frisk out of your grasp. She drags the stunned boy up to their shared room, throwing the door open to grab their evening bags. An awkward tense silence fills the gap as the two skeletons eye you. Sans, although frequents here often, never leaves himself a moment with you alone. Papyrus outright refuses to come over, the older brother often begging his younger sibling sometimes to come home early.

‘Most likely because of me. Not that Sans is subtle with his phone conversations either.’

“Hey…” Sans speaks, his voice quieter than usual. You glance at the skeleton, your face null of any emotions. Above the living room, you hear Chara’s footsteps frantically running around her bedroom, occasionally the soft ‘thud’ of an object hits the floor.

“I know we didn’t exactly…get off on the right foot. But I would like to start over and try again.” You blink, staring awkwardly at the shorter skeleton. Gone is his usual goofy grin, the teeth of his mouth drawn straight, his eye sockets remaining passive. His hands wring the gloves attached to his fingers nervously, his eyes never wavering from your face Little blips of blue liquid appears on the
top of his shiny dome, slipping down the side of his face. You hear a snort coming from Papyrus, your eyes immediately locking in to glare at the skeleton.

“Speak for yourself bro.” Papyrus’ icy tone cuts through his brother’s sincerity like a knife, tension and anger radiating off him in waves. An orange glow pulses within the skeleton’s bones, backing up the skeleton in the possible fight to come. You feel your own magic pulsing at the surface, awaiting your call.

“Brother…” Sans glances up sadly at his brother, his eyes dimming a fraction.

“The human deserves another chance…don’t you think brother? X does not appear to be evil and even though I know she dislikes me, she allows me to enjoy snack time with Chara.” Papyrus removes a hand from his hoodie, patting his brother on his skull. His other hand dislodges the cigarette from between his teeth, pushing a smoke ring into the living room.

“You are too kind for your own good bro. You do not see what I see.” Papyrus growls, the eye lights gone from his vision as he turns toward you. You growl quietly under your breath, the edges of your vision tinting with red.

“What I see is a dirty monster killer, her hands…no, her body covered in the dust of fathers, mothers, children…All for what? A chance to survive when there was plenty of opportunity to escape?” His voice drops an octave, venom lancing each letter. A bitter chill coats your skin, but the anger within flash fries it to steam. You lock onto the empty sockets, your lips pulling back to reveal your teeth.

“Say. That. Again.” You hiss, your fingers clenching into fists at your side. His fucking face has the audacity to smirk, a faint glow of orange appearing in his left socket. His jaw opens up readily, the words on the tip of his tongue.

“I have everything ready to go! I just needed a few more things!” Chara descends the stairs, her duffle bag swinging with each step. Papyrus immediately closes his mouth, placing the cancer stick back into his mouth. Sans turns to greet the small girl, giving you a couple of glances when she shuffles through her bag. Frisk is not far behind her, his eyes casting you an odd glance as he descends with his duffle bag. Papyrus and Sans immediately slip back into their persona, Sans rushing to the two to grab their bags while Papyrus takes one last drag, squashing the cigarette into the floor.

“LET US GO THEN HUMANS! HUMAN X, I SHALL RETURN THEM TO YOU SUNDAY NIGHT AS USUAL!” Sans gives you a curt nod. You return the gesture, noting the skeleton’s sockets wince in the corners, his usual happy aura dissipating for a second. The corners of his smile jolt for a brief second, the motion easily missed. He situates his grin back into place, the wide girth of the smile taking up most of his lower jaw. You cannot examine the skeleton further as he turns around, bags in hand as he talks excitedly with the kids.

“Bye sis!” Chara calls from the door, her hand waving as the door slowly closes. An orange glow surrounds the wood, slamming shut once Frisk crosses the threshold. It dissipates after a second, the house once again settling into a quiet lull of television commercials and the kitchen clock. You stare at the door for a few seconds, your mind rewinding the conversation prior to the children coming down. After staring at the nothingness, your body begins its autopilot routine of cleaning up after snack time.

‘Sans…is an annoying, loud mouthed skeleton that is constantly hyperactive. He comes over unannounced most days intruding on the Queen’s hospitality as well as my own. He wears that stupid battle armor every day which is impractical unless you live in a bad neighborhood. Yet this dimwitted skeleton wishes…to make amends.’
You blow a sigh out through your lips, placing the dirty dishes into the dishwasher.

‘Papyrus the asshole smoke infected skeleton disagrees with his brother’s proposal, nearly calling his brother an idiot. A pretty low blow even by sibling standards.’

You thought back to San’s expression at his brother’s harsh tone, how…disappointed he appeared to be at his brother. As though he expected better from his brother. You shake your head.

‘A ruse most likely to work in his favor. Him and his brother are tight knit. Nothing could possibly sever or hurt that bond.’

You pause briefly, glancing down at the plate of leftovers Toriel left for tonight’s dinner. It appears to be a pasta of some sort, the shape hidden beneath a thick layer of blush sauce. Plastic wrap secures the sauce and noodles from sliding all over the place, condensation building internally from the once hot food. You place the meal into the microwave, ripping the plastic off before you shut the door. The microwave hums to life as you input the timer, the plate spinning as it heats.

‘A dirty monster killer with a body coated in dust huh? Are your hands as clean as you lead people to believe? Would you not do the same in my situation?’ You snort.

‘Of course, he will never know my pain and suffering. The obnoxious halfwit can barely keep himself awake on a good day, let alone enough to survive the training.’

The microwave screams as the timer reaches its limit. You pop it open, mixing the food around with a fork before placing it in for a few minutes longer.

‘…This is really irksome.’ You huff, anger blooming within your chest. You feel your soul beat erratically, demanding a release at the injustice, at the poor call of character.

‘I mean seriously. This is the same pair of skeletons that nearly obliterated me without a second thought due to my association at the time with Chara. They appeared at my weakest state in the hospital, taunting me with the child with no proper explanation causing a bad representation of my powers. Then just to spite me further, they appear once again in the hospital on multiple occasions. Now, just because I live with the Queen and her children they feel the need to come and go as they please! Do they not see what kind of target they are painting? How infuriating it is to see them, so carefree and oblivious to what goes on behind their fucking oblivious backs?!’ You nearly rip the door off the microwave, your hands darting in for the sizzling plate. Heat strikes your skin from the hot surface, but it only fuels your anger. The door to the microwave slams shut, your feet stomping to the living room. The remote complies to your rough button pushing, the screen immediately hiding from you. You make your way quickly up the stairs, slamming your bedroom door the second you enter. Your fingers wrap tightly around the metal utensil, the small instrument groaning under the force.

‘And that skeleton dare thinks he has the right to ask for a redo?’ You shove a large amount of pasta into your mouth, the liquid sauce burning the entire way down.

‘A second chance he has proven that he has not earned?!’ There is a sound in the background, a sound you cannot appropriately identify nor care to.

‘Fat fucking chance that I will ever accept a redo from them!’

SNAP!

The sound brings your thoughts out of the burning rage towards the sound. You carefully unravel your hand, watching as the two halves of the fork fall gracelessly from your palm, clattering to the
ground. Bits of metal particles remain within the center of your palm, the shavings causing a slight itch at the sight.

‘Looks like this is two things I must repay the Queen for.’ You sigh, dumping the shavings and broken fork into your small waste bin. You glance at the food within your other palm, your hunger vanishing.

‘I need to blow off some steam.’ Your eyes gaze out into the vast yard, the line of property ending at a small clutter of trees. The sun begins its descent into the horizon, the shadows dancing playfully along the lush green grass. Oranges and yellows tint everything within the ray’s reach in a bath of warm colors, offsetting the natural color. You place your plate down onto the desk, walking over to the large, expansive window on your north wall. Without another thought, you open your large bay window, allowing the breeze a moment to greet you kindly before jumping down to the earth below. Your feet make a beeline for the forest, your magic conjuring before you even cross the threshold.
Big shout out to all of my readers new and old! Thank you all for sticking it to the story and enjoying it as much as I am! This next one is a doosey page wise: roughly 14 typed up pages! The ending is a little rushed I will admit, however, if I kept going it would end up as another chapter!

“Fluffy bunny once again saves the day and has the loving adoration of the town…The end.” Papyrus closes the book, sighing in relief as he glances around the room. Sans is out like a light, his soft breathing accompanied by his snuggle partner Chara. The two mumble and toss with each other, cuddling closer to keep the night chill off.

“I will never understand how those two can fall asleep so quickly to such a dull book.” Frisk props himself up on his arm, eying the dozing pair. He will not admit it, but he is quite envious at their quick acceptance to sleep’s embrace. Papyrus shrugs, quietly shoving the book onto the shelf with his magic. The orange glow gives the room a soft color, bouncing off the lime green walls of Sans’ room.

“So…I gotta ask.” Papyrus makes an affirming noise, his eye lights glancing to the small child on the other bed. Frisk stares at the skeleton a moment, his eye flickering between their normal chocolate color and a warm caramel color dotted with red flecks.

“What have you got against X?” Papyrus blows out a frustrated sigh. Of course he would notice the tension in the air, the looks slipping back into their normal façade nothing more than a perfected mask.

‘I need a cigarette.’ Papyrus muses, shoving his hands into his pockets as he stands. He gestures the kid with his skull, walking out the door, his steps muted by the carpet. Frisk follows wordlessly behind, pulling the door closed as they exit into the hallway. They walk down the cream-colored tunnel, the plush nearly white carpet muting each skeletal clack and child stomp. They proceed down the dark staircase, ignoring the living room as they pass through. The kitchen too is ignored, the tiles reflecting the dim lighting of the lights. The pair end up on the back porch, their gazes meeting the rather large back yard adorned with shrubs and flowers as far as the eye can see.

Papyrus pulls his box of smokes out of his pocket, flicking the flimsy paper box open to retrieve his prize. Frisk stands next to him, his arms cross over his torso impatiently. The cancer stick lights with a fiery orange glow, the embers igniting as Papyrus takes a long drag.

“Well? I’m not getting any younger over here smiley trash bag.” Papyrus closes his sockets for a minute, opening them to glance at the child. His eyes glow in the moonlight like a cat stalking its prey. His hair wild and untamable despite the cleanliness of the cut. Scars line the child’s physical flesh, the cuts blending with his unnaturally pale skin, the moonlight accentuating the color. Beneath the flesh, a broken black heart pulses within the soul cavity, the tips of it dotting with flecks of determination. Looking closely at it, another color appears to surface, one that is too small to even distinguish against the inky background.
‘Curious.’ Papyrus takes another drag, exhaling the smoke after a few seconds.

“You could say I can get a good read on people.” Frisk groans at the pun, giving the skeletal leg a rough shove. It does not hurt him in the slightest, like a small annoying insect.

“I am serious Papyrus. I may not like you or your dimwitted brother, but I will not have you hurl insults at family.” Papyrus freezes in mid drag, his fingers drawing the cigarette away from his mandible.

“You are one to talk kid. Insulting my brother and yet claim that it is wrong to hurl insults at family.” Frisk huffs, glancing away from the tall annoying skeleton.

“This was a mistake trying to talk to him. I will get nowhere with these derailing answers. I should have gotten Chara to do this.’

“To answer your question, I dislike her for various reasons. Most I can understand due to the first encounter.” To this, Frisk raises a quizzical eyebrow, directing his attention back to Papyrus. Papyrus gruffly chuckles, taking another hit.

“They didn’t tell you did they. We had a very…explosive introduction.”

“Almost blew her up with the gaster blasters did you?” Papyrus chuckles once more, his eye light glancing at the child next to him.

“Yeah.”

A dull silence falls between the two, the nightly creatures chirping as they interact, a few braving the world rustle through the underbrush. Stars dot the night sky, not as many as living in the outskirts of town, but just enough to enjoy. A large half-moon resides within the sky, the beams of light shooting down in cone-like rays. The peace is broken by a faint humming in the air, Papyrus’ magic springing to the surface at the unnatural flux of magical energy. Frisk appears to feel this as well, his stance tightening as his fingers subconsciously reach for the non-existent weapon. Off in the distance, a small spark of light penetrates the sky like a rocket, the speck nearly invisible as itascends. Another speck joins the other one, the two clashing high above in a quick flash of light. Papyrus’ sockets widen a fraction as the light dissipates, the magic intensity following shortly after.

The color of the flash was not a natural white like everything else, but a split color of blue and red.

“I wonder what that was.” Frisk shivers, his body standing as neutral as ever, but Papyrus saw that he too is slightly shaken by the sight.

“I have the faintest idea.” Papyrus whispers, his cigarette long forgotten as the two re-enter the house. As Papyrus crosses the threshold, he eyes the explosion spot once more, silently closing the screen door behind him.

You lay on the forest floor, stars twinkling on the darkened canvas above, the moon shooting flares of light into the clearing. The soft fragrance of honey suckle and lilac dance through the night air, a hint of rain stretching along the borders. You run your fingers through the cool blades of grass, marveling at the waxy exterior slipping through your digits. The soil feels cool and moist against your backside, small chunks clinging to any exposed skin that will accept it.
'Finally…I can think clearly.' You muse, the wind rustling the forest around you, free wisps caressing your exposed stomach. You settle your free arm over the exposed flesh, feeling a piece of raised flesh beneath your fingertips just below the belly button. The jagged line is small, the rough ridges nearly mended completely to the new flesh around it.

‘The first time they tested my endurance after an injection…’ A time before the healing powers of green magic, where they watched you suffer for their own experimentation. Your fingers trail over the ridge of your abdominal muscles, the muscle instinctively sucking in at the soft caress. The faintest abnormality of skin breaks the smooth surface, the healing nearly complete.

‘They went larger, bolder with their incisions. This was after the discovery of healing properties of a kind soul.’

Your fingers trace the faint memories of incisions, the scars no longer visible on the surface. Each memory plays out quickly through your mind’s eye, the sound of screams echoing off the metal chamber. The sound of a metal instrument harshly tearing into the skin, ripping away the sinew, muscle, and organs sheathed in protective fibers. The cool feeling of the surgical knife poking and prodding everything vital to keeping you alive, digging and piercing each one, filling the cavities with blood. Stopping the heart, starting it back up a second later, cracking the skull open, poking and prodding in the brain cavities to see how magic effects it. The room doused in faint traces of human decomposition and alcohol. Each time, the incisions made by a person hiding within the hood, their features smirking under the faint glimpse of hospital lighting…

You take a shallow breath, closing your eyes, repressing the offending memories once more. They fade into the darkness, the forest whispering sweet nothings into your mind. You open your eyes, focusing your mind on the damage created by your sporadic training session. A rather large oddly shaped circle lines the damage with char marks and dying embers. A good portion of grass around the outer circle vanishes, the charred soil in its place the only indicator of anything being there. Those around the outside of the onslaught appear yellow, the strands crisp as wheat, the color similar to the color of hay. Trees lay in a disarray, some completely fallen to the forest floor while others use their counterparts to hold themselves up. Leaves fall in various locations around the trees, a hefty pile burned to a crisp like their grassy counterpart. It allows an ample amount of moonlight in, shining the way back into the clearing as well as shining a light on the damage done.

You let out a long, low whistle, pushing yourself off the ground to stand.

“I did a number on this area didn’t I.” The wind picks up slightly, the forest appearing to agree with you. You let out a huff, a small embarrassing smile gracing your face.

“Hah…I’m sorry. It has been…too long.” The wind dies down, the critters nearby filling the quiet space. You take that as an acceptance of your apology, taking this moment to leave.

‘After all, if someone found out it was I who did the damage, there will be some…questions.’

A frown creases your face as you walk, your feet nimbly jumping over or moving around possible tripping hazards.

‘The magical build this time around is definitely unstable. More so than when I was a prisoner at the lab. This might be something I must watch just in case it gets…’

A horn blares in the distance, lights encroaching your form at a brisk pace. You jump out of the road as a car speeds by, the driver flipping you off as they pass. You scowl, giving the vanishing car your own middle finger. Voices carry over the ‘swish’ of passing cars, the sound lively and filled with mirth. Lights shine down from various buildings, screaming over each other to present their specific
brand. Your eyes scan around the area, a Welcome to Downtown sign sits along your side of the road, the green billboard new compared to other signs.

‘That is about as creative as a three-year-old calling a cat’s name Kitty.’ You mentally roll your eyes, your body hanging along the shadows of the night. Something within the back of your mind itched to proceed forward, to look at this new area with the fascination of a child. The logical part of your mind, however, advises not to head so boldly into the unknown. You examine the people from your position, watching various patrons come and go from beat up clunkers to fancy looking cars. Music and coin sounds blast from various buildings, each with a ring of an announcing voice or chaotic civilian. Unconsciously your body takes a step forward.

‘It looks chaotic. People spending money they do not have and for what? A cheap thrill of possibility? And what is up with some of the outfits? It is warm out sure however that could not possibly keep them warm enough.’

Your body continues to walk toward the hum of excitement, your mind attempting to process what is going on.

‘Is that the smell of gasoline or sweaty bodies? Whatever the smell is, it is rancid as hell.’ You wrinkle your nose in disgust, a hit of cheap perfume infiltrating your senses. Scantly dressed women walk on either side of the large strip, their outfits showing off their notable physical features. Make up covers their natural complexions, the paint caked on like a cheap bit whore.

‘Hush. You should not judge. They could be in a situation like yourself only they make a small income by toying the patrons they wish to seduce.’

A trio of girls head in your general direction, their laughter infiltrating the air with bubbly mirth. They each sport a similar garb set, the variation of colors matching the natural glow of their skin. The various irises do not notice you as they pass, their conversation escalating at the sudden surge of noise. You feel your shoulder jolt as the sudden contact, bare skin brushing against your own. Something pointed carefully rests within your grasp, the end girls finger pressing it quickly yet nonchalantly as she continues to distract her group members. You watch as they depart, their steps carefully rolling their hips to accentuate the promise of a good time. They disappear within a few minutes, the mob of people swallowing them whole. You reveal the gift left behind the moment you are sure they are gone. A business card resides within your palm, the paper crisp with the smell of freshly printed ink. The background is dark, the lights behind the figures in the foreground dim with flickers of orange and yellow lighting. A male positions himself within the foreground, his hips in mid thrust, his fingers out of frame as they dig into the female’s hips. The female leans over what appears to be nothing, but upon closer inspection is in fact a dark table. Her hands grasp at the open air, each digit reaching for the letters inscribed off to the left. Her body is thankfully covered with the positioning, her breasts pushing into the table, the male being the only indication of her penetration.

Heat of Passion along with typical location details line the left-hand side in eloquent handwriting, the I’s dotted with small flames. At the very bottom in small print, it reads, “Present this card for a free drink on the house. Limit one per new customer.” You furrow your eyebrows at the card, flipping it over only to be greeted with another erogenous picture, this time featuring bunny monsters. Although it does not look like they are doing much other than presenting each other, their souls fill part of the picture. Two inverted white hearts fill the cavity between the blue bunnies, the other’s hand reaching out to stroke the soul of the other. The camera flashes their moment of pure bliss, their eyes glazing over as they bend in an odd fashion.

‘Why would the woman give me this type of card?’ You grumble, searching your person for a pocket as you begin to walk again. People subconsciously funnel away from you, their stray hands never
venturing in your general direction. Occasionally you hear a squeak from a girl, a stranger’s hand coming in contact within her personal bubble.

‘She probably thought I was nothing more than someone looking for a good time much like everyone else here.’ You snort, opting to shove the card within the waistband of your pants. It pokes uncomfortably into the crevice of your leg, but you pay it no mind. Flashing lights, music bouncing off each other building, girls and guys alike flirting up the strip. Various food establishments wafting their scents into the small area, the intermingling smell rancid with the mixture along with the sewage running below. Girls giggle, their breasts jiggling under the strain of short tops, a few others throwing up while their drunken counterparts wobble to help. Guys strut down shirtless, some even less than that, soaking up the praises of men and women alike in hopes for a lay. Sex suffocates the air with lewd sounds, voices shouting a top of buildings as the sloshing of body parts slap together, occasionally dropping sweat onto those below. It is thick and musty with every other smell fighting to control the airspace. You shiver, your mind shaking in disgust and some other undefined emotion. Your feet stop suddenly, planting against the stream of on-goers.

‘What…am I doing here…I should really turn around and leave this sin area while I still am sane.’ You snort.

‘Well…sane enough.’

“Oh! Hello? You there!” A chipper voice breaks through your mind, the sound carrying above the white noise. You glance up from the ground, your eyes scanning the crowd for the noise. An exotic looking woman stands before a dark building, her dark glossy skin shimmers under the lights like a thousand stars twinkling across her flesh. Lush midnight curls frame her sharp facial features, running along the back of her arms toward her midback. She wears near to nothing like the other girls wandering the strip, but you feel this looks right on her, dare you even say sexy. The forest green cross bra circles three-quarters of each breast, the bottom curvature poking beneath the fabric. It races across opposite shoulders, linking to a single strip around her neck. She sports matching boy shorts, little dark vines caressing the curvature of her wide set hips. The vine appears to connect with the body paint, or is it a tattoo, following the contour of her hourglass frame.

The woman struts forward, breaking the stream of the crowd. The people turn to scold the woman, but upon a flashy white smile and a golden voice, they walk away with a little more than a flustered memory. Her eyes pin you to your spot, the bright vibrant emerald orbs shimmering like molten lava. Flecks of gold and silver dot the lines within her iris giving her eyes an otherworldly glow.

“There you are! It took you long enough to get here!” She giggles, her arm looping around your left arm. You quickly dislodge yourself from the woman, taking a few careful steps back. She does not appear off put from your actions, rather, she appears to have expected those actions. You feel your magic flare beneath your palm, your thoughts thudding through your mind like a storm. Your eyes glare sharply at the woman, carefully watching her actions.

“The boss said you would be a little skittish.” She smiles, shifting her stance between her left and right foot. It sways her hips slightly, the action catching the attention of a few people passing. Her eyes trail along your figure, quietly assessing her target. Her eyes spark to life after a few seconds, her hands clasping in front of her eagerly.

“Oh you are who he is looking for! I can feel your magic from here that you are no ordinary slum goer!” You raise your eyebrow critically at the woman, causing another musical giggle to escape her lips.

“Where are my manners! My name is Violet but most people call me V or another name but that one is a secret.” She gives you a flirtatious wink, dipping her long lashes down to press kisses to her
“One of the girls gave you a card for this establishment yes?” At the mention, said card stabs awkwardly into your curve, eliciting a small hiss from your lips. You fish for the card imbedded within your hip, mentally sighing in relief as it dislodges from your reddened waist.

“You mean one of many scantily clad women? You should be more specific than that.” Violet pouts, her painted red lips jutting out slightly. She makes a gesture to the small sign on the ground next to a tacky red carpet. The familiar letters of *Heat of Passion* illuminate from the sign’s lights along with what appears to be a special drink menu written in neon colors.

“Ah, you mean the sex card. Sorry but I am **not** interested.” Your voice growls at the end. You hold up the card for between your index and middle finger, the glossy sheen catching the light of the strip. Violet’s expression lights up brighter than the lights, brighter than the strip as though she has found an oasis after a long, dry summer. Her soul hums within her chest, the light of the kind soul illuminating through the gaudy lights. You let out a sharp gasp, the light blinding you a fraction.

‘*Her soul shines as bright as her personality. Her reactions are true. But…who is this boss person she speaks of? Is he…’*

“Oh, they did! The boss will surely reward them later for this I am positive!” She claps her hands together, her feet slowly approaching you.

“Now! Come with me Miss X, as you are our guest of honor!” Violet makes a grab for your wrist once more, but this time, you are prepared. You pull her into your body, her lungs giving a soft grunt at the sudden impact. Her skin flushes up against your own, the warmth permeating through her skin despite the lack of clothing. A couple of people wolf whistle at the display, your one hand pinning her wrist behind your back, the other grasping the fleshy material making up her ass. Her free hand winds carefully around your head to steady herself, her fingers twisting almost painfully in your hair. Her breasts smack into an uncomfortable position, wishing to smother your face or have your face rest above them. Despite the discomfort, you give her a slight yank, causing her to lose her footing for a second. Violet crouches slightly at the stumble, her body pressing harder against your own as she holds fast.

“Who do you mean boss and how does he know my name.” You hiss, applying some pressure to the woman’s hand. You feel her flinch, her fingers grasping your hair tightly in response.

“Made of fire not of bone, a little crazy but not mad. One of your friends knows his identity and resides greatly in his favor.” You allow some slack on her hand, your mind grumbling in protest. A smile resides on her face, her eyes reflecting back with a bit of mirth and playfulness. Your vision swims for a few seconds, your body encountering her sturdy frame.

‘*What in the hell is she…’*

Your thoughts are interrupted as a warm, silken feeling caresses the skin behind your kneecaps.

‘*Mother fucker! She is…!’*

You gasp, air leaving your lungs quickly as gravity takes a turn, pulling you quickly to the ground as your legs dislodge from standing. Air rushes by your body, the lights and sounds merging to one unified blur of objects. You feel your head whip back slightly, your neck smacking down into something sturdy. The world spins around you for a second, your mind attempting to reorient itself from the attack. The lights settle back into the buildings, the noise screaming over the sounds of businesses hooting and hollering.
“Let me go!” You growl, your body flailing within the captured embrace of the prostitute. For every twist and turn, she dodges, twisting her upper form in such ways to miss a foot to the temple or a fist to the face. She makes a tisking sound, shaking her head like a mother scolding her child. Her hold tightens, the points of her perfectly manicured nails biting painfully into your flesh.

‘Shit this woman is strong.’ You inwardly wince as her nails tear at the flesh, little blips of blood sliding down your arm. Her hulking frame leans down, her face covering yours as though leaning in for a kiss.

“Look, we do not have much time and quite frankly I do not like hurting people, but if you cannot play along.” A dark look passes through her eyes, the color dimming into a muted, muddy color. Her tone drops, the voice foreign compared to the light windchimes a few seconds earlier. This tone is dark, the notes relaying the information as tactical information. Her soul wavers for a second, the light dulling around the edges to another color, one you are vaguely familiar with. “I will use force. The boss does not wish for this either, but desperate times calls for desperate measures.”

“Then why did you pick me up?” You whisper hiss. Her torso rumbles against your frame, a smile flicking out the corners of her mouth. As quick as the new color comes, it vanishes to the bright green aura the woman possesses.

“Would you really have willingly gone into a place you see as a whore house?” She snorts, rolling her eyes. You bite the inside of your cheek, your eyes narrowing. Violet chuckles, shaking her head as she moves away.

“That is what I thought.”

“V” HP: 120 ATK: 10 DEF: 40

You huff out an aggravated breath, opting to remain quiet as Violet walks the two of you into the Heat of Passion, her heels clicking along with the rhythm of a song within. She gives the dark wooden doors a careful shove with her foot, allowing just enough room for the two of you to slip in. Immediately your senses scream in protest, your mind whirling.

The room is large, larger than the building perceives it to be. Darkness swallows the exterior lining of the room, the spotlights slowly glowing brighter as they approach the center stage. A song with a heavy bass thumps the walls in a steady rhythm. A long white catwalk shimmers with different lights, pictures outlining the bottom of the base. Women and men of various build strut down it, their nearly naked forms performing lewd dances at the end of the stage. Others hang in cages above the stage, their naked forms put on display for those who do not wish to partake in the action. Tables and couches scatter around the room, the furniture holding no bounds to the sexual acts performing on them. You rip your gaze away from the performers, scanning for anything normal to focus on. A bar rests in the left-hand corner, the candlelight illuminating a soft glow as to not distract the patrons from the dancers. Sex permeates the air, the hormones and sexual noises stirring mixed feelings within your soul. If it were not for the fact Violet is currently holding you, your legs may not have survived such a shock.

“Hey V! I see you are successful with the capture!” A male voice booms to our immediate right. Violet swings her frame into his direction, her soul thrumming contently at the interaction with the club’s bodyguard. A wolf monster stands erect, his muscular arms bulging abnormally even by human standards, yet they do not appear to give him any trouble physically. His chest is well built, his stance tall to the point of looming over everyone. Fluffy storm grey fur covers his body, the threads shimmering at the faintest hit of light. His face holds attributes to a dog: a long-pointed snout with a little black nose at the tip, a wide set jaw, sharpened ears to a point, and wide predatory eyes the color of mud during a storm. White patches cover select parts of his body, the most notable
rushing from under his chin, behind his black tee shirt to places below the line of sight.

“Yes, although I am afraid this must be a culture shock to her.” The monster gives you a soft smile, his hands shifting his pants back onto his waist.

“Happens even to the best of us sometimes. Don’t worry kiddo, it will be all right.” His massive hand reaches in your general direction. Your mind flies into panic, your heart beating erratically within your chest. A feral growl slips through your lips, your body wiggling in panic as the fight or flight response kicks in. He does not falter in his course, your eyes widening in fear as his massive paw resting a top of your head. Darkness settles within your gaze, red blurring out the corners as your magic rushes to the rescue. It settles within your fingertips, burning the nerves beneath. Your body shifts, your free hand snapping up to the intrusion. Your magic begins mapping out the bones beneath the skin, adjusting your hand to target the fragile ones. Slowly, pressure is applied, the monster hissing in slight pain as the bones begin to scrape against each other. A smile slowly slicks its way across your face, the unnatural look growing each second as the sounds of the bone whine beneath your hand.

‘He deserves it. They are trapping me. Keeping me here like a whore just like them! Well I will not be touched! I will not succumb to this! I will break each and every one of his bones until they learn! Until they all learn!’

‘‘Nuff of that from you.’’ Something smacks the top of your head, pulling your mind from the internal ranting. You release a string of quiet curses, your hand removing itself to rub the tender spot on your forehead. A beat passes between the three of you, your head swiveling between the two.

‘Why did this insulant woman stop my conquest? She will be next right after I take care of this heathen.’ You glare up at the exotic woman, the club lights outlining her silhouette in a shimmering white glow. Her hair falls like a curtain between you and the world, her eyes staring at you with disapproval. Something familiar flashes through your mind, perhaps not the same instance but something similar. ‘They feel familiar somehow. I have never met this woman in my life yet…’ Her eyes, bright and glowing as though otherworldly.

‘Strange…maybe she was an experiment of some sort? No…she does not give off that tragic aura, her soul would no longer be this bright. Perhaps a lab technician? Then again, they died just as easily once the building collapsed. Humans are weak and inferior like that.’ A bark of a laugh shakes the two of you out of your stare down, both of your heads whipping up to the guard.

“Well, the boss definitely has his work cut out with this one! I like you already kid! Such spirit!” You blink at the strange wolf monster, your magic waverin in confusion as is your mind. The wolf guard lets out another boisterous chuckle, shaking his head at a hidden joke. He ushers the two of you toward a door across the floor, keeping grabby hands and prying eyes away as Violet maneuvers the two of you around the vast scape of chairs and tables. You keep your face turned toward the amazon woman, staring at the lesser of the two evils as she walks. Moans and giggles escalate the closer the stage comes, the sound of the patrons groaning and whispering lewd comments to each other. A shiver races up your spine, a faint chill in the air causing the flesh to rise.

The three of you end up against the north wall, a hidden door nestling next to the restrooms. A sticker plasters itself above the door, the silver chipping off the words reading “Fire Exit”.

“Well kids, it has been fun but I have to return to my post. Give my love to the boss.” The wolf man quickly swats at your hair, ruffling it, pulling away before you could register the action. You growl, your eyes squinting suspiciously at his face. His tired eyes glance over you once more, weariness lining the outskirts of his gaze. Blood vessels break in the corners of his eyes, branching out like a spider’s web.
A playful smile crinkling the corner of his eyes, the iris brightening up a fraction at your critical gaze.

“If you need anything kid, let me know all right?” The bodyguard does not wait for a response. He immediately turns around, heading back to his post at the front door.

“Such a big lug.” Violet hums above you. You redirect your gaze to the woman, her eyes somber with a dull emotion. She notes your gaze, shaking her head with a laugh.

“This is the boss’s room. He is expecting you and we have wasted so much time already!” Violet carefully places you onto the ground, her arm holding your shoulder tightly as though you will run at the first instant.

“I am here already, might as well get this over with.” You huff moodily, pushing her hand to no avail. She giggles behind you, at the lack of strength or the immobility of her grip you are not sure. Her free hand reaches past you to open the door, her palm giving a sturdy shove to your backside. You stumble into the room, mumbling curses under your breath as your feet stabilize. Immediately the scent sex and hormones dissipate, the strong scents of smoke and incense fills your nose, the smell painfully curling within you mind.

“Honey! I’m home!” Violet playfully coos, her voice expanding in the vast space. The door clicks quietly close behind her, the sounds of the strip joint shrinking to the low hum of the bass.

“Ah there you are my darling! ~ I was beginning to worry about you! Did you bring her?” A smooth voice answers back, the sound echoing from their location further into the room. Despite the loud thump of noise a few feet from the room, the bass does nothing more than tap the maroon walls. Dim lights hang from the ceiling, the old fixtures touched up with a bit of white paint. Candles line a small portion of the room, a few settling into boarded up windows. Satin curtains shimmer under the candle light, the dark orange coating reminding you of a sunset. Couches and love seats line the left-hand corner, the black leather cool and inviting after a long day. To the right, a glass stable adorned with small embellishments carved into the legs, a similar pattern residing on the legs of the table chairs. Vibrant blue cushions cover the seats, the backs holding some sort of similarly colored drapery.

“You ladies have done such a fine job! I will surely give you a large reward later!” The voice speaks, his voice humming approvingly as a light draws closer.

‘No…not a light…’

An elemental monster appears before the two of you, his light illuminating the darkness with a soft, warm glow. Orange and yellow flames flicker on his person, the fire giving a bit of heat and warmth but not enough to burn the average human. His get up is rather…eccentric for a lack of better terms. Spiral wired frames rest where the bridge of his nose should be, yet manage to remain in front of his eyes despite the lack of surface. An obnoxiously large pink bow situates under his chin, the color managing to match and contrast against the baby blue jacket covering his yellow button up. Matching baby blue pants coordinate with his blazer, bright banana colored shoes finishing the outfit. The fire elemental carries a tray of sorts along with him, an off tea-green pot with matching cups settling easily on the metal-looking tray.

“So, you must be X my little blueberry has taken a shine to! Please do make yourself comfortable!” The elemental gushes, practically pushing you over to the couches. You hiss as his warm hand settles on your shoulder.
“Well, I shall hit the floor once more boss. Call me if you need me!” Violet gives you a small bow, a twinkle of mischief within her gaze as she stares directly at you.

“I do hope our paths cross again. Boss. Miss X.” She straightens her form, giggling as she rushes out the door into the blast of music and sin. Faintly you can make out an excited crowd greeting her back into the routine.

“She is such a good employee.” The elemental blissfully sighs. Your eyes dart between his gaze and his fingers, a rumble bubbling out of your throat. His glasses widen at the sound, his head darting between your face and the location of your eyes. Quickly he removes his hand, placing it awkwardly back to his side.

‘Smart man.’

“I can walk just fine without your pushing thank you.” You state curtly. A faint flush brushes the elemental’s cheeks, his face giving no other emotions away.

“As you wish.” He responds, a hint of crackle laces his words, his lips moving in small amounts to emit sound. A quiet beat passes between the two of you, your eyes squinting at the monster.

‘He made mention of someone knowing me, thus it could be anyone. He says his blueberry which leads me to conclude that the person he speaks of is oddly close enough to the elemental to be on nickname basis. Although, who gives their friend the nickname blueberry?’

The elemental coughs awkwardly, the gesture causing your gaze to focus back to reality.

“Let us sit. We have much to discuss and it would do no good to let the tea go cold.” You give him an odd sort of look, a mix between a glare and confusion. Regardless of your mixed feelings, you nod in agreement, the two of you walking over to his small living room corner.

You take a seat on the loveseat, giving the elemental a glare at his brazen attempt to sit next to you. He shrugs his shoulders nonchalantly, taking up refuge on the sofa. The tea set jiggles as he sets the tray down, the close proximity dishes clacking against each other.

“Cream or sugar?” You shake your head.

“Straight.” The elemental gives you a nod as he begins fixing the two tea cups. A small puff of steam escapes the spout as he pours, an amber liquid quietly trickling into each ceramic cup. Steam rises from each cup, allowing the aromatics to perfume the air. He hands you a saucer with the steaming cup.

“…” You carefully take it out of his grip, moving in such a way as to not touch his fingers. He gives you a small smile, pulling his hand back to work on his own cup. An earthy smell tickles your nose, the smell indescribable as to what herbs make it so. There is an underlying fruity note to it as well, the two notes melding well together. You pick up the small cup, taking care to blow a few breaths onto the molten tea before sipping it. The liquid immediately warms the cavern of your mouth, nearly scalding your tongue upon entrance. A tingly sensation follows shortly after, flavoring your mouth with a bitter sweet indescribable taste. You repress a shudder, placing your saucer down.

You glance up from your drink to note the flame elemental staring quietly at you, his own tea cup drawn up to his face. His glasses slowly begin to crinkle in an odd way, the look causing an uncomfortable shiver up your spine.

“What.” You grumble, squinting your eyes. You watch him take a careful sip of tea, a small slurping sound coming from his general direction. The dish clatters quietly as he places it down, freeing his
hands. Another beat of silence passes between the two of you, his persistent staring causing your eye to twitch.

“Oh~ my little Sansy was right about you! Such cold, calculating eyes! Practically fire burning deep within your soul, its intentions thriving on revenge! And that look! Vicious!” The monster swoons, his hands coming up to his face as his body wiggles like jello. You feel your eye twitch, the reaction leaving you unnerved.

‘What the fuck…’

You stare at his wiggling form for a second, your eyes widening up as the slipped information finally registers.

‘The blueberry he mentioned earlier is actually Sans! I will have a few choice words with that skeleton later…’

He seems to snap out of his trance, coughing awkwardly as he stands. You follow suit, your body shifting uncomfortably, your mind finding difficulty in tracking the elemental’s motives.

“Oh~ Forgive my manners! My name is Grillby the fine owner of this establishment.” Grillby wraps an arm around his abdomen, his body leaning on that axis as his torso lowers. He extends his free hand out in your direction. You give him a quirk of your eyebrow, staring at the flaming hand quizzically.

‘This thing won’t burn me right?’

He waits a few seconds longer, adjusting his head to look up in your general direction. A blatantly obvious crinkle moves the glasses, adorning his face with a look of excitement.

“I say, I do not bite child! Although…” Grillby purrs, his voice dropping an octave. The space between the two of you warms slightly, causing an unnerving chill to rush up your spine. You smack into a hard surface a second later, your brain cursing at itself as it did not prepare you for the sudden motion. The lights in the room appear dimmer compared to the light emitting from Grillby, the flames channel strongly through his exposed flesh. The material he wears is soft, softer than satin yet appears to hold up durability wise, this tested by various small marks grazing the shirt. A soft glow of warmth begins to heat up your flesh, the skin dotting with pink flecks.

“I will if you wish of me to.” You feel his magic invading your space causing your lips to part into a hiss. Immediately you throw both hands into his body, landing a solid blow to the elemental’s chest. He grunts at the impact, his strength faltering for a fraction of a second. You use the extra space to flip backwards out of his grasp effectively twisting out of the confines of his hold. Your fingers immediately latch onto his wrist as you depart, throwing the elemental in your acrobatic escape. You hear a heavy ‘smack!’ against the tiled floor, the body sliding a few inches as it readjusts to the sudden shift in gravity. A smirk plays its way onto your face as you look down at his form. His glasses twisted in an odd way, the frames positioned crookedly on his face revealing a corner of his solid golden eye. His seamless, perfectly pressed clothing rumples over multiple orifices of his body, disheveling his appearance. Grillby attempts to prop himself up on an arm, using the free second to readjust his glasses back into place. You allow him that second or two. After he is situated with his glasses, you plant a foot onto his chest, applying pressure as you glare down at the monster.

“Sans told you who I am and your strippers brought me here. Tell me what you are planning or I am getting the fuck out of here.” You growl darkly, pressing your foot firmer into his chest. The magic making it up whines in protest, the solid surface debating on staying afloat or caving.
“So moody.” He pouts, his form dislodging with ease as though the weight was nothing more than a blanket. A faint imprint of the bottom of your boot resides in the center of his body, the angle crossing his breast bone. Grillby dusts himself off, adjusting his clothing to its near pristine condition. He spares no glance at you as he walks over to the sofa, plopping himself down with a sigh of relief. His fingers graze over his tea cup, a sad sigh escaping into the air.

“Oh dear. It appears the tea has gone cold.”

“You are worried about some FUCKING TEA?!” You snap, your teeth snapping together like a rabid animal. You swing your arm in a large gesture, your hair swaying in the small breeze.

“You fucking uplift me from the streets in which I was leaving, have one of your whores practically drag me through this sin forsaken slut house only to fucking tell me the tea you poured a few minutes ago is co…!” The words die in your throat, the air rapid filling up with thick layers of smoke, the temperature spiking drastically. Your skin glistens with a thick sheen of sweat, the pores screaming as the liquid is immediately evaporated into the air. Everything feels dry. Your skin feels like paper, singed and brittle like a flimsy plank of wood ready to snap. Your eyes close immediately from the change, the nerves drying out to the point of painfully sticking to parts of your inner eyelid. Even the mucus membrane within your nose dries like a desert, the faintest shift in the wind causing it to splinter open, allowing blood to flow through. You gasp and shudder, the air suffocating your body from the outside in.

‘What…the fuck…why does this…hurt…hurts so much’

“It would be wise to watch your tongue in my domain child. This is my sector of things and queen’s daughter or not, you will be subjected to punishments I deem fit. Do. You. Under. Stand.” A cough rattles your bones, the dry action blocking your throat’s simplest action of swallowing saliva. Your leg muscles collapse beneath you due to the strain. You give the elemental a jerk of a nod, hopefully in his direction. Immediately the oppressing feelings lift, the cool air caressing your skin with gentle fingers. You gasp, greedily taking large gulps of air into your nearly fried lungs. The cool minty feel of the air leaves your body feeling rejuvenated, the previous aches and pain dissipating the more air your lungs intake.

‘It was almost as if it was an optical illusion.’ You shudder, shooting the elemental a hesitant look. Grillby remains at his perch prior to the events, the tea within his cup releasing a small wisp of steam into the air.

“Much better! We cannot have a proper conversation with cold tea now can we my dear?” You hum quietly under your breath, trudging back to your place on the other piece of furniture. Grillby hands you your tea cup once more, the tea greeting you with a small herbal wisp of steam. The color is slightly darker than the first round, the amber color deepening to a richer color. You feel Grillby’s eyes on you, waiting for you to take the first sip of the new tea. The liquid is warm yet cool at the same time. A mint flavor immediately erupts within your mouth, the chilling effects blocking the bitter contrast of its flowery counterpart. You find yourself taking a few more swallows of the tea, noting the small properties of magic coursing through it as it heals your body. With a satisfied hum, Grillby places his saucer down, straightening himself up.

“Now, I suppose it is time to get down to business.” Gone is the playful, bubbly tone of the elemental. A deep crackling voice surfaces, the tone superficial with deep baritones striking his sentences.

“I understand you possess many talents before and after the alterations of your form.” You open your mouth to protest, but he raises a hand, immediately silencing you.
“You may speak once I have finished.” You bite the inside of your lip, surprising a growl as you nod. A small crinkle of his eyes indicates a small smile, his tone continuing uninterrupted.

“You altered talents would pose as an asset for my business, however, it is not these talents that I wish to exploit.” He waits a minute, his fingers shifting to wrap around his arms as he crosses them.

“From my resources, I have gathered you are quite talented in the arts, specifically in the play category. Originally, I had wished to talk to you peacefully about the matter, one of wish you could choose to reject or accept. However…” Grillby shifts again, his arms untwirling to dig into his kneecaps, his fingers balling into tight fists under his chin.

“As per the injury you have caused within your stay, it will be a part of your punishment. Until I deem it otherwise, you shall work for me.” His words hang heavily in the air, the implications settling into your mind like a slap to the face. Shock escapes your schooled features a few seconds later, your mind refusing to fix the issue.

“What?”

“You will be working for me from now on X. I have already discussed this with the Queen and she agrees with me. She feels this will be a great learning experience for you to stabilize yourself into society.”

Absolutely not! Regardless of what you or the Queen says I will not be a stripper!” You scoff, folding your arms protectively over yourself. You glare at the elemental, your aggravation escalating at the tip of his brow protruding up. He waits a second more, answering slowly as though talking to a child.

“Who said anything about being one of my dancers?” Your mouth opens, a verbal proof of evidence staining your lips when suddenly, your eyes widen.

‘He never said anywhere that I would have to whore myself out for him.’

Your mouth gapes open and close, your mind attempting to find some sort of hidden dialogue within his sentence to no avail.

‘Stupid! You made yourself look foolish and let your emotions get out of hand once more! Obviously more training will have to be implicated to stabilize that!’

A crackle breaks through your thoughts, your eyes focusing in on the elemental. His shoulders vibrate slightly, the action small but notable. Quiet strains of laughter hide behind the natural sounds of his flames. You blush, grumbling angrily under your breath as you turn your head away.

‘Stupid! Stupid! Stupid! Why couldn’t they have instilled better communication practices in that stupid containment! They do fucking combat, weapon specializations, and other shit but not the ba...’

Warmth envelopes the top of your head, your mind immediately whipping away from the sensation. It follows your motion seamlessly, matching every jerk with its own form of persistence.

“There is no need to beat yourself up child. Come, allow me to show you what you will be doing.” Grillby’s hand shifts, sliding down to rest between your shoulder blades. He offers a gentle push, your body complying as he silently leads you further into his household. You pass through his kitchen, the tiles reflecting a brilliant glow from the household owner. Each step brings a knot of nerves through your body, each click of the shoes behind you brings a prickle of anxiety to your mind. The hall passes you in a blur, the colors mashing together into one monotone color. Vaguely
you can make out a thump of music along the left wall, the sound quieter than the heavy beats of the strip club. Three gentle raps in front of you and the wall…no…the door gives way to a bunny monster. You blink, the large beautiful greens giving you one look before reporting back to her boss. Behind her, the soft notes of a song play through the speakers, occasionally mixed with a strum of a guitar rift. The room is vastly dark save for a few scones along the perimeter of the wall, igniting the midnight blue paper.

“You rang sir?” Her voice is smooth like a rich liquor, a hint of shyness quieting her words.

“Ah Renge, my favorite little hare. I am merely checking up to see how the guests are enjoying the entertainment for the evening. And to show our newest employee how it is done.” Renge smiles up at her boss, her buck teeth widening the gap between her top and bottom rows. She crosses her arms with a lackadaisical huff, leaning her weight onto the doorway. Her blonde bang grazes the tip of her right eye, the shape nearly defying gravity. Her hair is long, cascading down the back of her form with various waves and curls. Under the dark lighting of the club, the green strips throughout her hair appear to glow like radiation.

“Doing well sir. They appear to like this performer very well, more so than the previous one. Although,” She leans slightly forward, her eyes twinkling with mischief.

“We would never tell her that.” The two of them snicker at the inside joke, careful to mind the noise. You huff, shaking Grillby’s hand off your back. This draws the attention of the rabbit monster to you, her eyebrow raising a fraction, a smirk settling onto her lips.

“So, you are the human the skeleton has been raving about. Glad to finally meet you kid. Names Renge or Ren for short.”

“Sans has been talking about me?” The bunny monster barks out a laugh, stifling it behind her paw.

“Wont’t shut up about you kid. Seriously I feel like I know you and that’s saying something.” An embarrassing blush coats the top of your cheeks, your head whipping to the side to scold the open air.

‘I swear to god I will burry that skeleton! He knows nothing of me let alone enough to rave about me to some strangers!’

Renge giggles once more, drawing your attention to her. Once she is assured that she has your attention, she makes a sweeping motion with her hand, bowing at the waist.

“Welcome to the Ice Palace.”
All right everyone! Chapter 12 is out with some switching views as well as a little bit more! I was going to stop at a certain point, but found a new stopping point making the chapter a bit longer than intended. Hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

‘Why does this sort of thing appear to occur only to me. Must be my curse.’ You sigh, curling your toes into the sheets. It’s cooling material bunches slightly under the curve of your toes, slowly heating as you stay connected. The headphones atop of your head click and shift as the plastic adjusts to the force of weight. Music blares through the speakers, the fast-paced tempo causing the instruments to squeal louder, the singer’s voice escalating a few notches. You sigh, staring blankly at the ceiling.

‘Why would Toriel approve of his actions? Is there something that wrong with me that she needed to consult an outside onlooker than trust her own judgement?’ You snort.

‘Naturally there are a lot of things wrong with me. All the L.O.V.E. I possess is enough to warrant extra help. Maybe even a body guard…or five.’

Unconsciously you lift your right hand, feeling the warm beads slide at the sudden shift of gravity. A bracelet dangles on your wrist, the beads rolling a few centimeters before settling into the perfect circumference. Small orange beads circle around the thin clear band of the bracelet, the color flickering like the fire elemental himself. Reds and yellows alternate in their dance within the orange, sometimes embracing, sometimes escaping. Small traces of magic emit from the jewelry, a signature of sorts for all of Grillby’s employees.

‘That elemental…Grillby…he is truly a strange one. Slightly egocentric and a bit of an airhead. But that power…’ You shiver.

‘That type of boss level power is only obtained through someone who has suffered through a great tragedy. Or, he is simply a mass murderer using his club to climb through the ranks.’ You hum, your mouth curving into a frown.

‘I hope it is the lateral. A monster that pries on the weak should not live.’ Images flash through your mind, each one flickering quickly to allow the next one a few seconds of remembrance.

The teenagers huddling together in the army-esque car, the darkness encasing the large metal monster except for a little slit of light. The light highlighting the cold, dead eyes of those who did not make it to the destination.

The training. The cold, calculated looks of the supervisors as they stripped each, individual personal brought in. They left the naked personal outside, testing their endurance. Frozen bodies, the skin a sickening tint of blue, their eyes glossed over due to the ice forming over their exposed sockets.
Those who scream, their sounds like music to the captor’s ears. The escalated pitch, the smell of fear in the air, blood coating the walls as they…

You gasp, your body jumping at the sudden sound. The headphones fall off seamlessly onto the bed, your feet planting with practiced ease onto the floor. Your magic surrounds you, the strands awaiting a command. There is a slight shuffling sound, someone shifting their weight behind the door. You hold your breath, ears straining to hear useful information from the other side. Three quiet raps of knuckles meeting your door echo the room once more. The person lets out an agitated huff of air, their body nervously shifting as they quietly mumble incoherent words.

“…X…” The voice is soft, your ears straining to hear the whisper of a voice behind the door. You take a hesitant step forward, your body remaining coiled for attack.

“Who wants to know.” You growl, taking another inch forward.

“…” The voice does not respond, their body shifting back and forth, almost anxiously. Your heart beats within your ears, the blood pumping static into the silent background. Hesitantly, your fingers inch toward the door knob, the cool metal brushing the heated tips.

“Red rover…red rover…” The voice quietly whispers, their footsteps taking a careful step away from the door. Immediately your magic recedes, your body wincing as it relaxes into a neutral stance. Blood continues to rapidly race through your body, your adrenaline slowly cooling down. The knob twists under your grasp, the door slowly shifting open.

“Let my soul’s sins repeat over and over.” Frisk stands awkwardly in your doorway, his hands stuffed into a hoodie obviously too large for his lanky frame. The black fabric chokes at his neck, hiding his undershirt as well as majority of his neck. The hoodie covers the top of his knee caps, allowing only a small strip of blue beneath to be seen. You open your door just enough for the child to walk through.

“Heya Frisk. You gave me a scare there.” You sigh, a small smile tinting your cheeks. The child shifts awkwardly once more, their gaze staring down the hallway. This causes the smile to fall into a neutral line, a worry ticking in the back of your mind. You carefully open the door a few more inches, your body leaning casually in the doorframe. Arms cross over your chest, looking down the hall with the child. Faint chitter and laughter linger, the sounds a mere wisp of their true form.

“Hey…is everything all right kiddo?” You take your glance off the hallway, glancing down at Frisk. He gives a curt nod, keeping his frame stiff, his face unreadable. You sigh, untangling one arm. Carefully you reach out, gently brushing a few locks atop of the child’s head. The fibers feel slightly greasy, emitting a fraction of a shine over the whole blade. Regardless of the feeling, you continue to play with a few strands of hair. Frisk stiffens at the contact, his mind processing the action for a split second. It deems the action suitable, relaxing the body a moment later. He leans into the touch like a cat, head pressing against the palm, pushing further on his toes to fully relish in the physical contact. A copper eye pokes out from the curtain of hair in front of his face, the color dull in comparison to the usual lustrous shine.

“…Dinner time.” Frisk retracts from your touch immediately as though poison seeps from your fingertips. His gaze returns to the floor, his hair covering his eyes, hiding his emotions. Without another word, he throws a hand in your general direction, the fingertips outstretched. You quietly hum in acknowledgement, lacing your fingers with the child’s. They are cold, a cold you associate with the child and his darkened soul. A theory you have about the warmth of the human in correlation with the darkness or light within the soul.
'I am starting to sound like him. Best to leave such things chalked up to magic or the human anatomy at work.'

Frisk does not wait for you to dislodge from the wall. He gives a sharp tug in the direction of the kitchen, your feet nearly twisting in an odd stumble at the sudden movement. You level it evenly enough, your steps falling in a slow 'thump' in contrast to the numerous steps Frisk takes to accommodate one step. The walk is quiet between the two of you, the sounds of laughter and talk slowly increasing in volume as the house shifts around you.

“You are walking in a hurry. Are they impatient for our arrival?” One squeeze. Yes. You hum, the voice vibrating the back of your throat.

'Odd. They never send Frisk up to gather me for dinner. The Queen would rap once, inquire of my well-being, then leave a plate of food in the fridge for later.'

“Is there a particular event occurring or has occurred to warrant such a pace?” Yes. Your face remains neutral at the information, your mind reeling at the possible outcomes of new or previous information.

'There is a possibility that someone from the state is here to check in on the stability of the humans living with monsters. Could be someone who saw my little outburst if you could even call it that. It could be that air headed boss coming in to make sure I show up later this week...There are too many variables to decipher which is called for in this situation.'

Waves of nervous energy bounce off the child, his head refusing to look anywhere but the floor. It is enough emotional energy to cause your own body to emit similar waves. Your mouth dries suddenly, your tongue sticking to the roof of your mouth as saliva attempts to go down. Beads of sweat envelope between your connected hands, the clammy feeling traveling through your arm.

“Is...there a possibility for danger?” Frisk stops in mid step, an action that nearly causes you to knock the child over with your towering frame. His grip slacks against your own, the fingertips frosting the palm of your hand. An aura you cannot identify fills the hallway, the walls appearing to close in on the two of you. The stairs appear farther than they originally did, the slightest hint of movement causing them to stretch away. Lights dim within the hall, the comforting yellow glow bathing the hall in an eerily molten orange. Even a nearby door, a few within literal reach radiate an aura of malice; you cannot discern the focal direction of the feeling. A cool, tingling feeling snaps your frantic gazing back to the small child, his fingers tracing small circles up your forearm.

'A cold snap of magic sucks the life out of the room, a sweep of icy wind caressing the exposed skin.

'This magical output...I have not seen this before...Is it the child? Is it my own? Is there someone watching from the outside creating this illusion? Truly too many questions with no distinguishable answers.'

A single tap draws you from your thoughts, your eyes immediately widening at the sight before you. His skin is semi-translucent, the arteries and veins pumping through their course without a care. Muscles constrict and release with slow, controlled movements, the lines well defined despite the layering above it. The remaining skin that appears solid frosts unnaturally white. His air sways in the air as though a breeze is constant within the hall. That is not what startles you however. A needle protrudes from the child’s neck, a thick glowing liquid slowly dripping into their form. With each drip, a shock of color illuminates the body. The syringe protruding is familiar to you, the inscription written on it contains pictures of symbols and hands.

“Why didn’t you save me?” His voice whispers through your mind. You glance at his face, your
soul crying out in anguish. A pale, half skeletal face stares back at you, his head tilted to the side to allow the syringe to do its job. Phantom images of his nose, lips, and ears appear only in direct lighting, his skin favoring to hide the human characteristics. His hair sways in front of his eyes, the cover preventing you from looking directly into his gaze.

“Frisk…?” You whisper, fear lumping within your throat. Your hand reaches to encase the small child’s cheek, the surface smooth as porcelain. He shifts his head, his cold, dead feeling fingers latching onto your wrist currently touching his face. Cold, dead, black eyes stare back at you, the familiar feel of his dark soul encasing all that remains of Frisk.

“Why didn’t you save me from him?”

You open and close your mouth, words refusing to form for the small child. Something deep within your soul howls in pain, clawing and growling in revenge.

“…X…?”

You allow the experimented husk of Frisk to hold your wrist, your other hand encasing the small child into the tight hug. The smell of ash and soot linger in the child’s hair, a few strands burned to a crisp as noted by the fried fringes.

“X? Hello? Earth to X. Please don’t tell me you fucking broke or something up there….Shit…”

You gasp, your eyes snapping open. The illusion dissipates, the home returning to its once warm attire. A warm body stands within your grasp, his arms pushing awkwardly into your chest. A heavy weight settles over your left shoulder, a tickle of hair brushes the side of your neck.

“Seriously this isn’t funny. What the fuck am I suppose to tell mom if you break? She will blame me for it like everyone else and I cannot deal with another grounding.”

You let out an awkward cough, immediately untangling yourself from Frisk. He stares up at you with the familiar warm orbs of molten copper, worry flickering through his gaze. You brush it off with a calm smile, ruffling the hair on his head.

“It is nothing kiddo. So…about that danger…” Frisk gives you a longing glance, his eyes squinting in assessment. After a few seconds, a huff of frustration escapes through his nose. His hands encase yours once more, adding one more stimuli to keep you grounded.

“Mom invited dad over so there is some tension in that.” Frisk rolls his eyes, puffing a stray lock out of his eyes as the two of you begin walking once more.

“Honestly the two of them should just fuck and get it over with already.”

“I am surprised you know of such adultery actions.” You glance down at the child, noting a tint of pink filling in his face.

“W…well when you have parents you know how they…procreate…” He huffs at you, his eyes staring up at you accusingly.

“We are getting off track.”

“Or possibly on the right one.”

“This could possibly go sideways.”
“And vertical if we so choose.” Frisk chuckles under his breath, his shoulders shrugging in response.

“So your dad is here to have dinner with us. That is quite unusual but not completely out of left field.”

“Oh…it will get worse. Just wait until he opens that maw of his. Swear I have no clue how mom deals with his…puniness. Then again she tolerates the smiley trash bag’s puns.” Frisk shakes his head; the sounds emitting from the kitchen trickle down the hallway forming into semi-coherent sentences.

The two of you descend the staircase, quietly listening in to the conversations within the kitchen. The Queen is laughing at something someone said, her voice following behind a burly chuckle. As you head toward the kitchen, the homey smell of cooked goods fills your nose. You note a wheat smell, cooked with a faint hint of yeast and the salty residue of butter in the underlying notes. Garlic, rosemary, and a hint of some sort of spice follows behind with a cooked meat of some sort, the various assortment of earthy vegetables adding pleasant notes beneath the overwhelming scents. Saliva builds immediately within your jaw, your throat involuntarily swallowing. Frisk mimics the actions, his eyes alight with glee. Your steps quicken along with the child’s your stomach giving out an unsavory growl of need as you approach. The two of you round the corner, heading toward the archway at an almost jogging speed.

“Hey Toriel. Hey Chara. Sorry we are…” You enter the room, a sheepish smile on your face for the two household counterparts. The room stills into silence at your arrival, various pairs of eyes boring into your flesh. Your smile slips as your eyes scan around the table. A rumble bubbles deep within your chest, your magic immediately flaring up at the notice of an asshole skeleton.

“Mom, what are they doing here?” Frisk groans next to you, releasing your hand to ball his fists at his side. You silently thank the stars it is Frisk asking the question instead of yourself, your own ire of annoyance radiating.

“Chara has invited them over for dinner along with your father.” She responds in kind, giving Chara a kind smile.

“Yeah big sis! Brother! We can’t have a family dinner without the rest of the family!” She beams her thousand watt smile in your direction, melting the tinniest sliver of irritation away.

“Do you mean it my child? Do you see your mother and I as part of your family?” You take note of the goat monster situated on the other side of Chara, his amethyst eyes glistening with tears. Two impressively large horns curl around to the back of his head, the thick base nestled beneath golden tresses. The golden hue runs down his face into a goatee framing his snout. In a similar fashion as the Queen, this goat monster bares the golden circle with wings around his neck. You nearly snort aloud at the man’s outfit: a hawaiian button up with the top two buttons undone to reveal his fur. The tears bubble over his eyes, the smile once on his face twists into a grimace.

“A divorced, dysfunctional household perhaps.” Toriel states plainly, retracting her hand back to her side. The silver glisten of the fork in hand is the only indication of the weapon used on the man.

“BUT A BRILLIANTLY PUT TOGETHER FAMILY ALL THE SAME!” Sans shouts from his seat, the small skeleton practically vibrating to become one with the wood. He twists his head back in your general direction, immediately jumping up in attendance with a gasp.

“HUMAN!” His gloved hand points up in your general direction, his eye sockets glittering with star pointed irises.
“I, THE MAGNIFICENT SANS, HAVE CONJURED UP THE BEST APOLOGY TACOS FOR THE PREVIOUS TIME’S ANTICS. I HOPE YOU WILL ACCEPT THEM!” The skeleton whips around to the table, his form immediately swivels back with a perfectly stacked tower of tacos. They glisten under the imaginary spotlight the skeleton portrays as he begins his rant about how these tacos will bring everyone together forming lasting friendships or something of the like. You hesitantly walk toward the skeleton, noting with a sideways glance at the arrangement of seating: Frisk immediately sits to the left of his mother at the head of the table, Chara to the right of her. The male goat monster sits next to her and is currently swapping jokes with the asshole skeleton leaving you with the only seat next to the hyperactive skeleton. Your eye twitches.

‘Let us hope this evening does not progress into someone losing their head.’

“Thank you.” You mumble under the skeleton’s ramblings, plucking the top taco with ease. The illustrious shine you perceived as a trick of the light was in fact, real. Sparkles line the inside portion of the taco a few clinging to the outside of the hard shell. Various quantities of lettuce, tomato, sour cream, and cheese hide the meat beneath it, the whole build a crumbling mess waiting to happen. You swallow. Hard. A pungent smell comes off the poor thing causing your stomach to summersault before it even touches your taste buds.

“I accept. Lettuce hope this shell bring us closer.” You mumble to the skeleton, blushing at the use of the terrible taco puns. He groans, his palm slapping the dead center of his face.

“I WILL IGNORE YOUR HIDEOUS PUNS FOR NOW HUMAN FOR I WISH TO SEE THE DELIGHT ON YOUR FACE FROM MY MASTERPIECE!”

‘It’s a masterpiece all right.’ Silently hoping this was not the way you would die, you take a bite of the glittery taco, the tower immediately collapsing at the first intrusion. It is…well…indescribable is the best word you can give this misfit of a taco. Politely you chew it, shivering slightly as the conglomerate of stuff hits your tongue. The sour cream is the first to overwhelm, coating your tongue with a thick viscous tangy cream. The lettuce and tomato attempt to break through, only succeeding in sweeping up bits of the sour cream and lodging awkwardly onto your teeth. The shell incinerated due to the wet ingredients turning into a soppy, chewy piece of plastic. The meat, slightly charred and a hair on the spicy side is the only redeeming factor of the whole taco.

‘I do not understand how he can go from making delicious tacos to…this.’

You take your seat next to the hyperactive skeleton, watching as he places the tacos on the table for all to share. Most take at least one out of politeness, hiding the evidence once his skull turns away from their direction.

“I will make sure to plant pretty flowers on your grave.” You hear Frisk mumble, his fork poking into the food Toriel prepared for dinner. Your eye twitches in irritation, your mouth swinging the taco up for another bite under the watchful gaze of Sans. By now, the taco’s ingredients coat your fingers in a messy goop, one ingredient difficult is discern from another. It is oddly warm and cold at the same time, sending a weird nerve impulse to your brain.

‘I cannot believe I am thanking that bastard for feeding us nearly toxic levels of food in that dungeon.’

“So my child, how are you liking it here with Tori?” The goat man draws your attention from the melting taco, his fingers gingerly wrapped around a steaming mug of tea.

“It’s Toriel to you Asgore.” Toriel huffs, shooting a sharp glare at him. He withers under her piercing glare, sweat beads dotting his forehead. Asgore clears his throat, taking a quick sip of his tea. Frisk
scoots out of his chair, his feet stepping away from the table to gather something. You straighten your spine, leveling your stare directly into the monster’s eyes.

“She takes extraordinary care of those in her stead and is an exceptional cook. She is very generous to those she does not know and those she does. A quite exceptional Queen overall.” Asgore settles his cup down, humming in approval.

“That is quite an exceptional answer my child, however, it does not give your direct opinion on the question.” You shrug your shoulders. You answered his question without giving away personal feelings, he should be thanking you rather than look at you oddly. A cup is placed to the right of your arm, the unknown contents swirling around in a digitally designed cup.

“Thank you Frisk.” You nod at the child, noting the similar design of his cup as well. He takes a big swig of the contents, sighing contently as he continues to dig into his meal. The taco ends up on a spare plate left on the table, allowing your hands to finally rid of the nasty contents onto a napkin.

“What I mean to say, my child, is that I wish to hear your utmost feelings on the matter.” Asgore continues, his thumb idly swiveling around the rim of his cup. You hum, your fingers carefully grabbing small portions of food onto your own plate. Seasoned chicken with flakes of herbs carefully baked into a golden skin crust, cloud-like mash potatoes with flecks of a green herb swirling around it, a little smelly but dripping in buttery goodness asparagus, carrot coins sliced on a bias a seasoned oil coating their shiny tops…

‘The Queen definitely outdid her usual culinary prowess on this meal.’

“You do not need to answer him if you do not wish my child. After all, it is not his place to ask such questions.” Toriel huffs, passing you a basket of buttery biscuits slathered in what smells like cinnamon butter. You mumble a “thanks” under your breath, settling the plate of food down in front of you.

“BUT I AM CURIOUS OF THE HUMAN’S ANSWER AS WELL, YOUR MAJESTY!” Sans pipes up from left field, the sound startling your body into nearly knocking over your drink. You shoot the skeleton a withering glare, shoving a rather large helping of food into your mouth. Her magic tingles the inside of your mouth, filling the surfaces with a warm, homey feeling.

“Sans my dear, it is obvious she feels uncomfortable in answering. It is best to leave her be on the matter.” The skeleton pouts, but continues to eat his food while conversing with Chara. Conversations around the table muddle into a mess of noises, each tune melding with the next as you seek inward to your own thoughts.

‘Nearly took a bullet with that question, from a stranger no less. Judging from the symbol on his chest and the way the Queen interacts with him, he could be a potential partner the Queen invested in. Frisk and Chara appear fond on the goat man therefore the conclusion can be drawn that the Queen and Asgore have a consistent relationship.’

You take a thoughtful bite of your food.

‘Sans and that asshole also appear to be fairly close with the Queen. They come over during the weekends to watch the children as well as randomly show up some days. Guards perhaps. Chara appears quite smitten with the skeletons while Frisk could care less. At least, that is the front he puts up. It is obvious he cares for them but one does not care for him.’

Your hand reaches for the drink, taking a sip without a second thought. It is very sweet, thickened with syrup of some kind. Bubbles pop along your tongue as you swallow, displacing the flavor over
'And then there was the incident in the hallway. That image…was it real? Was it just a trick of the mind? Or is it a warning of what may come? It is truly unsettling to note the syringe number pertains to the lab, directly from one of his higher ups.' You sigh, dispelling the thoughts for another moment of time. You will need more time to decipher the image than dinner can provide. Someone calls your name, attempting to gather your attention.

“Hm? Did you say something Toriel?” Toriel smiles politely in your direction, the smile straining against the corners of her mouth. She opens her mouth, but no words come out. She bashfully closes her maw again, her face erupting into a faint blush.

“Mom says you met Grillby!” Chara chirps from across the table. You turn your gaze to the little girl, stifling a snort of amusement at the smear of food dotting her cheekbones. Chara opens her mouth widely, stuffing a rather impressively sized piece of chicken. It proves to be too large for her small face, the piece stretching her cheeks on one side.

“Ah! So you have met Grillby then my child? He is quite the gentleman, although his prices are slightly astronomical.” Asgore pipes in, laughing quietly as he cleans up Chara’s face much to her muffled protests.

“YEAH! GRILLBY IS VERY NICE HUMAN X!” Sans excitedly joins the conversation.

“He can be a real hot head sometimes but is a really chill dude.” Sans groans, whipping his head over to his brother.

“THOSE ARE CONTRADICTORY PUNS BROTHER!” The skeleton shrugs, leaning back in his seat.

“Yeah…I have met him…” You grumble, shooting a dagger in the Queen’s direction. Visible beads of sweat dot the top of her head, her eyes glancing everywhere but your face.

‘So the fireball wasn’t lying was he?’ Your gaze narrows, your body leaning back into a relaxed position.

“He said that the Queen had talked to him about getting me a job.” The table silences around you, each figure shooting the other a nervous gaze.

“Asgore?” Asgore looks down at his tea, his fingers rubbing the rim at a slight erratic pace.

“Chara?” Chara twiddles with her thumbs in her lap, finding the floor more interesting. You slide your gaze to the skeletons.

“Sans?” He looks up at you, his eye sockets large and wide as a newborn. Sadness flickers across his gaze, his fingers clutching together on his lap.

“I AM SORRY HUMAN.”

“You have no reason to apologize bro.” The asshole skeleton pipes up, reaching over to give his brother a reassuring pat.

“Oh? If he has no reason to apologize then, why did he?” You growl. A deep growl vibrates the skeleton’s chest, his eye lights dimming into the blackness of his skull.

“Because unlike you he is the kindest, most considerate monster and person out there.” In a flurry of
motions, you stand, slapping your hands onto the table. A resound ‘thud!’ echoes the quiet, a few plates and bowls rattle on impact. The chair screams out as it impacts the floor, accentuating the silence.

“And what gives you the right to make such accusations about my person when you hardly know me.” Papyrus remains seated, his chair leaning back. It rides the cusp of toppling him down and remaining stable. A crackle of energy shifts through the air, toxic, burning, a mixture of fuel, fire, and acid.

“It doesn’t take much to judge the evil within you. You practically radiate it through your very soul.” His eye sockets narrow, a faint tinge of orange staining the voided space.

“A hidden LV and EXP only signifies all the dust on your hands. Tell me I am wrong.”

Silence. No one dares to move nor speak. The world warbles around the edges, fading of color as the room slowly inches monochrome in. You feel your magic flare to life, empowering your body. Your fingers clench as you bring them off the table, your face twisting into something sinister.

“ENOUGH!” The monochrome breaks on command, magic flushing the toxic anger out with a powerful wave. You whip your head over to the Queen, her hand outstretched shimmers with residue green magic. She at some point stood, her regal frame covering the room with her power.

“I will not have you insulting my newest daughter Papyrus and X I will not have you insulting a dear friend. You should both be ashamed of your actions. This is why we voted to have you work there.” The Queen gasps, covering her maw with her paw. Your eyes narrow once more, something painful penetrating your soul.

“What. Did. You. Say.” She holds your gaze, her eyes flickering with various emotions. After a few seconds, they settle into ruler mode, shunting any feeling out of her form.

“The family and I talked about how to help you readjust to society once more. No one had a solid plan at the time as we had to take your nature into consideration.”

“Mom…was very hesitant to allow you out of her nest so soon. At the same time however, she knew you needed to get out into the real world.”

“Sans and I talked for a bit and came to the same conclusion.” Chara looks to the skeleton across the table.

“If you worked with a close family friend, perhaps it would make the adjustment easier for you.” Sans’ voice is quiet and strong, his gaze looking to the table for support.

“Naturally, we all agreed with the idea but then ran into another problem.” Asgore’s gruff voice sighs, taking a small sip of tea. He, much like the Queen, wears a mask of leadership.

“Who among our friends have an opening for someone with no training or background?” He looks to the Queen for her to continue. She gives him a grave nod, directing your attention to her once more. Your frame begins to shake subtly, hurt punching your soul. It cries betrayal.

“When none of our options came through to an appropriate answer, Sans mentioned that Grillby needed someone for one of two positions: a dancer for his club or a performer for his lounge.”

“I talked to him the next day and told him of what we know about you: the good and the bad. He did not reject the idea nor make offending faces about the situation. He wholeheartedly agreed to meet you and allow you to decide if this was for you.” Sans’ cheekbones dust with a faint tinge of blue,
his hands wringing his gloves.

“The fireball called us a few days later, claiming you had taken up a job as a performer for the lounge.” Frisk finishes, his eyes downcast. Your eyes glass over, a wet substance filling the sockets other than the usual fluid. Pain dully registers within your palms, nails digging into the curled flesh.

“I am so sorry my child that you…”

“Don’t I…” You raise your head up, the liquid threatening to fall at a sudden blink.

“GET TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?!” You scream, tears falling down your face. Anger and betrayal ride your body like a machine.

“MY LIFE UP UNTIL I CAME TO THIS HOUSEHOLD, CONTROLLED AND DECIDED DOWN TO THE THINGS I ATE!” Your palm opens as you swipe it through the air in jest. Something wet trickles down the palm, running a small river down your wrist.

“Your hand…” Mom…no…the Queen of Monsters mentions, her eyes wide with her own set of unshed tears.

Something within you…cracks. You feel it splinter within your soul, something hollow and deep forming along the surface. You laugh, tears continuing to stream down your face.

“My hand? MY HAND?! THIS little thing is what you are worried about?! Not how hurt I feel that you went behind my back to plan this but a fucking orifice of muscle and skin?! Here!” You reach for the serrated knife on the table, the blade dull. Pointed teeth gleam from the metal, a few ends worn to a slight curve. The metal itself however, is clear, reflecting a sliver of your face on the surface. Without a thought, you slash the blade across your palm. There is no pain, no thought, just a crimson river billowing from the newly acquired exposure of flesh.

‘Pain. I need more of it. I cannot feel it. Why is my skin so tight? Why does this hurt so much? I need it off. I need to take it off to get rid of this pressure!’

Someone yanks the knife from your grasp, eliciting a hiss from your lips. Everyone stares at you in fear, their bodies tense. Vaguely you can hear a quiet sob or two in the background, the sound annoying more than anything else.

“X…” Your eyes slowly follow the sound of the voice, your eyes widening at the child before you. Frisk holds the knife in one hand, his frame shaking unsteadily with the weapon. Small flecks of blood dye his skin, but he appears unbothered by it. His eyes stare back at you, flickering between the normal hues and a red vibrant light. Tears gather in the corner of his eyes, refusing to drop as he glares at you. You cock your head to the side, your brows furrowing.

“That is highly unnecessary. Look what you did to yourself and your family.”

“Family Frisk?” You laugh, the tears a permanent accessory to your face.

“Since when do I belong to a family?” Your laughter halts immediately, a scowl replacing the chaotic smile.

“A murder machine does not belong to any family. Monster or not.”

“You are not a murder machine. You are my…”

“Enough.” The child does not understand, only going by looks and words. A pang of hurt digs the
wound in deeper within the soul.

‘They do not understand.’ You turn toward the monster Queen.

“Young kindness is a lost cause on me and I will not take advantage of it a moment longer.” You look toward the asshole skeleton, his sockets widening. Your lips curl into a sadistic smile.

‘Get a nice, long, look you fucking asshole.’

“How does it feel to be right my dear?” Your voice thick like syrup. He does not move, his skull in a permanent fixation to the multi-colored soul within your chest. You know it looks broken and torn, beaten and ugly like a dead, flattened rat, but you know he pays no mind to the physical attributes. Another pang of pain.

“Guess you win in this game after all. I hope you choke on it Papyrus dear.” Before anyone could make another movement, you bolt for the door, opening and closing with a house shaking ‘slam!’

Papyrus sits in his seat, stunned as the rest of the family. Chara and Toriel cry, the action of self infliction causing a permanent mental scar on the child’s mind. Toriel attempts to keep her body from quivering, her eyes focusing in on the two remaining children. Frisk glares at the knife in his hand, throwing it to the floor with a guttural cry.

“Brother…” Sans whispers, carefully placing a hand on his brother’s shoulder. He flinches at the contact, but makes no move to acknowledge Sans.

“EX” HP:7,685 ATK:600 DEF:1300

Lives for those who wish it to be.

Immediately at the flicker of her deflector, it restores itself, leaving a film over the stats.

‘She did not show her LV despite the flicker. How much dust must she have on her hands for her stats to be this high? Monsters do not give that much either unless they are boss monsters but we are all accounted for…How many humans and monster alike has she killed?’

“W…why did she…?” Chara sobs, constantly wiping her eyes and nose with her sleeves. Asgore pats the child reassuringly on the head, his own gaze holding back a wall of tears.

“I am afraid I do not know my child. Perhaps she just…had a little breakdown.” Toriel sympathizes. She continues, her thoughts out in the open for all to listen.

“After all, she has suffered traumatic events through her life. Perhaps we should seek some outside source of help. I hear the humans have a therapist that could…” A ‘slam!’ against the table stops the monster queen in her tracks. All eyes follow the source of the sound, their reactions varying at sight. Frisk’s palms push painfully into the table, the flesh tinting a slight pink color, the knuckles pushing painfully against his skin. His eyes are not normal, the color swimming in a sea of crimson. They scan the table with a visible anger, the color causing those around to shiver as they pass. A growl emits from the small child, his lips parting.

“THAT is what you decide to do?! Our sister, your daughter, is out in the world having a breakdown due to our decision and you STILL seek to do something that might upset her further?! Are you daft?!”
“Frisk…” Chara mumbles. He shoots his glare over to his sister, his other half of the coin. Her red, puffy eyes deflate at the look, her own color flashing briefly in a matching color. He shakes his head at his sister, putting a hand up to stop her from speaking.

“No Chara. I need to say this now. All of you do not know her as I do, what she is suffering from, what we suffer from.” He looks over to his mother, her mouth wide open, tears freely staining her fur. His face softens a fraction, his soul aching at the pain this is causing.

‘She needs to hear this.’ He reminds himself.

“Once upon a time, a child fell into the Underground into a bed of yellow buttercups. A monster child approached the human, frightened and curious. They helped the child up, introducing them to their family and forever changing the dynamic of the family. The Royal family.” He pauses, shaking his feelings out of the equation.

‘This is for X’s sake not my own.’

“Fed him, clothed him, gave him a place to call home and a family that would love him. Not once mom, did you pry for my personal life before this. X… X is the same way mom. She is the same, scared human child thrown into a world that she thought did not exist.” She gives a hesitant nod to her child, wiping her tears up with a napkin from the table. Chara gasps, a flicker of understanding washing across her face.

“That explains why…” Frisk nods. Of course his twin would understand the explanation, he expects her to. He directs his attention back to his mother.

“What I need you to do, mom, is to not make these decisions without asking her first. She is…falling is the best term I can describe that you will understand.” No one moves, the spell of the word holding the room in a tight, iron fist. Sans is the first to push against it, his body taking a shaky step forward. His sockets glance around the room, the eye lights within the sockets shifting nervously. The fabric within his hands feels clammy, the material saturating with the magical perspiration.

“Isn’t that when…” Sans begins, his voice wavering through the words. His sockets meet with a straight-faced Frisk, his head giving the skeleton a knowing nod. The eye lights within the skeleton’s skull vanish, leaving vast, empty voids in their place. Papyrus, sensing the change within his brother, wraps an arm around his brother’s shoulder, holding him close. Sans’ bones rattle under his brother’s touch, sorrow and grief emulating from his soul. Papyrus’ sockets darken, the apparent glowing eyes of the child reawakening memories of those times. His phalanges dig into the shoulder padding of Sans, anchoring him to reality.

“It is when monsters begin to die. Yes Sans. X, to a degree, is falling like a monster.” A quiet collective gasp echoes after his statement, the words hanging heavily within the air. To fall means the monster either cannot support itself to live longer or is unstable to the point of breaking down. It rarely happens within the monster universe that one breaks from instability, but it has happened.

Frisk huffs, his voice raw from the sudden surge and over usage. He takes a sip from his cup, allowing the bubbly fizz of soda to momentarily distract his own frantic thoughts. He sighs, a small smile slipping onto his lips as his eyes gaze over the matching set of cups. The digital pattern contains a few pixel art characters from a vastly popular online game he plays with hopes of having his new sister try. Chara and Frisk also have a matching set from the same game series, theirs linked to a set of brothers constantly fighting each other. X’s cup however, bares a distinct resemblance of angelic wings and a halo of a character in the game. He shakes his head, dispelling the thoughts for another time.
'I can reminisce later. Right now, we need to find our sibling.'

“I need everyone to cooperate on this if we wish to bring her home.” He levels a stare with the tall, lanky skeleton, a challenging brow raised. The red begins to fade from his eyes, allowing the caramel color to seep back in. Papyrus raises a bone brow in his direction as well, gauging the child for malice.

“Very well.” Papyrus sighs in defeat.

‘I need a fucking cigarette…or three.’

“Mom, I need you and Chara to stay by the phone lines. Call around the local businesses and see if they have seen someone matching her description.” Chara opens her mouth to protest, but Frisk sends her a level plea. He knows that if both children leave the house, mom would allow neither to go at all.

‘You owe me.’ Her gaze reads before getting up to stand with their mother.

“Dad, you and I will look by foot in the surrounding neighborhoods. See if anyone out and walking has seen her.” Asgore nods, raising himself to his full height. He surpasses Toriel by a good amount, his frame approaching dangerously close to the ceiling.

“Very well my child.”

“Sans.” The skeleton jolts at his name, standing tall and serious as a soldier. His face lays in a neutral expression, the permanent smile resting into a straight line of teeth.

“You and Papyrus will check the surrounding woods. It is not uncommon for someone who wishes not to be found to be there.” The skeleton gives the small child a nod, his fingers clenched at his side.

“We will bring her home…” Sans words cause Frisk to halt, his eyes glancing at the skeleton with a new appreciation. Frisk nods, redirecting his attention to the patrons around the table.

“All right everyone. Let us get moving. The longer we wait here, the less the chance works in our favor.” All heads nod in agreement, each respectable party moving out. Chara and Toriel whip out their cell phones and begin to frantically dial any contact within them. Sans latches onto Papyrus’ hand, the two blinking out of existence. Asgore exchanges a few words with Toriel, giving her a reassuring pat on the shoulder. After the small exchange, Asgore heads toward the front door, handing Frisk a coat. Frisk quickly begins slipping on his coat, glancing out a nearby window into the dark night. The stars twinkle above, their shine dulled compared to the brilliance of the moon. The two head out the door, closing it silently behind them. They begin their trek on foot, going to the nearby houses for answers. Frisk balls his fists into his jacket pockets, staring up at the moon as though it holds all the answers.

‘Please do not fall X…We need you.’

———

‘Well…didn’t I just fuck that all up.’

You sigh, wiping the dirt and grime on your pant legs. It smears with small rubble streaks, a few seams scarred from the fall. Street lights illuminate the sidewalk, various patrons walking along the
strip of stores and restaurants. Cars zoom by frequently, their headlights occasionally flashing down the alleyway, illuminating the off colored bricks. No one dares peak down the darkness, the fear of the unknown keeping even the most adventurous at bay. Of course, those with a sharper gaze can note the hints of garbage laying around the dumpster, contents dragged out by rodents and neanderthals alike. It reeks of rotten garbage, human waste, and a hint undertone of rusting iron. A faint tinge in your hand draws your worried gaze to the gaping wound, the seam clotting in a poor attempt to mend. Dirt lines the outside of the wound, sticking to it as though life itself depends on it.

Your feet tingle in pain as well, bits of glass and rubble scratching the padding of your feet. Blood, if there is any, is caked with bacteria laced soil and human matter. You will be lucky if it does not develop into an infection. Due to the overexertion of energy, you reserve your magic for worst case scenarios.

‘What I wouldn’t give for some green magic right now.’ You sigh, pulling your knees to your chest. The dumpster lip groans at the shift of weight, but does nothing more, the plastic holding steady. The dried tears feel like crusty skin that needs to be removed, your eyes feeling heavy with fatigue and dryness. You close your eyes, taking a deep breath through your mouth.

‘I still can’t believe I freaked out at them like that. To yell and scream at them when they just wanted to help.’

‘Was it really help? Or were they trying to “fix” you like he did. Make you perfect. To fit the mold they design.’

You cover your ears with your hands, your eyes squeezing shut.

“Shut up…” You whisper.

‘I mean, why else would someone take you in as such? A broken machine with a few gears loose. You need repair by hands that can mold you. Why should you have a say when you yourself cannot even fathom the want nor the need to do so?’

“I said SHUT UP!” You bark, throwing your damaged hand to the wall behind you. The rocky surface scrapes the upper layer of your skin, the bits of flesh flaking off onto the wall. It tingles in pain, the nerves working with the body to deploy hormones. Another annoying thought spikes your anxiety further, your throat groaning in defeat.

‘Shit…I showed that cocky ass skeleton my stats. He is probably convincing them that I need to be put down.’ A bottle breaks at the entrance of the alleyway, snapping your head in the direction. The glass shards glimmer in the light of the street, crushing into the soil as a foot steps on them. “Shit!” The voice harshly whispers, picking a rather large shard of glass out of their foot. “Come back lil’ one! We need to take you home.” A voice coos, the sound laced with false concern and malice. A group chuckles shortly after the statement, their footsteps moving as two units. The body rushes into the alleyway, failing to notice the small stack of open boxes to their left or the abandoned garbage can lid to the right. They mumble a string of curses, the masculine voice taking a higher pitch with each fall. Fear is tangible in the air, malice and anger following closely behind. Bodies block the entrance of the alleyway, dimming the small hole into near darkness. Vaguely you can make out the footsteps of the other half of the party parading around the building.

“Oh for fucks sake.” You sigh, jumping off the dumpster. You land gracefully a few feet in front of the scampering body, your own hidden by the darkness. It is a young man, roughly someone in their early adulthood. His hair is bright blonde to the point of nearly being white, the occasional strand of
green flickering through the underbrush. His skin is light, the markings of tattoos marring the smooth surface with icons and colors.

“Come on my little hare. This is a game you will not be winning.” The same voice begins their approach, the glimmer of a weapon in their hand lighting up in the dull street light. Sleek grey steal, polished to a fine finish. Black accent marks covering the outside of the barrel, a little pull trigger at the end of the device. The owner waves it around in the air, the silhouette of their finger holding a trigger flashing for an intimidating effect.

A gun.

You crouch, carefully waddling to the male on the floor. You feel his fingertips brush blindly against the tips of your toes, immediately recoiling back. A scream builds in his throat, but you quickly clamp a hand over his lips. Warm puffs of frantic air pulse out of his nose, his cyan eyes swinging wildly from your face to the location of those approaching.

“Any crime committed?” You murmur low enough for only the two of you to hear. The male halts his futile attempts at escaping, his eyes looking up at you quizzically. You sigh, pinching his side with your free hand. You listen for the subtle cues of lying, something the boss is quite fond of training you to do when he made “dealings.”

“You. Any crimes committed?” He slowly shakes his head.

“Any drugs stolen?” Again no.

“Did you steal his mate?” He hesitates for a second, his eyes calculating the possible events. Again, he shakes for no. You sigh through your nose, carefully listening for the members to approach.

‘A few paces at the start, a few moving in from the south. How many souls? A handful in both hands. Magic? Nonexistent.’

“Look, I will help you because you are some sap that was at the wrong place at the wrong time. No one deserves to die lest to a band of thugs.” He wiggles some more, his eyes widening a fraction in shock. His lips move to work under your palm, but you press your hand into him harder.

“Don’t ask questions from a stranger willing to help.” You hiss, dragging his body awkwardly along with you. He puts up no fight, allowing an easy move around the bits of sharper garbage laying askew.

“You will hide behind this dumpster and wait for me to come back. His lackeys are on either side of this accursed building. Here, use this to defend yourself.” You find a plank of wood the sod probably dragged with him in the last fall. It is a heavy two by four with at least a good inch of thickness. It weighs like nothing within your hands, but you know the man will struggle with the make-shift. He makes no move to retrieve it, huddling in a shivering mess in the corner. You place it at his feet, releasing the last hold over his mouth as you ascend.

‘No time like the present.’

You walk forward toward the first group, your ears taking into account for the second group attempting a stealthy approach.

“Yo.” You wave to the group leader, keeping the injured hand tucked behind your back. The leader halts, raising his hand in a similar fashion. The people behind him halt, allowing the boss to walk forward, swinging his weapon with abandonment. An unknown smell emits from the leader, pungent and sour like week old soiling.
“Well hello to you pretty young thing. Tell me,” He moves in closer, his body keeping a respectable foot away from your own. He angles his body, half to the group half to you. A simple tactic to allow his posse to see what is going on while leaving him a smaller target. You grin, the smile stretching oddly across your face.

“Have you seen a punk running through these parts. He stole something quite valuable from us that we need back.” You shrug your shoulders, throwing your thumb in the other direction.

“Probably went that way. I just happen to be cutting through to meet up with some of my girlfriends.” The leader barks out a laugh, his posse following suit after a few seconds. His gaze appears animalistic, drinking up your form like a man thirsting for water.

“Well, we were looking for the boy but you appear to need our services more.”

‘That’s right you commie fuck. Fall into it and see what happens.’

“Services?” You question innocently, your lips pulling into a pout. He nods eagerly, his grubby hands holstering the gun while the other signals for a few men to approach.

“You see my dear, we have a sort of escort service with only the best women. For the right price that is…” The men move forward, each one taller than the last, looming their shadows over your form. Each take a side flanking the other like a compass.

‘A little closer…’

“I…don’t quite understand.” You feigned ignorance, glancing around at the men. They each bare a similar smirk, deep rumbling chuckles vibrating their chests. The leader laughs once more, shaking the gun around like a toy.

“You my dear, are a fine piece of ass that someone would pay dearly for the first…deflowering.” He snaps his fingers, the men immediately springing into action. The façade slips, a sinister grin pushing your cheekbones high. The world around you darkens, the monotone colors seeping in, igniting the colors of the souls around you. Various levels and numbers flutter in front of the muddled colors, some high, some low. A few gasp, backing up as though running from the scene would save them from the distortion. You laugh, the sound echoing off the walls.

“I do believe you have made quite a terrible mistake this time and I am in no mood tonight.” Your magic hums within your being, your mutated soul appearing before all engaged with the fight.

“How terribly…unfortunate for you.” The leader growls, using his pistol point as he shouts commands.

“Get the mage!” Bodies fly in, each holding a distinct gun or small sharpened knife. Others fall back, their low levels not immune to the fear of real combat. You giggle, your damaged hand coming up to cover your mouth. One takes the first lunge, swinging his knife through the air with little finesse. You easily side step away from him, watching as he stumbles as to not impale his friend. A duo tries next, the knife swinging wildly in your direction. You continue stepping backwards, dodging with very little movements. Off to the side, you note the gunman attempting to line up a shot, his hands shaking as the partner ushers you to the spot.

‘Typical positioning techniques. Very remedial and survival 101.’

You wait for the swinger to swipe, using the moment in between the next cut to jump, using the poor sod’s body to propel you forward…
As the friend pulls the trigger.

You watch the bullet sail slowly through the air, impaling itself through his friend’s shoulder. He lets out a blood curdling scream, dropping the knife to the ground. It clatters, the momentum sending the dull object in your general direction. You ignore the crude weapon, checking your nails as though it is kid’s play. Vaguely you can see the man’s HP drop with some steady damage, but you pay no mind after the assurance of life.

Those with knives step forward in waves, the bodies colliding with another as they attempt to formulate a cohesive plan. The gunmen in the far back attempt to take aim, their shaky, untrained hands firing bullets that miss completely or impale a fellow comrade. You can hear the boss in the background grumbling and shouting about the obvious rule: never kill a comrade. Something about being an idiot too. In all the commotion, it causes you to laugh, allowing one knife goer to land a small scrape against your skin. You immediately reach for the hand, snapping the wrist back with one fell movement. He screams in pain, clutching the injury while the rest continue without him.

One by one, the bodies begin to fall, the HP never depleting lower than 1. Blood stains the walls of your black and white world, the spots of red adding a touch of sadistic color to the barren land.

Once the last body falls to the floor, you face the boss, a wicked smile gleaming with blood from those around you.

“S…stay back!” He barks, the gun shakily pointed in your direction. You smirk, taking a step forward. A loud ‘bang!’ fills the void, the bullet lodged somewhere into the floor. You tisk, shaking your head like a scolding child.

“Now now. Children should not be playing with guns. They could get hurt.” You chide. Another bullet, this one misses by a landslide, smacking into the walls somewhere in the back.

“I…I’m warning you!” You hum, glancing at the poor soul in front of you.

“Leader” HP 150 ATK 10+ DEF 20

Attack will increase with armed weapon

You continue your walk forward, the bullets whizzing past like annoying insects. He attempts to back up, attempts to escape, but you do not allow for him to do so. You stand a foot away as he did earlier, your hands carefully clasped behind your back, your body swaying on your heels.

“I will give you one more warning: hand over the gun or face the consequences.”

“Go to hell!” He spits, the splatter smacking the floor. You sigh, unclasping your hands. You did not wish to do this; you hoped he would have taken the mercy.

’But…such is life.’

You raise a hand, watching your magic form around the fingertips like eager little snakes. They hiss for justice, to take this man’s life as he has with many others.

“I am already there.” You throw your hand forward, the strings lashing out. Everything happens in slow motion. The threads glistening through the air, the odd colors emitting a soft glow as they seek out the target. In the same instant, the gun fires off, the smell of gunpowder and smoke gaining momentum as the metal whizzes in your direction. The threads make their impact as the bullet does, the force causing your threads to thrust upward. The man screams in pain, the threads piercing his valuable organs into less than swiss cheese. The threads move upward, dragging everything through
a meat slicer, shredding and tearing everything within its path. Blood seeps through every entry point, his screams gurgling under the suffocation of blood within his throat. It drips out of his nose and eyes, his final moments staring directly into your own gaze.

The bullet sails through, the metal piece clanking somewhere off in the distance but the damage is done. The world around you draws the monotone colors back in, releasing color back into the world. Blood splatters cover the alley with reckless abandonment, but for the most part create puddles into the soil. Your knees hit the ground, the bullet hole causing a good deal of pain under your collar bone.

“Shit.” You hiss, blood pouring out of your wound like a small fountain. You lift your hand, applying a painful amount of pressure to the wound on the one side. It continues to race down your backside, the sticky lifeforce draining quicker than you anticipated.

‘Great…this is how I potentially might die. A fucking bullet.’

“Hey…let us get you out of here.” The man mumbles in your ear. Without asking for your permission, he sweeps his hands under your form, lifting with a little difficulty. Blood begins to coat his outfit, but he does not seem to care. You wiggle within his grip, your head spinning with blood loss.

‘Shit this isn’t good. I hardly know the twat let alone for him to take me somewhere. This is what happens when I try to do something good.’

“I am fine kid. You should be getting home.” You growl quietly, the lights around you slowly fading into the background. Everything takes on a slightly darker tinge, the world spinning on its axis.

“Hush. You need to rest.” The dark is strong, stronger than the will to fight the stranger. Your body complies, crumpling to a sleeping mess, condemning to your fate.

Chapter End Notes

Just as a side note if anyone has any music they are willing to recommend I need some more battle dynamic stuff or dance music.
Chapter Notes

As to not clog this chat, please see the bottom for the rest of my notes lol. I also apologize for the shortness of this chapter as I have slept 8 hours total in two days. =)
Also I love molten chocolate cake...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 13

Toriel paces anxiously around the kitchen of her home, her eyes glancing over to the telephone every few seconds. Her paws squeeze and wring each other, the fur slowly matting down to a flat consistency. Her and Chara placed as many possible calls as possible, giving out a description and your likely whereabouts. Each person, monster and human alike, gave the queen a promise of results should the information arise in their location of the city.

‘This is all my fault. Had I just let her do things at her own pace...Had I just perhaps listened a little better...My child...’ Her musing is brought to a halt at a gentle tug of her leg. The faint scent of golden flower tea wafts up to her senses, her youngest child carefully raising the full mug in her direction.

“Come on mom...It will do us no good just pacing around like a caged animal. We called everyone we could and I know they will call immediately if they find something.” Chara smiles, dark circles encompassing the child’s lower lids. Her eyes are dark with worry, the typical shimmering rubies dulled to a dirty colored solo cup. Her face is pale with worry and exhaustion, but she remains determined to wait up until they find her older sister. Toriel accepts the cup with a small smile, the warmth of the mug emitting into her aching paws.

“Thank you, my child. You are right. Worrying will do us no good…” Toriel sighs, walking over to the abandoned meal on the table, the food long cooled. Chara follows closely behind, swiping her own mug of flower tea off the counter. Chara pulls her chair next to her mother’s, leaning against the goat monster for warmth and support. A thick silence fills the air, the clock ticking away in the background only counting each painful second you have not returned home. Toriel sighs again, her fingers caressing the rim of the cup. Chara looks down at her own cup, her reflection wavering in the ripples of the liquid.

‘If I had only told her about what she has gone through...or better detail than a vague mess of blubbery words...’ Chara shakes her head, squeezing her eyes closed in pain.

‘I told Frisk as I do with everything and something...changed in him. I can’t tell what it is but it is there. He seems even more determined to get to know our sister, to be with her.’ She slowly opens her eyes, tears threatening to gather on the edges of her eyes. A sideways glance at her mother reveals her tear stained eyes attempting to hold back as well. Neither one touches their tea, their hands holding the warmth as though it is a direct lifeline to your well-being. After a few moments, Chara grits her teeth, pushing back her sorrow and regret.

“Mom...?” Toriel snaps herself out of her musings, glancing down at Chara with a sad smile.
“What is it my child?” Chara opens her mouth, air rushing in but the words refusing to speak out. She looks away, closing her mouth. Chara bites the inside of her cheek nervously, her heart screaming as to not add damage to the situation.

‘No. I have to tell her everything now. There might be a clue as to where X is…’

Toriel waits patiently as ever, watching the various emotions flicker across her child’s face. When the familiar look of determination settles across, Chara looks up at her.

“I have something I need to tell you. Where I was all that time I was missing.” Toriel shifts in her seat slightly, giving her child her undivided attention. Chara takes a rather large breath, expanding her lungs and ribcage painfully. The mug suddenly feels too hot in her hand, burning the flesh while causing copious amounts of moisture to formulate between the surfaces.

“I…”

‘Ring!’ ‘Ring!’

The phones’ shrill ringing breaks the tense silence, Chara’s confession cut off by the sudden jump in her mother. The goat monster carefully puts her still filled mug on the table, darting across the room to the phone. Chara lets out a breath she did not know she was holding.

‘Well…maybe it can wait for another day…’

Toriel practically throws the phone off the receiver, her massive paws struggling not to crush the plastic device.

“Dreemurr residence. Toriel speaking.” Light sounds of movement echo through the line, footsteps running back and forth with a few chitters of noise.

“Hello your majesty.” The quiet yet familiar voice of Muffet fills the line, her voice pulling away for a few seconds to chitter out a command. Toriel’s hand grips the receiver like a lifeline, her mind racing away with a thousand thoughts only to stop dead on two: you are either alive or dead.

“Let us…get right to the chase, shall we?” Toriel nods into the phone. Muffet chuckles on the other end, the sound of her hands moving around signifies her picking up a few things.

“One of my spiders went out in search of some information on another matter. He got into a bit of an altercation with a few monster haters lingering in the district. A problem you should already be aware of.”

“Of course.” Toriel nods, her other hand grasping at her clothing.

“Well, as his life nearly ended, a particular female ‘beat the shit’ out of them. My spider’s words naturally. He said she saved him from a gang and took a bullet to take the leader down. He is quite smitten with her, I will admit I have not seen him so lively in a long time.” Muffet’s giggles do nothing to calm the frantic beating of Toriel’s soul, the small thing screaming at the worst-case scenario.

“Is…is the woman…all right?” Muffet hums on the other side of the phone, turning away as though to gauge something.

“She will be fine. The bullet exited through her body, scraping by most vital organs. At best one or two were grazed.” Toriel’s face drops in shock, her body trembling.
‘My child…I wished to give you a better life than where you came from. Instead I have run you into even more pain. I am so sorry…’ Chara sits off to the side where her mother will not directly see her, listening in. Although the words over the receiver are jagged as all, she can vaguely make out the context of what is going on. You were shot trying to defend a monster. Chara watches her mother’s face fall into shock, tears silently leaving the corners of her eyes as she stifles back a sob. She can feel her own tears sliding out of her eyes, but quickly wipes them away, leaving a red streak across her face.

“I understand you made mention of your daughter missing and it is quite odd that my spiders would bring in a woman somewhat matching her description. It could be coincidental or it could be her. I just wished to report in to you in case it is the lateral.” Muffet makes an odd sound on the other side of the line, something frantically talking a mile a minute. It reminds Toriel of telephone static, the sound too quick to make out words and too high that could cause quite a headache. Muffet lets out a small ‘Ahuhuhu~’ before returning to the conversation at hand.

“It appears that our guest has finally woken up.”

Papyrus lifts the cigarette from his teeth, blowing out a rather large huff for someone with no lungs. Vaguely in the distance he can hear Sans calling out your name, worry etched into the fading words. He whips out his phone from his pocket, the small digital devices screen light blinding him momentarily.

‘11:30. The punk has been missing for a few hours now. Heh. Maybe she won’t come back.’ Something tugs unsteadily within his chest, causing his brow to raise. It feels as though someone is poking his insides to the point of irritation: not enough to hurt but enough to make itself known. Before he can examine the feeling further, Sans rushes back to his brother’s location, his chest rising and falling despite his lack of need for air.

“Brother…” Sans voice is quiet, fear lingering on each letter like a death sentence. The smaller skeleton wrings his gloves nervously, his eye lights wide with worry. Papyrus directs his gaze to his brother, letting a small hum of recognition pass through his teeth.

“Do you…do you think human X will return soon? It is rather late for a lady to be out this late…” Sans mumbles mostly to himself, his skull shaking with a scoff at his own absurdity. His eye lights are dim, the moon light casting shadows deep into his sockets. Bits of bramble and dirt sticks to his uniform, small patches of fabric torn by a few threads.

“Of course, human X will return! She just needs to be found and reminded that we all care about her!” Papyrus watches his brother, his eye lights dimming a fraction at every mention of your name.

‘Heh. It is just like my brother to worry about a nobody. She most likely ran off for the attention’s sake. To make everyone worry and shit about her to make it seem like they care. You won’t get a rise out of me you little snake.’ A painful tug within his chest causes him to wince. His chest cavity hurts slightly worse now, the pain pushing against his sternum as though it is trying to escape. Papyrus carefully scrapes his hand close to his chest as he reaches for his cigarette, allowing the feeling to ‘thump’ under his palm.

‘I will have to check that out later. Figure out what the hell is going on in there, although it probably is a flux of magic. That person really knows how to get under my skin.’

“Paps? Papyrus?! Are you even listening to me?!” Sans growls, stuffing his fists onto his hips. If his
brother had lips, he would be pouting them in irritation, his eyebrow twitching in annoyance. Sans watches his brother blow another ring of smoke into the air, the wisps escaping through the sides of his jaw into the night. The moon offers a large amount of light out here, enough for the skeleton to see where he is generally going. His brother, much to Sans’ distain, lays about in a tree, appearing to not give a care about their missing human. His form is illuminated by the natural lighting of the night, his orange hoodie shining brightly like a beacon in the dark. Said skeleton finally directs his gaze at his brother, a sheepish shrug moving the shoulders.

“Sorry bro. What were you saying?” Sans groans, throwing his hands up into the air. Sans does not wish to think of the notion that his brother does not care about finding their human, let alone to the point where you would never return. It sends an uneasy twinge in the skeleton’s chest.

‘I would miss the human’s snack time when I come home with Chara and Frisk.’

“Forget it brother! I will continue the search elsewhere!” Sans stomps away from his brother, his gloves cupping around his teeth as he shouts out your name into the air once more.

‘I would miss the passing stares you send our way when we aren’t looking.’

Sans bellows out your name into the night, the creatures keeping a safe distance from the loud skeleton monster.

‘I would miss the way Chara lights up when I ask about what you are up to.’

Sans stops in his tracks, his hands slowly falling back to his sides. He stares longingly up into the night sky, a phenomenon that still wonders the small skeleton since his arrival to the surface. Right now, it offers him no comfort, the inky night sky a pressure on his skull, the stars mocking his vain search. Papyrus would often tell Sans about the stars in the sky, the different planets, things about the universe that both shock and wonder the smaller skeleton. He shakes his head quietly to himself, his usual smile twisting into a grimace.

‘It is as though Papyrus does not care about the human. He might not like X sure, but Papy can’t hate anyone…right?’ A small twist in Sans’ chest causes the skeleton’s sockets to widen, his eye lights glancing down at the cavity in bewilderment. Something within him knows his brother could care less, the taller skeleton agreeing to the search due to Sans himself being out.

‘I do hope you are okay Miss X. I know the world can be cruel to what they do not know.’ Sans, despite his brother’s best intentions, knows of the human raids on monster’s houses, their bodies turning to ash as they are murdered. All because humans are afraid of monster as they are with any other thing “new”. He sighs, rubbing his breastbone in hopes of quelling the pain with the action.

‘Perhaps if she explains it all to us, we can better understand. If we better understand maybe she will open up more. And maybe then…’

The shrill tone of his cell phone goes off, causing a startled ‘yelp!’ to escape the skeleton. He flails his arms a little bit, his footing twisting in an odd way. Papyrus immediately appears next to his brother, the familiar crackle of his orange energy encompassing the two in a warm, dangerous static. The cell phone continues to vibrate and chime within Sans’ body armor, the skeleton steadying himself before reaching in to grab it.

Chara flashes across the screen, the funny image of her and the skeletons posing for the camera phone behind the text. Sans slides his finger across the screen, the call put onto speakerphone so his brother could listen in to the update. Papyrus huffs in slight annoyance, squishing the nub of a cancer stick into the ground before lighting a new one, much to Sans irritation.
“HELLO HUMAN! DO YOU HAVE ANY GOOD NEWS?” Sans asks wholeheartedly, his tone upbeat for the sake of the child. Papyrus notices the flat notes in his brother’s voice, but refuses to say anything on the matter. Silence answers his question on the other side, the quiet sobs of Toriel echoing in the background. Sans brow crinkles in confusion, an odd fast thumping beating painfully against his ribcage. A seed of dread settles deep into the crevice of his soul, the vines constricting the small thing tightly.

“…Human, you do have good news…right?” Sans hears a hiccup on the other side followed by the sound of fabric moving over a surface. A few more hiccups follow, a snort of snot or two only causing his brows to crinkle further in worry. He counts each deep breath the child takes, the dark feeling slowly creeping deeper and deeper.

“She…” Chara lets out a shudder of a sigh, snorting the mucus attempting to drip from her nose.

“She is…Sans she got shot.” Sans feels himself freeze, the information slowly sinking into his skull. Papyrus stiffens next to him, his arm subconsciously rubbing his shoulder. The two may not know what it is like to have a bullet rip through their internals, but they have seen enough movies and daytime crime shows to know it is not a pleasant feeling.

‘Shot? Does that mean the human is unwell? Does it mean there is a chance that the human might…’ A shuddering sigh brings his focus back to the call.

“Mom says she…is staying with Muffet for a little bit.” Chara’s words crackle and break as she struggles to get the phrasing out, her nerves evident to both skeletons.

“Mom…says from Muffet…that she is up now…but…” They can hear her shift closer to the phone line, her shuddering breaths coming over loudly.

“I am so scared…I am scared that she…” Chara lets out a little hiccup, a quiet ‘plink’ hits her speaker. Sans soul swells within his chest with fear, worry, relief…too many emotions at once that he cannot decipher.

‘The human said she is awake, so she will not fall. But then, why is she crying? Is she afraid the other human will not return to us?’ Sans’ fingers grasp the plastic device a little firmer, the buttons pushing into the crevices of the bone. Papyrus watches with his own brow of confusion, taking a long drag of his smoke.

‘She is found, she is alive with only a bullet wound. Although from what the humans have said, if a bullet or a sharp object of shorts hits something vital, they can die.’ Papyrus lets out a quiet snort to himself.

‘I highly doubt someone like her would go down easily from a…’

“Chara…” Papyrus halts his thoughts, his eye lights looking in his brother’s direction in shock. Sans never uses such a strong, quiet tone even when he is serious. Sans skull crinkles with determination, his brow edging into his eye space, his teeth pulled into a straight line. A flicker of cyan crosses his iris, the lingering magic silently billowing in a nonexistent wind.

“If Muffet has X then it. Will. Be. Okay. Have faith in X. She will know what to do when the time comes.” Stunned silence fills the end of the line, even the stray hiccup silenced by his tone. It is deep, deeper than the hyperactive skeleton shouldn’t have been able to achieve. It is nowhere near as gravely as Papyrus’, the smooth notes play like a well-tuned violin. The sound does not bode well in Papyrus, his mind refusing to believe that voice is truly his brother. As though a switch suddenly flips, Sans is back to his smiley self, the remnants of magic dissipating immediately.
“NOW STOP CRYING HUMAN! LET US MEET BACK UP AT YOUR HOUSE FOR A NAPSTATION MARATHON AND A SLEEPOVER!” There is a quiet giggle over the other line, the rustling of fabric, and a sigh.

“That sounds wonderful Sans…thank you.” The airwaves go dead as the dial tone responds back to the skeleton. He clicks his phone off, stuffing it back into his body armor. Papyrus stares at his brother quizzically for a few seconds, off put by the strange face his brother is making. His teeth sit awkwardly in a straight line across his face, his eyes staring down at the phone like a lifeline. Emotions flicker across his eye lights, settling on one particular emotion, one just outside of Papyrus’ range of understanding.

‘If I didn’t know any better, he looks like…’ It immediately shifts back to his wide grin, his eye lights brightening up in excitement as he looks up to his brother.

“LET US GO BROTHER! THE SOONER WE COMENCE, THE SOONER HUMAN X WILL RETURN!”

You jolt awake with a start, hiss immediately as the wound beneath your collar bone flares in pain. A slow trickle of something wet seeps through the bandage, the fluid remaining in a small stationary blot. You instinctively reach toward the wound, wincing slightly as the cool feeling of blood brushes over your fingertips. As you pull your hand back, you note the small traces of red dye left behind on the skin.

‘Probably pulled the stitching again…I will probably have to resew it back…’ Your thoughts trail off suddenly, your eyes darting from the blood to the dressing.

‘I did not do this. I wasn’t conscious enough to patch myself before passing out…Which means.’ Your eyes snap to the sound of a door opening on the west wall, the dark wood slowly peeling away to allow a man in. The man glances at you at first, his ruby eyes lazily sweeping over the room. It is halfway into closing the door does his eyes shoot over you once again, the orbs wide in awe.

“You are up!” The male voice cheers, immediately slamming the door the rest of the way close. It rattles in protest, the furnishings close by groan at the sudden jolt. He spins around on his heels, the shoes quietly tapping across the floor as he slowly approaches you, a wide smile set on his pale face. You growl out a warning, your hands fussing to gain leverage over the silken sheets swishing beneath your body. The headboard meets your back after a few seconds, your lips curled back as you continue to growl at the stranger. He puts his hands up in surrender, but that stupid grin on his face remains.

“I mean you no harm lady…I mean I actually owe you a lot and um…” The smile twitches on his face, his one hand moving to nervously rub the back of his head. His nearly platinum hair falls slightly into his face, the vibrant green streaks screaming against the blank canvas.

“Get on with it.” You hiss, your eyes narrowing. He lets out a breathy chuckle, his body vibrating at the seams.

‘Good. He is nervous. He is less likely to possibly attack should the situation arise.’

“IJUSTWANTEDTOSAYTHANKYOUFORSAVINGMEANDTHATWASSOCOOL!IMEANYOUW You deadpan, your face falling into something akin to shock, confusion, and annoyance. The kid lets out a nervous laugh, coughing at the end of it with a nervous “yeah.”
“Kid, I could not understand any of that shit you just said.” You rasp, the dryness within your throat coating your surfaces like cotton sticking to sap. A faint tint of red rushes across the kid’s face, his head falling slightly forward in a vain attempt to hide it.

“A…ah yeah. Muffet says I do that a lot when I’m…um…excitable.” You raise a quizzical eyebrow at the kid, watching the blush on his face deepen.

“Y..you must be hungry! How could I be so stupid!” His face twists into a scowl, the hand rubbing behind his head swinging around to face palm. A smile attempts to make its way onto your face, but you stomp it down before it could even cause a small corner twitch.

“I...I will be right back! Please make yourself at home! Muffet has left you clothes in the armoire. So, um…!” The male quickly darts out of the room, slamming himself into the closed door with a solid ’thud!’ You almost ask if he is okay, the words forming on the tip of your tongue. He immediately laughs at himself, flinging the door open and close in a speed of light. A few knickknacks on the furniture rattle in protest, falling silent a few moments later. You let out a breath you didn’t know you were holding, your head shaking back and forth in disbelief.

‘Such a nervous little thing.’

You let out a groan as you carefully begin stretching your joints, mewling contently as they pop back into place. Endorphins shoot throughout your system, quelling the slight pain within your collar albeit temporarily. The room offers a soft glow of yellows against dark, purple walls, the scones traced with elegant designs. A rather impressively sized dresser stands proudly next to the door, the wood bending at the top into a near perfect arch. Two brass knobs reflect the light of the room, the metal winking back at the scones. A rather impressively sized television hangs on the wall across from the bed, the screen taking up at least a third of the wall in width alone. Below the intimidating electronic, a small wooden bookshelf filled with various colorful cases and covers. The text is too small to be read at a distance, the miniscule lettering looking like brail rather than words.

Beneath the tip of the bed, the top of a small love seat faces the view, the dark wood glossy with a varnish finish. Little tails of fabric flutter in a nonexistent breeze at the end of the bed, the thin mesh fabric caressing the top of the love seat. It wraps around the tall beams of polished wood, racing above creating a protective tarp against the ceiling. Your fingers clench and unclench the fabric beneath you once more, the material practically melting out of your grasp.

‘The boy claims we are currently residing in someone named Muffet’s house or at least her establishment. Which means there is a small possibility that her Majesty knows of my current location.’ You scowl, your fingers grasping the blanket tightly into a ball.

‘There is also a small possibility she has finally allowed me to go on my own. If I can only get out of here before this Muffet person finds out…’ As you look down at the material, the door slips open once more, the same boy scurrying in clumsily with a silver tray.

“I asked Muffet what she thought was good for something recovering and she gave me a lot of things! I hope you are hungry! I mean it all looks really good and I helped make it and…” The kid lets out a groan of frustration, drawing your gaze to him. He struggles to close the door with his foot behind him, his face infused with a deep cherry color. The silver tray is an impressive size, taking up the male’s entire forearm; the metal shining despite the poor lighting in the room. A matching silver pitcher rests within the middle of it, the surface reflecting the room through a fisheye look. Two matching mugs sit next to it, the dark purple coloring blends with the walls and looks out of place next to an elegant pitcher. Metal domes coat the top of the tray, concealing the food and its warmth beneath it. Fragrances you are unfamiliar with floats in the air, smelling of sweet and spicy yet not either one. There are underlying notes of garlic as well as some warming spices that you cannot
properly identify. Unconsciously your free hand wraps around your waist, squeezing the flesh in a vain attempt to quell the sudden rise in hunger.

‘I should leave now while the kid is trying not to look like a fool…’ You sigh through your nose.

‘And I would be a damn fool to turn down a free meal before my next journey. There is no telling when the next time I shall be able to eat.’

“Oh! I am so sorry! You must be ready to eat your heart out and here I am holding it at bay!” The kid wobbles his way over to the bed, his lips muttering quiet curses under his breath as the tray sways unsteadily with each step. Determination settles within his eyes, his footsteps darting across the small space. As soon as they impact the end of the bed, he quickly sets the tray down, slipping his arm out before it could get caught between the metal and the mattress. The kid turns toward you, an idiotic smile stretching the blush across the rest of his face.

“I do hope you like it Miss X. I ah…I owe you my life and I know this isn’t the best way to say it but…yeah…” You glance between the boy and the tray, keeping a steady eye on the male as you dislodge yourself from the headboard. It shifts back into place with a silent groan, the sheets talking back as you slide forward. Once the pitcher is in reach, you carefully take it off the tray, raising a small quizzical eyebrow at the lightness of what should be a heavy object. You immediately shrug it off, chalking it up to magic much like many other things.

‘The kid is shaking like a leaf and I cannot distinguish if I make him nervous or if he is excitable.’ You mentally roll your eyes.

‘I mean, I do not care either way, but his constant awkward staring is starting to grate on my fucking nerves. He might as well join me at this rate.’

“Sit.” You mutter, grabbing a mug to fill. A warm blue liquid pours out of the spout, the steam of mixed berries wafting up from the cup. It shimmers with various shades of turquoise, swirls of peppermint green mixing with the colors. You look up from the strangely colored liquid, expecting some sort of answer. A frown creases your face as you examine the child, his face in utter shock. The boy looks taken aback, his face shading as brightly as his eyes. Tears appear to gather in the corners of his eyes, glossing over the orbs with a thin veil of liquid but he holds them back.

“Sit. I will not ask you again.” He jumps, the tremor riding from his feet up to his skull, the hairs along the way standing erect.

“O…of course.” He stutters out, the blush intensifying past even the color of his eyes. His steps carefully walk toward the silken mattress, his eyes glancing between you and the bed as though asking permission once more. You let out an annoyed grunt, jolting the child as he nervously sits on the edge.

‘Not my problem if the kid decides to sit on the fucking edge like a goddamn bird.’

You huff a short-irritated breath through your nose, shoving your filled mug into his general direction. As if a trigger goes off, his body recoils, his eyes darting frantically between everything in the room and the hands clasped on his lap. After a few seconds and nothing happening to his person, he gingerly takes the cup from your hand, his chilled fingers brushing yours as they pass.

“T…thank you.” You give him a curt nod, reaching out for the other mug to pour yourself a drink. This one appears to shift slightly in color, rich hues of purple attacking the turquoise rather than join it peacefully. The turquoise fights for a small amount of time, eventually allowing purple to consume it whole.
Once it is filled to your liking, you set the pitcher back down, beginning the process of removing the covers over the food. The near sight of it could put Tor… the Queen’s cooking to shame. A rather large porcelain bowl holds a thick orange soup, the liquid solid with bits of pumpkin seeds poking through the top. Nutmeg and other fall spices waft up from the concoction, filling your body with warmth before it even graces your tongue. Upon inspection of another lid, the immediate spicy sweet smell hits you full force. Yellow looking rice coats the bottom of the plate, diced vegetables accompanying a layer of the dish. Cubed bits of meat cover the immediate top, their origin of beef, pork, or chicken unknown due to a thick, rich sauce slathering the whole thing.

A third plate holds some sort of pretzel bread rods, the skin crisped to a golden brown with flecks of pure white sea salt scattered evenly across the surface. The fourth dome, you reveal eagerly, your mouth literally drooling from all the food presented. Your heart nearly stops in your throat, the final piece of the meal revealing itself: a beautiful, heaven sent piece of molten lava cake. You visibly swallow, your eyes shimmering with unshed tears.

‘How…how did they know this was my favorite cake?…….It has been too long…’

“You see you eying the lava cake. Is it perhaps your favorite?” You shake your mind out of the daze, attempting to form a scowl on your face. The boy chuckles under his breath.

“No need to make such a face. A guilty pleasure I take it then.” He chuckles again as you huff in annoyance, swiping one of the pretzel sticks to munch on. You carefully dip the end into the orange soup, watching the steam pour out of the disrupted surface.

“To tell you the truth, it is one of my guilty pleasures too, though Muffet says if I eat too many I will become one.” You ignore the kid as he continues to talk, examining the concoction with intrigue.

‘Fuck it. This will be the last meal for a while I might as well enjoy it.’

You take a bite, your eyes widening at the sudden burst of flavor and magic slapping your tongue. The magic, despite previous encounters with it, warms your tongue with little sparks allowing the sweet and tangy taste of the soup to seep deeper into your taste buds. The pretzel adds a slight yeasty taste to the mix, the salt melding well with the flavors. You turn your head towards the snickering kid, half a pretzel resting in his free hand.

“Wow Miss X…I never pegged you for a food enthusiast.” You feel heat immediately rush up onto your face, your mind relating it to the smell of heat from the food. You glare at the kid, taking an angry bite out of the bare pretzel.

“Fawk owff.” You mutter through your food, giving no shits about double dipping in the soup. As you finish the first one within a few seconds, you grab for another one, burning the taste to your memory. The two of you finish the pretzel sticks and soup, moving onto the main course with curious yet greedy eyes.

“Have you ever had curry before?” The kid asks, taking a spoon for himself. He piles a small amount of rice onto it, scooping the meat and a healthy portion of the sauce along with it. You stare at him questioningly, watching as he blows a careful breath before scooping the whole thing into his mouth.

“Whoo!” He breathes, his cheeks puffing out like a chipmunk. Beads of sweat poke through the pores on his forehead, trickling down the sides of his face. His eyes begin to water, tears threatening to spill at any moment. His face explodes in fire red, covering every inch of skin including the tips of his ears. If it were not for the fact he has green striping through his nearly white hair, you could
almost see the red settling on his skull.

“It cannot possibly that hot.” You reason, rolling your eyes at his overly done expression. As soon as he swallows, he takes a healthy swig of his liquid, chugging until the fire within his mouth quells.

“Ahh!” He gasps after a few seconds of chugging. The kid narrows his eyes on you, raising an eyebrow in challenge.

“Oh and you think you can hold the heat? Why don’t you put your money where your mouth is!” He shoves a spoon into your face, rice and bits of juice dripping back down onto the silver tray below. You glare at the kid, feeling determination trickle into your soul.

’Sohisstlittlefuckwitpunkthinkshecanoutdome?Hemusthavelosthisfuckingmarbles’

“Give me that.” You hiss, swiping the spoon out of his outstretched hand. He leans back with a smirk, his face slowly decreasing in temperature and liquid. You stare at the food with a frown, the smell of spices slapping your senses with a maple syrup smell.

‘Itcannotbethatbad.Afterall,heisprobablyaweaklingwhentocomethinglikethis.’

With that thought in mind, you take the whole scoop into your mouth in a similar fashion. At first there is an abundance of things crowding your mouth, the food puffing your cheeks out as you try to adjust. A sweet tang of some sort of spice coats the inside of your mouth, mixing and melding with the lightly seasoned yellow rice. The beef, you discover from the chew of the meat, is tender and juicy, adding its own flavor to the mix of things. It is after the second small swallow of food do you feel something tingling within your throat. At first, you think it is the magic infused within the food, the prickles of heat poking and prodding all the way down your throat. It slowly grows uncomfortable, a burning sensation slowly taking place of the simple tingling one. You swallow a little bit more, attempting to shift the discomfort away from the wonderful flavor of the food.

You continue to swallow, the heat slowly building uncomfortably like an inferno beginning to flick its tendrils out in greeting. Once the final piece of food washes down your throat with quick haste, everything within burns. It still tastes delicious, the spices coating your cheeks and tongue, but the burning sensation slowly took away the taste of these flavors, replacing it with a burning need for some liquid. Still, you stare evenly at the kid, watching his face for any signs of mockery.

‘Holdit.Justholditalittlelonger.’

The heat continues to grow, the inferno mockingly laughing at you as you attempt to swallow some saliva in hopes of quelling the heat. It only intensifies. You feel sweat begin to bead at the top of your head, the wet salty droplets coating the strands in a sickly greasy feeling. Heat tips the edge of your ears, the warmth attempting to spread further than that one point.

“Aww. I guess you are right after all.” The boy sighs, a slight pout on his lips. You mentally cheer, grabbing the cup with a slow, controlled movement.

‘AtthispointifthedrinkispoisonedIdonotgivedamn.’

You take a rather large sip, allowing the smooth wisp of magic to quell the heat within your body. It is fruity, the hints of sweet raspberries and blackberries muddling together along with a crisp, sharp tang of lemon. Water is added to fill the concoction, but it tastes off, almost like a fruity water but sharper, cleaner. It is hard to distinguish what exactly was wrong with it.

“Are you ready for the grand masterpiece?” The kid’s grin grows wide, his eyes twinkling as brightly as the brass knobs on the amour. You unconsciously nod your head, your eyes skimming
over to the awaiting lava cake. He hands you a clean fork, the metal shining in the light as though it were the knight’s holy grail itself. As if in slow motion, you carefully swing the fork dead center of the squishy concoction, watching with glee as the spongy cake gives way, keeping its form as it slices through its unbaked center. The fork taps the plate, the ceramic talking for a moment. Chocolate silences the plate’s protest, the thick shimmering river of chocolate peeking out from the crack down the center. As you pull the cake away, you repress a groan as the cake releases all the thick, hot chocolate all over the plate. Residue chocolate not wishing to leave its home soaks into the cake, the nooks and crannies filled with the heated goodness.

You carefully pull a small piece of cake from the corner, the sponge slicing off with little to no resistance. The bottom of the beautifully crafted cake slides through the chocolate molten sauce, clinging desperately to the cake. Once the liquid knows where its final destination is headed, a small dollop of it falls back into the puddle, the rest remaining fast on the cake. You carefully stare at the crafted beauty, your mouth watering at the sight of a dear friend after so long. The goodness slides easily past your parted lips, chocolate leaving a slight trail along the pink flesh. You repress a shudder that races through your body, your throat letting out an involuntarily moan of pure bliss. ‘Holy shit…’

The cake is soft, airy as a cloud with a little bit of denseness from the sauce. It squishes easily without much force, the little bits mingling with the sauce. The sauce coats your tongue, the delectable goo adding the best part to the entire cake. It is slightly hot but not spicy, like a lingering taste of fire without the flame. The sweet taste of the cocoa muddles the fire significantly, yet allows it to shine for a small moment as it races to the back of your throat.

“Good right? It’s Muffet’s most popular item on the menu.” The kid takes a small piece than yours, carefully running the piece through the chocolate. He pops it in with little grace, his own moan of pleasure passing through his lips. You ignore the child and his small pleasure bound spell about the cake, enjoying the perfection in front of you with slow, controlled difficulty. Vaguely you hear the boy mutter something about “not having spiders in this batch” but you choose to ignore him, opting to believe he is talking to a voice in his head.

‘This is liquid perfection…god it is so rich and delicate…it really has been too long since I have indulged in such plesantries.’

The cake is sadly gone after a few more moments, the kid allowing you the final sad bites of your personal heaven. There is a sudden rap at the door, the knob immediately turning after the sudden intrusion. The boy twists to the person, his head immediately going into a bow.

“Welcome back Mistress.” Your face scrunches in confusion, your eyes scanning over the boy like he has three heads. There is a quiet “Ahuhuhu~” in response to his greeting, prompting your eyes to the door. They immediately widen at the sight before you.

A spider monster stands within the doorway, two of her hands crossing over her nearly flat chest while the other four busy themselves with things in the hall. She wears a crisp white undershirt, the sleeve ends expertly cuffed and ironed to prevent any type of wrinkle. She adorns herself with a dark purple vest, the color of it the perfect likeness to the wall color. She wears another variation of purple on her dress pants, the lines hiding her thin legs beneath. Bright rose pink skates hold her feet hostage, the yellow wheels easily gliding over the surface without a hiccup. Dark locks of nearly black hair are pulled into two side pigtailed, the ends flaring out like a cheerleader’s pom pom glued in the open position. It is none of this nor her slightly rounded features that puts you off guard. Nor is it the fangs that glisten as she opens her mouth in a polite smile, a trickle of something green caressing the tips. No, it is the five-purple bug-like eyes that stare back at you, their angularity making it
difficult to gauge the monster’s true reasoning.

“Why hello my dear.” The monster purrs, her voice tinkling like a windchime. There is a slight roughness at the end of her sentence, the magical flow suddenly cut abruptly. You glare at the woman, a frown creasing the corners of your lips. She lets out a slight chuckle once more, her one hand coming up to hide her fangs from your view.

“No need to look so hostile my dear. I am simply coming to inquire about your well-being.”

‘She’s lying.’

The voice suddenly within your head snaps, their voice low and growling.

‘This is probably one of the queen’s bitches reporting into her royal assholeness about your whereabouts.’

“My that is quite a…glare you are giving…” The boy vibrates next to you anxiously, his eyes glancing between the spider monster and you. The world warbles for a flash of a second, the colors melding into patches of the black, voidless domain. As soon as you blink, they vanish as though they never existed, the two creatures looking at you with an indescribable look. Tense silence fills the empty space, the sound of her hands scraping along the outside and inside of the door nearly mute. A charm-like sound fills the silence of the room, spooking not only you but the male next to you. A small screen lights up in the spider’s breast pocket, one of the hands reaching with practiced ease to pull out a small purple phone.

“Hello~?” The monster answers, one of her many eyes keeping you within her line of sight. Your face drains of color slightly as the voice comes over the small intercom, the quick flash of sound enough to know who she is talking to. The sunshine bells of a small child, their voice light with the promise if mischief and laughter. Their screams permanently stained onto your soul as a silent vow to never allow that to happen again.

Chara.

You do not waste a moment, taking the opportunity dart up and over the bed, nearly missing the arms ready to encircle your waist. There is a shout, words falling on deaf ears. Muffet does not stop you as you nearly knock the tall lanky monster over, a shrug of her shoulders as she tells Chara on the other line the events happening. You pay neither thing any mind, racing through the long hallways towards freedom. A shiver races down your spine as you round another corner, the dark voice appearing once more.

‘You feel your sins imbedding into your skin.’

Chapter End Notes

My Georgia readers! I am visiting my husband’s home state (which is a 16 hour drive) for the week. This results in less than 3 hours a day sleeping (due to snoring) and very poor access to internet from the hotel room (I saw some dogs roaming the hallways). Anywho! I understand that this chapter ultimately sucks and I apologize for it. It is not as put together as I would like and generally has no sense of where to go. On a positive note, hopefully the chapter after this monster will be a hell lot better. Also, if you guys have never been White Water Rafting: do it. You may get thrown, you may feel like
you are drowning a bit, but it is ultimately worth it. Phones and glasses and anything of value, cars people. Small rant/excitement but thank you all for reading!~
“…and that is what happened.” Chara concludes, the cup of tea left alone through the duration of the talk. The clock ticks painfully loud behind her, her hair shielding her face from the outside world.

‘There. I did it. I finally told mom.’ Despite the shiver of relief within her soul, a deep sense of dread lingers over it, the color darkening.

Dried tears stain her face, the recollection of memory retelling blurring with the time, the events smudging together as though her mind is trying to rid it. She feels her eyes threatening to close in exhaustion, the dried orbs barely keeping focus on the carpeted floor beneath her feet. Her bare feet remain stagnant, the once nervous energy long gone. Chara can hear her mother attempting to stifle her sobs into her hands, her other hand wrapping securely around her shoulder. The warmth is comforting, the fluffy fur emitting small pulses of her soul energy, attempting to heal the scars within. Her soul beats painfully in jest, the invisible stitches keeping the red soul from shattering completely.

‘And it was all thanks to sis…I hope she is okay…’

Chara stares at the cellphone in her hand, the bright red device lighting up with a picture of the three of you. Chara stares into the camera, her tanned arm outstretched to hold the camera in place. Her cheeks are rosy, a wide toothy grin squinting her eyes close, the corners crinkling in delight. Frisk stands to the right of the camera, his eyes alight with mischief, a smirk perking up the corner of his face. In the middle of the two, you appear to be slightly animated, your face contorted into a scowl and confusion. Your hair is disheveled, the strands askew from previous roughhousing minutes before. Your cheeks glow with a slight warmth despite the look on your face. You appear to be having a hard time determining who you should be looking at, the image freezing at you starting to turn away from Chara. Chara smiles at the memory reflecting at her.

Breakfast went on without a hitch, conversation minimal for the early hours of the Dreemurr household. Toriel remains in the kitchen to clean up the morning mess, shooing the children off into the living room. The children walk out of the kitchen, stomachs full of the delicious cooking only Toriel could possible whip up. Chara bounces ahead of the group, her boundless energy ceasing to quit even after a full meal.

“What do you guys want to do now?” She glances between the two siblings, her smile falling a bit when you and Frisk merely shrug your shoulders. Chara digs her foot into the floor, her body swaying from the tip to the ball of her feet. She releases a huff of exasperation, her hands flying above her head.

“Come on you two! Surely there is something we can do!” You shrug your shoulders at her once more, taking the time to glance at the child for a moment.
“I don’t really care Chara.” Frisk signs to his sibling, his fingers whipping out his cell phone to type something out. She looks to you expectantly, her face falling into a scowl as you mutely agree with her brother. Chara makes a tisking sound, her cheeks puffing out in anger. She nearly brings her hands into fists at her side, the urge to stomp her foot like Sans itching her instincts.

“Well we can’t do nothing!” You raise your eyebrow in her direction, a coy response on the tip of your lips. Frisk lifts his head from his phone, a blank expression directed at his hyperactive sister.

“We can and we will.” Frisk boldly responds, taking your hand with his free hand, the other typing away at something on his phone. You give her a fleeting apologetic look before directing your attention to Frisk, your head bobbing in response to something. Chara deflates slightly, her determination flaring in protest as the two of you begin to walk in the opposite direction. She glances around the room, her ruby eyes lighting up at the pillows lining the corners of the living room sofa. The soft, inviting squares scream with glee as Chara eyes them a second longer, their screams escalating as she picks one up. She slowly turns around, her body moving to get a running jump start. Her feet slap against the floor, her toes pushing off in hopes to gain speed. The pillow slowly rises over her head, her fingers tightening around the fabric as she brings it behind her head.

“Hyah!” The pillow sails through the air, time appearing to slow down. You hear the attack a mile away, your mind demanding you move out of the way and attack the projectile. The other half knows it is nothing more than something stuffed with cotton, the hit will barely register on your radar of pain. You carefully lift Frisk into your arms, his steady paced conversation jolting with the sudden movement. You spin your bodies around much to Frisk’s confusion until he sees the pillow flying by. He demands you put him down, wriggling and squirming to no avail. With a satisfying ‘flop!’ the pillow contacts his face, a grunt escaping as it pushes shock out of his lungs. The pillow brushes under your chin, the corners barely sharp enough to do any damage. You glance down at Frisk, his eyes alight with a mischievous look. Your eyes immediately dart to the female, a wicked smirk gracing her face. They each take one look at the other, their heads simultaneously spinning to get a better look at you. It is then your eyes widen, your hands immediately dropping the boy as you back away. They are both filled with determination.

Chara chuckles at the picture once more, the day vivid in her memory. She remembers taking the picture shortly after the war, you coming out as the obvious victor against the two determined souls. For a moment, you were allowed to be a kid again, your laughter still ringing through Chara’s ears.

‘Even though she comes off as harsh and cruel, she really is a softie on the inside.’

Her grip tightens on the phone.

‘It is all the more reason we need to bring her home.’

With determination fueling her actions, Chara unlocks the device. Quick, deft fingers flicker over the keys, the number appearing on the screen within a few seconds. Her finger slaps down on the call button, the dial tone immediately meeting her ears as she brings it to her face. It rings only for a fraction of a second, the line connecting almost immediately with the soft tinkling of Muffet’s voice.

“Hello~?” Chara feels Toriel’s quizzical gaze against the side of her head, the goat mother relaying her confusion to her child. Chara looks through the curtain of her hair at her mother. Toriel notes the look within the child’s eyes, her mind demanding answers while her soul understands the situation.

“Hey Muffet. I was wondering if maybe I could talk to X.” Toriel stiffens slightly beside her child, but Chara ignores her obvious protest. There is a clatter of things on the other line, a voice shouting in the background, and a gust of air brushing past the microphone. Muffet giggles over the line, the
clutter of noise silencing almost immediately as it came.

“Oh my. I do believe she has stepped out for a moment.”

“She ran off when she heard my voice didn’t she?”

“Now I didn’t say that my dear.” Muffet giggles quietly over the line. Chara sighs, her fingers pushing painfully into the electronics’ side. Faintly she can make out some sort of clicking noise on the other side, rapid enough to be a conversation but quiet enough that the words mute over the speaker. Something clicks within her mind, her grip relaxing a fraction.

“You are sending some spiders out to look for her aren’t you?” There is a beat of silence over the line, the clicking trickling with finality.

“You are too smart for your own good.” Muffet praises.

“Yes, I am sending a few of my shifters out to find and possibly detain her. I told them if she looks hostile to back away and report on her whereabouts only. ‘Z’ is especially eager to go out and “find his hero”. Ahuhu~” Chara pulls the phone away from her ear slightly, glancing up at her mother with bright, hopeful eyes. Toriel’s eyes begin to water, hope flickering across her amethyst eyes.

“Thank you Muffet. Your help is truly appreciated.” Another pause on the other line, all movement ceasing to the quiet static of the line.

“It is an honor to be of use to you…. Your majesty.”

You keep running, the city around you blurring into nothing more than color swatches and lights. There are people you push through, their words and grunts of irritation blending into a high pitch ringing sound. You want to cover your ears, to stop, to make the noise go away. Your feet keep moving however, the rawness of the gravel, the uneven pavement crushing into the souls of your feet.

‘You fucking idiot! You forgot to put on your shoes before you ran away! How stupid can you be?! You might as well get fucking tetanus or something while we are at it!’

The terrain begins to shift slightly around you, the lights dimming a fraction, the noise slowly muddling down to a soft noise.

‘And what was that?! Letting the kid you just rescued from a situation he probably put himself into only get shot! I mean, who the hell does this kind of thing?!”

The colors mute to neutral tones, the scenery flashing strips of grey washed colors with a few flashes of yellow lights from the lamps above. The loud city noise squeal no longer plagues your eardrums, the softer notes of the residential area providing nature feedback. You do not falter in step, the ground beneath your feet shifting from gravel to grass, houses morphing into trees. Civilian life recedes behind you, the density of wildlife surrounding you on all sides.

‘I knew I should have stayed away! I should have ignored their stares! Their kindness!’

A tree branch slashes at your arm, the wood digging deep into the flesh, snapping a few seconds later from the tree.
‘I should have pretended kind monsters did not exist! Monsters, like humans, bring nothing but trouble in their wake!’

Something digs painfully into the arch of your foot, a shock of pain itching up your leg. You continue forward.

“I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO HIM!” The words pierce through your lips into the night sky, the sound echoing a short distance before disappearing into the sound of the city. Your legs finally give, the strain from your injury over the long distance draining the remainder of your stamina. Your knees hit the grassy terrain with a hard ‘thud!’ the damp earth soaking slowly through the thin protection. Grass blades thread through the gaps between your fingers, bending to your will as your fingers curl them inward. The sounds of the forest chirp silently in tune with the sound of the city below, the small illumination of lights hidden behind your hair.

“I…should have just…” Pain welds up within your chest, deafening the frantic beats of your heart. Tension swells up into your head, the tightness coursing through every muscle, every nerve. They coil and contract, the tension causing muting the world around you. Your gaze mists with liquid, the small river wasting no time smacking down to the ground. The world is dark around you, the liquid seeming to continue flowing much to your protest.

“I just…”

‘Just what? You know what you are now: an abomination. No creature, monster or human would take you in without wanting to control you. Without wanting your power.’

You shake your head in denial. “That’s not true…”

‘It is true. A creature with your power…the ability to destroy a world without even thinking about it. The doc created a mass murdering machine and you are the product.’

“I don’t want to…”

‘You don’t have a choice in the matter. Eventually he will come to collect his greatest achievement and then you won’t have to worry about your opinions.’

You lift your head up, your eyes blurrily opening to the city. A soft orange glow covers the invisible dome around the city, the smog from the pollution adding a dream-like effect to the image. Lights flash in the main districts, the colors and sounds brighter than the surrounding street lamps of houses. There are a few car sounds rushing above the sounds, their blaring horns breaking the peaceful night with a shrill cry. The others race by with no care, their bodies creating a wind-like effect down the roads. People in large numbers talk in the main hubs, their sounds merging with the calls of the music. The outskirts remain quiet, the occasional headlight piercing through the faint glow it emits. Your brain commits it all to memory, from the faint flicker of light from a flashing building to the soft smell of pine from the whispering trees behind you. You take in the feel of the cool blades between your flesh, their wavy stems slipping through your fingertips. The way the dew on the grass melts into your pant legs, wetting the warm flesh beneath. Everything feels surreal and real at the same time, like a dream you wish to hold onto for a second longer.

Your soul screams in protest as determination flares through it, the reasoning beyond what your cumulation wishes to do. It begs you to stop, it screams at you to reconsider your actions as you push yourself off the ground to stand. A gentle breeze whips through your locks, drying the tears stained against your face. It is cool, refreshing, like a kiss of a stone-cold lover.

“Hey!” Your back stiffens, the hairs along your arm sticking up on edge. You hear the patter of feet
stepping through a field of grass, the frantic shout of a familiar male voice talking to another being. A few seconds later, a pale body appears through the brush, his skin illuminated against the dark backdrop. You slowly turn your head to meet the gaze of the spider’s lackey, his hair swept at an odd angle due to the pieces of debris through it. His ruby eyes are wild, the shine illuminated by the paleness of his form. Another body shortly appears after him, their identity hidden by a thin, black robe. You can make out a wisp of white hair flowing out of the entrance of the hood, but otherwise the magic they possess blocks your sight.

“Hey…X…Come on. This isn’t funny to even consider!” The kid shines a look of fear, the flicker of emotion fleeting to a warm, bright face.

“You have a family at home. Some kids waiting for their big sisters return.” He takes a single step forward. His hooded figure friend remains stationary, their hands resting at their side. Despite the wind blowing at the fabric, no form is made.

“A mother wishing for her daughter’s return…” The kid takes another step forward, his eyes locking onto yours. You see emotions flicker across the vibrant orbs, the color representing a familiar trait of a red human soul. You shake your head lowly at the kid, the tears threatening to spill at any given moment. He extends a hand forward, a gesture of kindness. His eyes read: don’t do it.

“…A friend…” Your hands shoot out immediately, your magic springing into action. Shimmering needles of thread dart out of your palm into his direction. The kid’s shocked expression catches you for a moment, the robbed body having to move him out of the way as the threads extend to his location. You fling your fingertips gracefully, weaving each strand into the other. They dance and spin around each other, tying off one end only to start a new strand. Time shifts oddly for a second, the strands appearing to weave slowly despite a nearly completed wall in its wake. It makes you anxious, nervous almost. As though someone is messing with time itself. Your eyes narrow in on the robbed figure, their hands covered in a dark cloth, concealing their features further. Their arm wraps around the kid’s arm, holding him back or from harm’s way you are not sure.

“…I have none of those. I think you have me mistaken for someone else stranger.” Your voice hangs heavily in the air. The words are thick like sap in your throat, the lump making it hard to breathe. Your soul screeches in defiance, the small being thrusting against your ribcage. Your body winces, but remains sturdy, keeping the annoyance in place. The kid shakes off the hooded figure’s grasp, whispering something within their ear before facing you. He walks forward with an astounding amount of confidence, his spine tall, his soul illuminating with a warm glow. The kid stops within a few feet of the barrier, his eyes boring into yours before glancing down at your chest.

“You know, your soul refuses to believe what you are trying to do.” He whispers to you, the voice softer than the breeze sweeping by. You feel your eyes widen as his gaze shifts upward, a lopsided grin on his face.

“Now stop this foolishness X. Your soul does not wish this of you, and I think…” He reaches forward, his fingers brushing the woven barrier for a brief second. The magic growls in response, the threads pushing his fingers off. The kid looks excited at this revelation, the emotion wiping off his face just as quickly.

“I don’t think you want to do this. You think no one cares about you, do you?” He gives you no time to respond, the stupid smile growing larger on his face despite the initial shock.

“Well they do! I hear boss talk about you sometimes to Grillby and your mom! You have a younger brother named Frisk and a younger sister named Chara who both love you unconditionally despite everything. Even the skeleton brothers who I hear do not take to anyone lightly, come over to visit constantly much to your distain on the matter.” Your feet take a step backward, your eyes narrowing
accusingly.

‘He’s lying. Of course Toriel or Muffet would put him up to this. They just want my powers for their own devices, enough to send this poor sap to his death.’

“You love to play music all the time on your i-pod and dance when no one is watching!”

You take another step back, tears spilling from the slits in your eyes. The world is blurry around you, the beat of your heart racing through the static in your head. You can faintly make out his form pushing into the barrier, his fingers causing a current of static to push him away. He holds fast.

“You say you hate doing things with everyone because it is annoying but they know you secretly enjoy it and that is why they do it!”

You shake your head in denial, your heel brushing the last bit of ground before the drop.

‘I need to do this. To save myself now before things get worse. Before I actually begin to…’

You open your mouth, a sad smile gracing the corners of your lips. You cannot see what the kid looks like, his words lost onto deaf ears.

“I’m sorry…”

You take the final step back, allowing gravity to pull your body down with it. You feel him hit the magical barrier repetitively, the muffle of his voice lost on the wind. The air is cool as you fall, the tendrils hugging every crevice of your body it can get to. It feels like your body is remaining stagnant, suspended, like you are laying on the sky rather than falling to your death.

‘The stars are beautiful when there is no city to block their shine…I wonder…have they always looked this bright when I was little?’

You close your eyes, the tears flying away from your face.

‘Funny…I thought I would die still trapped in that hell hole…But now…’

You extend your arms out, a giggle of glee surpassing your lips.

The first day of freedom, the fear of waking up in a hospital, thinking it was another encampment.

The kind smile, the patient hand waiting for your response. There is a twinkle in her eyes, as though she already knows your answer. She smells of home: yellow buttercups and cinnamon.

The children. The familiar face of Chara as she gives you a hug after a long day of school. The cool collected smirk of Frisk, his soul greeting you with a thrum of warmth.

The pranks between the three of you despite your obvious protests. Secretly though, you enjoyed every second of it.

The skeletons. The hyperactive active one always smiling and giving you new things of his to try. Of course you did politely, eating it all even when he wasn’t looking. Secretly, a small part of you looks forward to those meals.

The annoying asshole brother with his witty, hurtful puns. How he reeks of cigarettes and citrus. It has become a familiar smell to the living room couch.

Memories flash behind your closed lids, each one eliciting one more tear into the sky. They cause
you to look at yourself from a third perspective, your feelings shining strongly with the thoughts.

Walking in through the front door of Toriel’s house, the crowd of people greeting a stranger. **I want to call this a home.** Chara demanding that you all sit down and watch the new episode of Napstaton. The way she kicks her feet on the floor, occasionally tapping Frisk’s foot respectively. **I love having siblings that I can protect.** Sans constant barging into the house unannounced, his excitement bubbling over to the house members. Papyrus follows in shortly after his brother, his quick wit bringing collective groans from the party. **It is nice when the skeletons come over, even if they hate me.** The smell of Toriel’s butterscotch cinnamon pie, the slices larger than your head. **I love mom’s cooking.** The small male coming over to talk to you after a particularly stressful day, his head resting in your lap as you run your fingers through his hair. **I love Frisk’s quiet but blunt nature.** The small female bouncing over with limitless energy, her smile infectious as she brings you to her room for a tea party. **I love Chara’s charm despite what she has gone through.**

**I love this new life.**

Gravity feels stronger here, the world accelerating around you faster than the free fall. You know the impact is coming in a few seconds, your final seconds in this lifetime to absorb everything and nothing all at once. You feel branches snap against your arms, the wood scraping against the flesh. You absorb the pain as the last feeling before you impact.

“I’m sorry…”

Your words fall into the wind as your body coils in preparation of the impact.

…

You wait a few seconds, the rush of the air completely still, the forest chirping quietly around you.

…

A prickle of familiar electrical energy rushes across your chilled skin. A cold feeling of dread rests heavily within your chest.

…

Your eyes snap open and sure enough, a faint orange glow encases your body. The orange glow hums with a familiar energy, the gravitational powers keeping you in place instead of pieces on the ground. Tears immediately spring into your dry eyes, your angry glare searching for the user of the magic.

“Heh kid. You really shouldn’t fall for someone like me. After all, one slip up can cause some airy consequences.”

‘No…’

Red filters in your vision, your head swinging into the direction of the voice. A silhouette stands just outside of the ridge of the forest, the faint glow of orange illuminating from a pinpoint.

“**LET ME GO YOU ASSHOLE!**” You scream hoarsely, your body flailing about in the bubble of orange magic. It shifts with your form, the magic expanding and contracting like a well-made rubber ball.

‘Of course it was this asshole! It is always this asshole! He has to fucking ruin everything!’
“Nah.” The said skeleton walks out from the shadows, his left palm ablaze with orange energy much like his left eye. A cigarette he always seems to have glows bright orange with the burning material, the smoke wisp ascending to the sky. He looks calm, collected, like he is coming to scoop up a child and not someone who nearly committed suicide. It fills you with rage.

“PUT ME DOWN! I DIDN’T WANT TO LIVE YOU ASSHOLE! WHY DID YOU...!” You shoot the skeleton a lethal glare, the tears racing faster down your face. A hiccup pushes past your lips, your lungs struggling to breathe. The air within your chest does not feel enough, the tightening feeling clawing and squeezing your lungs. Short bursts of air shoot up your throat, the hiccups gaining momentum as a sob races behind it. It is heart wrenching, your soul crying in both joy of life and of the pain you endure. You curl into yourself, grabbing your knees with your arms as the magic carefully lowers you to the ground. Your fingers dig painfully into your legs, the crudely pulled nails digging small trenches into the flesh.

“WHY COULDN’T YOU JUST LET ME DIE PAPYRUS!” You scream, the world blurs, every motion swaying your center of gravity in some direction. Sobs wrack through your body, your frame shivering and convulsing under the immense emotional strain. It is what you imagine falling is like: a painful, emotional ride riddled with regrets and closure. Beneath your chest, your soul cracks, the small being slowly splintering old wounds open in its grief. It feels like water is swimming within your chest, the lifeforce syphoning out into the cavity as the wound splinters. The words of regret begin to spill out without the filter, your mind tired, wishing for the end.

“I should have just died back then. I should have let everyone kill me and then everything would be okay…” You hiccup to yourself, your hands leaving your knees to wrap around your torso in a poor attempt to contain the convulsions. It only causes them to increase as your words rush out frantically.

“I should have been like the rest, just give up on life and hope the next is better. I should have let them all kill me instead of striving to be better, striving for survival. All for what? Some chance to look at the stars again? To be free? It is a laugh…” A dry humorless laugh escapes your raw throat, hiccups making it harder to breathe through it.

“Yet I tried right? I tried to be the best, to gain his favor so that maybe, just maybe…” You let out a shaky sigh.

“It means nothing now though right? It just means I am broken. Broken without fixing. Broken things must be…” You feel something drape over the top of your head, the material warm against the chilled flesh. You cannot smell much, the congestion heavy within your nasal cavity, but you can faintly make out the smell of cigarette smoke. Your hands instinctively reach up for the item, the material worn to a soft texture, the threads easily stretched due to constant wear. Through bleary eyes you make out the worn orange material that usually makes up Papyrus’ attire. You stare at the article as though it is nothing and everything wrapped into one, the fabric falling from your shocked hands. Through the pulsing in your ears, you hear Papyrus sigh, his bones clacking as he shifts his position.

“Kid.” The gruff voice, the smell of smoke washing over your face despite his lack of lungs. It flutters a strand out of your face for a few seconds.

“Look at me kid.” Your body refuses to function, the system giving out from the over exhaustion of emotions. The hiccups die within your throat, the muscle dry as sandpaper, your tongue sticking to the roof of your mouth. The world is cold and warm, sweet and bitter, black and white and color. There is life and there is death.

‘Where do I fall?’

Something soft brushes under your chin, the digit carefully pushing your chin into an upright
position. A singular glowing socket greets your face, the orange glow emitting a warmth throughout your body. The other socket remains dark, the bleakness promising death, destruction, and ever torturous pain. You let out a small whimper, your eyes slowly shutting, your body shifting to lean toward the skeleton. He holds you carefully with his other hand, the digits slipping something over your head. The fabric is soft, the material stretching over your form with little resistance. It contains a small pocket of heat within, the material trapping it against your shivering form.

“Easy there kid. We are going to get you somewhere safe. Can you stand?” You cock your head to the side, your brows furrowing at the question.

‘What does he mean can I stand? Of course I…’ The moment you attempt to shift from your fetal position, pain ignites your nerve endings. It feels as though an inferno burns with a passion of a thousand suns, the blood attempting to quench the fire to no avail. You let out a whimper, the world swaying sideways. Black spots begin to coat your vision, concealing parts of the area with perfect circular dots. You vaguely hear Papyrus mutter a curse under his breath as the spots begin expanding. The world falls on deaf ears once the final dot covers the remainder of your vision.

Papyrus looks down at your passed-out form, the human form expended of its reserves. Your chest rises and falls with some hesitancy, but otherwise you are alive.

‘Well at least I think alive.’

He curses to himself again, casting a glare at your sleeping form. Your hair splays wildly around the grass around your head, the short dark strands nearly lost within the blades. Your skin is pale, paler than Papyrus has ever seen with a tinge of blue staining the outline. He may not know the human anatomy well enough, but he knows that humans under no circumstance should be blue.

He sighs, brushing a stray lock out of your face. You look serene, the permanent scowl completely washed away into a neutral line, your eyes closed off from the world. Angelic would be the word he would use on anyone else.

“Hey! Did you get her in time?!” Muffet’s spiderling, Zanos, races down the mountainside, beads of sweat perspiring through his artificial skin. Papyrus did not question the spider queen’s power or that of her spiders, but it did unnerve him that they could be anyone on the street, their disguises flawless.

“Yeah.” He responds with a small shrug, dropping his cigarette to the floor, crushing the embers with his shoes. Zanos comes into view shortly after, the spider’s appearance fading around the edges slightly, the form appearing disheveled. Behind him, a hooded figure follows like a shadow, their form hidden by Muffet’s special boss magic. The boy races forward, his crimson eyes widening slightly at the sight of you on the ground, your features less than optimal. His legs drop from underneath of him, his knees crunching down onto the soft soil. His pale fingers reach out, the tips hovering briefly over your face. They stall for a moment, the tips barely brushing the surface before collapsing back to his side. His head bows over your form, half his hair falling into his face, the other half windblown.

“Thank god.” He whispers under his breath, the words nearly lost on the soft breeze blowing through the forest. Papyrus feels a twinge in his chest, an odd twist that sours his mood immediately. Something about the spider monster showing great concern, his frame shaking slightly from shock, ruby eyes holding back the drips of tears running down his face, the fingers shakily reaching out to caress…it makes his soul squeeze.
“Odd…it is doing that again. This may be a serious ailment that must be attended to immediately.’

“Zanos.” The female voice echoes through the hood, her tone cold. The spider shakes his head wearily at the figure, his gaze opening to her as though they are having a silent conversation. Papyrus takes this moment to move in, his feet moving on their own accord as he nears your body. Without thinking, he scoops your frame up, cradling your head in the crook of his bone. You do not shift, your head lolling lifelessly as though you are already dead. Zanos stands in attention after a second, his body fulling facing Papyrus, his shoulders squared back.

He looks ready to say something, something of a challenge to the skeleton, only to back down with a huff. Zanos opts to carefully move a few stray hairs out of your face, the tear stains prominent in the glow of the moon. A growl breaks the kid away from Papyrus, ruby eyes widening, a cloaked figure immediately appearing at Zanos’ side. It takes Papyrus a moment to realize the animalistic sound is from him, his spinal column vibrating, his magic flaring to life in his left eye. He cannot stop it however, the power overflowing like an over charged battery. Something within growls in tune with his hum, his soul cheering triumphantly as he pulls your body closer. The spider monster looks at you quizzically, his humanoid eyebrows raising in challenge, a knowing smirk on his lips.

“Come on sis. It is probably time we return to the mistress. You know how she is if we are out past curfew.” The clothed figure nods, her hand reaching out to grab Zanos. He flashes her a knowing smile, directing his gaze back to the frowning skeleton.

“I may not know you mister Papyrus and frankly I don’t give a shit. It is in the mistress’ orders that we do not take her right here right now. But I will leave you with this warning.” The aura around the spider monster grows dark, the light immediately vanishing into a black hole, devoid of color. The spider’s human form morphs, the skin ripping from the body, pieces melting to the floor like hot wax. A hot, heavy feeling coats the air with a thickness, like a humid day with no breeze. Papyrus does not falter in his stance, his phalanges digging deeper into his hoodie wrapped securely over your body. A giggle, a giggle mixing on the border of deranged and mechanical whips through the air, the spider nowhere to be seen. The only indication that Papyrus has of his whereabouts is the single glowing eye within the dark, the colors morphing from crimson to scarlet.

“Treat my hero poorly and we will annex her from you with or without the Queen’s wishes. These orders come from Muffet herself.” The bleak black world sucks itself to a focal point, color and surrounding ambience returning as though nothing has occurred. The spider’s skin is back in place, a dimwitted smile gracing his flushed cheeks.

“Well, we must be off! Do give our regards to the Queen!” The two figures turn, their backs walking along the side of the mountainous cliff until darkness swallows them whole. Papyrus stands there for a moment longer, his void sockets gazing at the nonexistent backsides with his own warning. He sighs after a moment, shaking his head out of whatever funk he appears to have found himself in.

“I really have to lay off the honey.”

Chapter End Notes

So I will be finishing school come May 5th and at the same time I will be picking up more hours at work. This is not an excuse as to not posting more of a just in case it is a day or two late. Thank you to all my readers for making it this far through some of the drab! I look forward to seeing people reading it and commenting and just liking it!
Things should get slightly more interesting from here on out!
“How is she mom?” Chara asks quietly as her mother steps out of your room once more. Toriel sighs, shaking her head at her child. Three days. It has been three days since Papyrus brought you back to the household to numerous worried bodies. Your complexion has not improved in the slightest, the skin ashen like death itself, your eyes vacant, darkness swallowing the color. Your lips splinter with numerous cracks trailing the pale pink surface, dried bits of blood clotting along the flesh as though to patch the damage. Pink and red splotches scratch along the pale surface of your body, the blood long dried as the body patches beneath.

“She jumped off a cliff Tor. By the time I got to her she was falling through a tree line.” Toriel sighs, gliding her fingers through Chara’s hair. It is smooth under her touch, the tendrils slipping back into place. If it was not for the fact Toriel could see your chest rise and fall, she would assume Papyrus brought back the corpse of her new child.

“Am I allowed to see her today?” Again, Toriel shakes her head, gently ushering the small child forward.

“Perhaps she will be well enough to have visitors tomorrow my dear. Come, let us make her some Butterscotch Cinnamon pie together.” A look of determination settles across the small child’s face as she eagerly nods.

“I will go get Frisk to help too! Maybe if we all work on it, it will help her get better faster!” Chara rushes ahead of Toriel, her little legs flicking back with every stride as she searches for her brother. Toriel smiles sadly to herself, quietly mulling over the thoughts within her head. It has been three days since you have returned, two of those days you have not eaten a single piece of food brought to you. If, with the help of Sans and Papyrus, they do manage to get something down your throat, you immediately throw it back up as soon as they leave. Anytime Sans or Toriel would attempt to talk with you, your vacant stare would leave the window, the voids staring at the speaker. It makes Toriel’s soul shiver and cry every time she walks into the room, her soul wishing to reach out to apologize, to comfort you. The feeling of dread builds within the Queen’s soul, all signs prevalent to the only monster sickness she is familiar with. Faintly in the background, she can hear Chara rushing into her brother’s room, her animated voice muffled by the dividing walls.

‘My poor child…It is truly my fault for not understanding the situation at hand. At this rate, it is only a matter of time before…’ She shakes her head, a sigh escaping through her nostrils. Chara’s small form races down the hall once more, Frisk literally dragged despite his legs attempting to cause traction. A smile immediately slips onto the Queen’s face as the two approach, their cheeks flush with a light pink, their breaths coming out in small pants.

‘It is best not to think of the worst-case. The children need me to be strong, a beacon of reassurance.’

“Mom! Frisk says he will help us make big sis a get-well pie!” Chara bares her pearly whites up at
her mother, the quiet boy rolling his copper hues at his sister. Toriel giggles quietly behind a paw, the other carefully ruffling the top of Chara’s head.

“Did he now? Frisk? Is this true my child?” Toriel looks up at the young boy, watching with slight amusement as a faint blush crosses his features. His gaze hardens at his mother, a soft huff flaring his nostrils open. His hands immediately wave in front of his face, the familiar lettering of sign language speaking his words.

“It’s only to make sure she eats something and so everyone stops worrying. Jeez mom!”

Toriel lets out a bark of laughter, the weight of the situation lightens considerably on her old soul. Frisk scoffs at his mother, yanking his hand out of his sister’s grasp only to cross it over his chest.

“It isn’t funny.”

“You are quite right my child. Forgive me.” The Queen slowly settles her laughter to a soft chuckle, her free hand opening slowly in the child’s direction.

“Come my children. Let us get started.” The two nod, determination flaring deep within their souls as they take their mother’s hand, making their way to the kitchen.

You sigh, curling into the warmth of the blanket. The stars are long gone, the sun poking rays through the curtains swaying in the vent’s breeze. The warm beams reach out into the dark room, seeking, searching for a sign of life.

‘It won’t find anything here.’ You think bitterly, curling your free arm closer to your chest. There is a slow, steady rhythm beating within your chest, the speed lower than normal, pumping small rivers of iron enriched cells across the body. Air struggles in and out of your raw lungs, each tickle of cilia causing your lungs to contract, your diaphragm to contract in preparation of a cough. Your mind is numb, the static within a blessing and a curse. It can be too loud sometimes, the thrum of static pulsing painfully across your mind.

You roll over onto your back, staring aimlessly at the ceiling as though it holds all the answers. The paper-thin stars twinkle back at you with a dim green fluorescent glow, the lights slowly fading due to lack of light exposure. They remind you of the stars out in the world, some glowing brighter than others. Some die off, their glow long forgotten in the expansive night sky. It reminds you of life: each person is an individual star within the night sky, trying to compete in brightness, trying desperately to be noticed. Some illuminate a white luminescent shine, their beacon of light drawing most eyes to it more than anything else. Others appear dim, their light squished by those brighter around them or from something within, something keeping them from their own full potential. Any of them could easily die out one day, their light, no matter how bright or dim, could one day vanish and no one would be the wiser. Someone always takes the place of a dead star, replacing it, letting the dead remain forgotten.

Liquid pools in the corners of your eyes, the salt traces burning the red dryness as it cascades down your cheeks, plinking into a small puddle in the crevices within your ears. Your eyes are dry, they feel as though someone ran sandpaper over the ball of nerves. Everything remains slightly out of focus through the onslaught of tears, the bitter saltiness only reassuring your mind that you are a failure.

‘A failure that cannot even commit a suicide right...’ A hiccup surpasses your lips for a brief second,
your throat tightening immediately to silence future ones.

‘Why are they even keeping me alive? I am a parasite. A nobody. I mean nothing to them or to this lifetime. I do not belong here. I should not exist. I am an abomination.’

A sigh makes it ways past your lips, flecks of iron bubble up to the surface through the dry fissures.

‘Why do they even bother trying? They should give up, they should have let me impact only to die a slow, painful death. Police wouldn’t even be able to distinguish the body by the time they actually would have found me.’

The wind slaps against the exterior of the house, the glass and plastic groaning under the sudden onslaught of force. Trees shout at each other, their leaves bristling together as they sway with the wind.

‘I should have run away sooner. I should have allowed myself to get lost, to allow that one bullet to let me bleed out. I should have just died in that facility long ago. Then, just maybe then, I would be in paradise. I would be free without shackles and restraint. I wouldn’t feel like this flesh is tainted, that this body is broken inside and out. I could have been with…’

A soft fabric brushes up against your arm, the material caressing like a patient lover. You turn slightly to the side, your eyes squinting through the tears to make out the offending object. Bright orange stares back at you, the sleeve extended into your bubble. Faint traces of smoke make its way through your stuffed sinuses, the offending smell causing your nose to crinkle.

‘Odd…when did this thing get here?’

You pull the material closer to your body, wincing at the small wisps of smoke following it. It is soft beneath your fingertips, the material feeling silky but sturdy. It is obviously well made having survived at least two battles with you and probably numerous more that you do not know of. Your fingers slip into the sleeve, a soft surprise escaping your lips as your fingers are met with soft tendrils of material.

‘It’s warm but not an itchy warm like most other materials. There does not appear to be any type of wear in it either.’ You quietly snort to yourself, your head musing your hair against the pillow.

‘Then again, the bag of bones has no flesh therefore no sweat which in turn means no real means to wash it.’

The tears slow within your eyes, your fingers pulling the fabric closer like a lifeline.

‘But I wonder, how does an asshole bag of bones manage to find a hoodie so comfortable feeling? Let alone one that fits him so well…almost as if by…’ You roll your eyes, the sockets screaming at the sudden movement.

‘It always boils down to magic doesn’t it. Typical.’

The room slowly begins to darken, the sun’s rays extending like fingers across your floor. You pay it no mind, your brows crinkling in confusion.

‘The real question is why isn’t he wearing it? Why is it in here…in my room…a person…he hates…’

The room falls to darkness, everything fading behind a thick black wall.
“I am worried brother.” Papyrus holds back an eyeroll, glancing over in his brother’s direction. Sans is a mess, his hands consistently wringing his gloves. There is a near permanent crease stretching from his thumb to his pinky, skewering the fabric at an odd angle. Ever since Papyrus brought you to the Queen, everyone is constantly muttering about how worried they are about you, how frail you look. He can admit, having witnessed a near suicide attempt, that you look like utter shit. Then again, anyone wanting to kill themselves would not look their best either.

“I know bro.” Papyrus responds, taking a deep inhale of the nicotine. It processes quickly through the skeleton’s system, giving him an instant high albeit only temporarily. He waits for his brother to make a comment about his smoking habits, a claim that it is bad for his bones and that he is wasting his life with such a “disgusting” habit. Nothing. Papyrus takes another hit of the stick, exhaling after allowing the smog to gather in his artificial lungs. Nothing.

Papyrus looks down at his shorter brother, his eye sockets widening. The skeleton in front of him does not look like his brother, the happy energetic skeleton nowhere to be found. Dark circles line under the eye sockets, the shadows appearing to blend with the voids. The once bright iris filling the void dim to a murky grey color, their confident stare deflated to a small spot on the floor. Even his brother’s ever permanent smile appears forced, fake, like a wax doll. Papyrus turns his full attention to his brother, snubbing out the cancer stick into his ashtray. The wind blows unsteadily within the air, the promise of rain to come hanging heavily in the moisture ridden air.

It is then Papyrus realizes the true state of his brother after the past few days. His armor is no longer crisp, crease lines waving in and out of his grey tee shirt. A sign of “sloppiness” his brother would often say. The battle body no longer shines in direct and indirect lighting, the metal dulls with the collection of pollen and dirt tinting the material. Even his boots, something his brother always keeps clean of dirt and scuffs appears worse for wear, dirt crusting the tip and heel.

“Sans…” He reaches a skeletal hand out to his brother.

“‘I miss her Papyrus…” Papyrus halts his hand, the bones hovering over his shoulder. A small shiver races across the smaller skeleton’s body, his arm reaching across to rub his other one.

“I know she doesn’t trust us…that she doesn’t like us. That she treats us like a disease or something beneath her when we visit. If it were not for the fact that Chara and Frisk appear to like us, I am pretty sure she would be kicking us out at every chance.” Sans laughs dryly, the sound hollow.

“And yet…knowing all of this…I still miss her. I miss the soft smile she shoots the children when they aren’t looking. I miss her snack times after school, how she always has extra available knowing I am almost always there. I miss the way she hums while she is doing chores, unaware of the people around her. Even when she says she hates us…there is a…spark. Like she is lying to herself and others…like she is afraid.”

Papyrus retracts his hand back to his side, his eye sockets staring blankly at the back of his brother’s skull. If his jaw was detachable, it would be through the floor on its way to China right now.

‘How could she have corrupted my brother so deeply that he would feel this way? It is not possible she is any of this that Sans claims. If anything, she is a selfish bitch, playing the strings of those weaker around her.’

Papyrus’ chest twinges painfully, something within crying out “Unjust!”. He adjusts his gaze back down to his chest, rubbing the small spot as though to soothe the ache.
‘Why is this acting up now? It did the same thing a few days ago as well.’

“I just…” Papyrus snaps his attention back to his brother, sockets widening. Bones rattle in the summer night, the soft rattle slowly escalating as a feeling of sorrow permeates the air.

“I DON’T KNOW WHAT TO DO!” Sans shouts, his hands immediately jumping up to slap against his eye sockets. Cyan tears slip through the cracks of magic, the thick droplets splashing onto the concrete patio. Small, barely audible hiccups brush past Sans’ closed jaw, rattling his bones harder with each jolt of emotion. Papyrus stares at his brother, his bones aching to soothe his brother’s sorrows. Normally, Papyrus would give his brother a pep talk, talking about how great he is and how one day he will be a member of the royal guard. It was always easy to talk his brother out of the sorrow, promising many adoring fans and recognition for his awesomeness.

‘It should be this easy but…’ Another sob wracks through the skeleton, his body teetering on collapsing.

‘He is worried about another, not his ego.’

Papyrus watches as his brother’s knees give out, the small skeleton falling straight down to the floor. He scoops his brother up before his knees could make a hard impact. The small skeleton twists in his brother’s arms, throwing his hands around his neck. Tears begin to soak into his tee shirt, soaking the material and the bone immediately. Still, Papyrus holds onto his brother as he cries, carefully rubbing his backside in a small attempt of comfort.

“I just… I don’t…!” Sans hiccups through his tears, his phalanges bunching the material beneath it.

“I know bro…” Papyrus mumble, his socket igniting with magic.

‘When she is finally better, she will know what happens to people that make my brother cry.’

The wind whistles along with Sans’ cries, the trees speaking no truths nor lies. The sun begins its descent into the background, painting the sky with brilliant hues of pink, red, yellow, and orange. Stars begin to dot against the colorful scheme, taking a small, childish peak.

Sans slowly decreases in sound, the shakes and rattles dimming to a dull shiver.

“Do you feel better bro?” Sans shakes his head against his brother’s clavicle. Papyrus hums.

“Would you like to go visit her?” Sans nods.

“All right. Let us get you cleaned up and then we can head over. We can’t have everyone see you shook up.” Sans whips his head off his brother’s shoulder, his tired sockets glaring dangerously.

“I mean, if you let them see how rumbled you look, they might cry out that their hero is a bit under the weather.”

“OH MY GOD PAPYRUS! LET ME DOWN THIS INSTANT!” Sans screeches, attempting to wiggle out of his brother’s hold. Papyrus hold’s fast, humming like he is contemplating the action.

“No need to tear my head off bro.”

“AUGH!”

“Oh! Hello my friends. Please do come in and make yourself comfortable.” Toriel moves out of the way, allowing the skeleton’s entrance into her home.
“THANK YOU YOUR MAGESTY!” Sans chirps as he enters, taking off his boots at the doorway.

“Sup Tor.” Papyrus shoots his friend a small smile, noting the weariness within her posture. Despite the smile she shoots the skeleton, it feels forced much like his brothers, her eyes glassy with pent up emotions.

“Tor…” She holds up a hand toward her friend, her face downcast.

“Please Papyrus…” The skeleton nods, closing the door behind himself. Small patters of feet race toward the front door, their speed picking up as they approach their intended target. Papyrus turns in time to see Chara running up to the smaller skeleton, arms outstretch, practically jumping into the skeleton’s embrace. Fear and sorrow line the small child’s usually bright demeanor, her soul humming a dark tune beneath the surface. Frisk appears from around the corner a moment later, his soul hidden within the depths of his already soulless being. There is a small throb of pain somewhere deep within the child, but Papyrus does not care too much about that.

Papyrus turns his attention to the hugging duo, a faint hum of whispers exchanged for the beings involved.

‘I wonder what they are talking about.’

He shakes his head, watching the two give one last squeeze before departing. Chara looks revitalized, almost to her normal, happy self. The small child immediately races back to her brother, the two having a silent exchange with their eyes.

“BROTHER!” Sans voice snaps Papyrus’ attention to him, the shorter skeleton grinning cheek to cheek.

“THE SMALL HUMAN CHARA HAS INFORMED ME THAT THEY HAVE MADE X A ‘GET WELL’ PIE. I SAY WE ALL GO UP THERE TO DELIVER IT! MAYBE THEN, THE HUMAN X WILL FEEL BETTER!” Papyrus internally rolls his eyes, his mood souring immediately.

‘Why do I have to get dragged into this? I don’t even like the bitch let alone to go cheer her up.’

Papyrus looks down at his brother, a spark of hope lighting the dull iris, his smile holding a small hope of happiness. Papyrus deflates, giving his brother a lazy smile.

“Sure bro.” Sans cheers, racing to scoop up the two humans into a rather large hug. Chara squeals in delight while her brother makes a sour face, but Papyrus can tell he is quietly pleased. It takes no time at all for the trio to grab the oversized pie from the kitchen, all three set of hands helping carry something easily the size of two of their heads. Toriel leaves them to it, the Queen quietly giggling to herself at the determination displayed among the three.

“Papyrus…” Toriel begins, her tone soft, the words nothing more than wind on the air. He lets out a noise of affirmation.

“I understand that you do not like my eldest daughter…” She begins. Her tone holds no malice or ill will, only that of fact. Papyrus, despite knowing this, stills his breath for a beat longer than normal.

“I am not here to scold you my friend. I am merely asking that you give her a chance.” Papyrus shoots a sideways glance at the Queen. For someone of her stature, she could school her features to remain neutral, never giving away how she feels to those around her. Papyrus knows better however, the Queen wearing her heart on her sleeve. She continues to walk forward a few paces behind the rowdy kids. The Queen keeps her eyes forward, her paws carefully intertwined in front of her. An
amethyst eye looks in his direction for a moment, a small smile gracing her jaw.

“If not for my sake my friend, then for your brother’s.” Papyrus’ skull nods, his bones shifting funny.

“Hurry up mom! I want to give her a piece before it gets too cold!” Chara whines, her feet fidgeting in place. The Queen lets out a soft giggle, giving the child a small nod.

“Of course my child. Let me knock on her door first to see if she is awake.”

You groan at the sudden intrusion of sound, a bright yellow light washing the dark off to the corners of the room.

“My child, you have a few guests that wish to see you.” Toriel’s voice attempts to filter through your sleepy haze, the words jumbling into a mess of incoherent sounds and words. You nod against your pillow, your throat humming in agreeance to the Queen. There is a high pitch sound in the background, the sound ringing higher than the usual static within your mind.

“Someone turn the sun out.” You grumble into the mess of blanket, pulling it higher on your head. You wrinkle your nose in disgust as a wave of heat envelops your face, moisture immediately forming at the hairline ridge.

‘Do I want to die from heat or do I want to deal with irritating light?’

You groan, throwing the blanket off the upper half of your body. Instantly you are rewarded with a blast of cool air conditioning, the chilled air brushing against your bare flesh.

“Nice stomach sis.” Frisk’s voice pushes through some of the fog, your mind only putting together the word ‘sis’.

“HUMAN! YOU SHOULD HAVE MORE CLOTHES ON! YOU MIGHT CATCH A COLD!” A hyperactive voice breaks through the static, the tone laced with bewilderment. Your eyes crack open a smidge, the lids refusing to give up their hold on your eyes. The world is blurry around you, everything taking on a slant of colors meshing together. Carefully you sit yourself upright, your body heavy as lead, your mind weighing more than a ten-pound weight. Your brain is slow to process the glaringly bright white body to your left, or the sharp green color sitting right next to the white.

“Hu…?” You blink, attempting to shake the grogginess from your eyes and mind.

‘Come on. I had to do this almost immediately at the institution. Why am I struggling now of all times?’

You try blinking again, the world coming into better focus. You can make out two shadows remaining in the doorway, one resembling that of the Queen, the other hard to distinguish. You blink once more, the world shifting to a better focus. The figures of Chara and Sans immediately fills your vision, their faces mere inches away from your own.

“Ah…”

“SIS!”

“HUMAN!”

Two bodies collide with your side, nearly toppling the three of you further into the bed. The two sets
of arms wrap around your shoulders and hips, squeezing and latching on for dear life. You are about to make a comment to them, a scoff, or a protest about how they were acting like you were dying. That plan immediately goes out the window the moment the first drop of liquid soaks through your top. Chara lets out a wail, her sobs wracking her body and soul with relief. She mumbles things under her breath that you cannot make out through the hiccups and sobs. She scoots herself into your lap, pressing her face into your collar bone. You feel Sans shift next to you, his body moving in closer, his arms tightening a fraction.

‘Odd…I did not think a skeleton could feel so…normal…. Now I know I must be sick if I am thinking that.’

“It is good to have you back human.” Sans whispers in your ear, the breath escaping his nasal cavity tickling the hairs along your neck. It sends a pleasant chill along your spine, your body immediately reacting to the stimulus with goosebumps. His forehead carefully lays onto your shoulder, his body quietly rattling beneath his friend’s cry. You sit there, eyes wide, mind unable to process all the stimuli hitting you at once. As your eyes move away from the bodies grasping you, you notice a third body awkwardly standing next to the bed, their face hidden from your view.

“Frisk?” You manage to croak out. It tickles all the dried cilia within your throat, urging a cough on, but you hold it down. The child does not move, refusing to look up in your general direction. Sans and Chara finish their crying session, Chara using her sleeve as a tissue despite the motherly protests from Toriel.

“Come on brother. I know you missed her too!” Chara sniffs, shooting the small child a warm grin. He refuses to look up, causing your brows to scrunch in confusion.

‘ Normally he is very open with his affections toward me, with and without people despite his normal protests. It is almost as if…’

Realization crosses your features, your eyes widening as the simplest answer dawns within your mind. You carefully untangle Chara and Sans from your body despite their protests, giving them a gentle tap to get off the bed.

“My child what are…?” You ignore the Queen, yanking the blanket off the rest of your body. The air is chilly, immediately attaching to swat away the heat. Everything is stiff, the muscles screaming in protest from lack of use the past couple of days. You ignore the numbing throb coming from the base of one of your feet, swinging your legs so they dangle next to the silent child. The floor chills the bottom of your feet as they make contact, your vertigo taking immediate effect with the new position. Your vision sways for a second, your eyes and body attempting to help the inner ear stabilize itself. It settles after a moment, your body protesting with relief and strain. You continue to ignore those around you, your focus set on the child as you crouch to his level. His hair is a mess, the strands sticking out in every which direction, a thick sheen of oil slicking the strands. Frisk’s skin looks pasty, as though the skin is painted on his bones rather than it being a part of his genetic make-up. It looks like he is wearing the same thing he wore days ago, the outfit rumpled and creased like someone who just woke up from a nap.

“Frisk. Look at me honey.” You carefully lift a hand to his face, the digits contacting the cold skin for a brief second before a hand slaps it away.

“Frisk!” Toriel scolds from the background. You hold a hand out to her, silencing the rest of her protest.

“Look at me.” You try again, his hand lashing out quicker this time, the slap resounding in the silence.
“How. Could. You.” His soul spits the words like venom, the being crushing under the weight of despair.

“How COULD YOU DO THIS TO US?!” The hoarse male voice shoots pasts his lips, his hair whipping out of the way to reveal a puffy, tear stained face. His eyes scream betrayal as another set of tears wash down his face, using the premade tracks to guide the way. Something contacts with your side, a small wince breaking through. Another jab to your other side, another fist flying into the bruised flesh. You do not try to block the child, you do not attempt to hold him back from this. You can see it in his eyes, the fear, the pain, the betrayal, the love. Everything is flooding out of him at once, all the pent-up emotions from this event and past events. All the stress, all the waiting, all the unknowns, everything piled within the small child finally breaking free. He wails on your sides, on your arms, his fingers clawing, his palms slapping. Occasionally a fist is thrown, sometimes at your face, sometimes within your stomach. You let him go unopposed until his attacks slow, his arms missing completely. Sniffles break the surface of the usually collected child, a wail of his own breaking through his lips. You pull the child into your chest, his arms immediately wrapping around your neck in a near suffocating hug. New tears stain your shirt, snot dripping along with it in a mucous river. It is difficult to let a breath of air in, but you do not mind if his arms are suffocating you. His hair smells of cinnamon butterscotch pie and sweat, the oily strands brushing along the side of your face. Your hands reach around to hug the small child back, your hands smoothing out the wrinkles within his shirt.

You allow all of this…

‘Because I love him.’

Sobs turn into quiet whimpers turn into heavy snot filled breaths. You continue to hold Frisk against your body, allowing his sobs to wrack your bones, letting the grief and anguish wash over your soul as a reminder. He wiggles in your grasp a moment later, his wide puffy red eyes staring back at you with a look of contentment.

“Feel better?” You whisper, your own voice choking on the strain. He gives you a small nod, your arms falling away to allow him his freedom.

Frisk timidly walks away from you, occasionally throwing a glance over his shoulder to see if you are real, that you are alive. You give him a small smile each time, until he is within his sister’s reach. She latches onto his hand, holding him steady as his support and her own. Toriel gives the children a small pat on the head, her fur ruffling the greasy tops before making her way towards you. Her walk is timed, practice, as it should be for someone of great power. Each step conveys her poise, neutral nature, but her eyes convey a different story.

The amethyst shines with a bright intensity behind the water wall obstructing the color. Her shoulders shake slightly, the movement covered by the pacing of her steps. There is a small smile on her snout, but it is a front, a fake, it quivers and waivers in front of you. Her shadow swallows you whole from your position, her frame highlighted by the backdrop of light. She carefully lowers herself to the ground, her frame still towering over you despite the halved height.

“My child…it is…good to see you are well.” You give her a timid nod. She breathes out a shaky breath, her palms open on her lap.

“May I…may I heal you my child?” She makes a gesture with her paw, her arm extending with a slight green glow. You shift back a little, shaking your head.

“No.” Her face falls for a second, the shock, the crestfallen look flashing for a second before being schooled back into her smile. It is forced, fake, she is barely holding it together evident by the
quivering in her jaw.

“I need this. I need to feel this pain. If I don’t…I will never learn if I know there is an easy way out.” Despite her look, realization flashes across her eyes, a tear releasing from the duct. It impacts the fur under her eye, the droplet immediately absorbed into her white fur.

“Does that mean…?” You stare at this monster, at this woman. She, despite the odds, despite how fucked up you are, took you in. She treats you like one of her children despite you not being flesh nor blood of her kind. She allows you to do as you please and despite knowing that at one day, you could snap, destroying this happy household she has built for not only herself but for the kids, the skeletons.

‘She has made poor decisions that are not of ill will or malicious intent, but as a concerned mother for her child.’

You give her a slow, hesitant nod. White fur pokes at your irritated skin and eyes, the strands waving like blades of grass on a spring day. Her frame shakes around you, quiet sobs echoing from deep within her soul. The warmth surrounds you in a loving aura, her body, mind, and soul radiating relief through her entire being. The feeling of love, to feel warmth and in turn receive it, unnerves you slightly having been deprived in the institution. You hesitantly move your arms around her waist, halfway clasping between her waist and back.

“Thank you…my child…” She whispers into your hair, large droplets dripping into your hair. You allow it, although just this once.

“I’m home.” You whisper into her fur, nuzzling your face into the warmth of your adopted goat mother. She barks out a sharp, shaky laugh above you.

“Welcome home my child.” Silence settles over the room, closure and relief flooding the air, dispelling the darkness within.

‘There will always be some secrets, some hidden regrets, some darkness that I may not be able to fight off on my own. Maybe in time, I will let them in as they have let me.’

“I AM GLAD THIS REUNION WENT OVER WELL HUMAN X, BUT COULD YOU PLEASE PUT SOME CLOTHES ON?!”
Chapter Notes

I just want to thank everyone for their support and patience with this story. As of yesterday, I am now divorced from my partner. It is not something to celebrate but at the same time towards the end, (long story short) he had a new girlfriend before it was finalized. This chapter literally took months to write due to on and off inspiration. So thank you so much everyone!!

“I just want to leave…” She whispers under her breath, air thrusting in and out of her throat in small tremors. The world shimmers and glistens through the lens of her tears, each drop jumping quickly after the other. He stares at her, his gaze hard, his eyes unmoving. They pierce, they judge, making accusations, belittling, controlling.

“I cannot accept that. Everything up until this point has been fine. All until you started talking to that boy.” He spits the word out like venom, the name on the tip of his lips, burning the flesh like bile. She winces, her thoughts on her best friend, her confidant, her other half.

“It’s nothing like that…” she lies, her heart rattling her ribcage, her thoughts racing a thousand miles a minute.

‘I cannot tell him. I cannot say that I do not love him anymore…. that I love another.’

“So, then what is it? I told you this relationship is as open as you want except for infidelity. Anything stopping you from doing what you want is your own walls.” She grits her teeth, her eyes leer at her mate, her best friend. He looks different to her now, his voice not as calming, his presence causing anxiety and grief rather than sanctuary.

“I just don’t understand.” He growls angrily, running his fingers through his hair. The strands splinter through the cracks, the threads settling back into a soft pile atop his head. She sits quietly, the words in her throat gone, her thoughts unable to rebuff his words.

“Look, I have given you space like you asked. I have given us a break to allow space yet you act as though I am either too clingy or too distant. Do you want me to treat you like a roommate or a wife?”

She looks down at her hands, they cling desperately to her lanyard around her neck. An off-white seal plushie dangles on the end along with her various keys, the white brushed with patches of grey from its travel. She wants out. She wants freedom. The word settles atop of her heart, the pain weighing heavier than her anxiety.

“Roommate.” She cringes, her eyes looking up, gauging, wondering.

“Okay go be on break.” Her breath catches, a chill racing down her spine. The man before her shifts, the tiny shred of warmth missing from his person. His aura emits intimidation, a secret threat, a warning. She immediately stands, not sparing a glance behind her as she leaves the home, the feeling of his threat weighing heavily on her shoulders. The warm summer air is a blessing and a curse as it marks the end of her marriage.
“Whatcha’ reading sis?” Chara’s voice startles you out of your trance, the words on the paper becoming stiff once more. You blink wearily at the screen, your head shaking back and forth to dispel the fog from within.

“Just a fanfiction someone wrote online. Some sort of drama or shit like that.” Chara hums contently next to you, her chin resting atop of the desk. You glance at the small child from the corner of your eye, her ruby eyes scanning the page of words before her, absorbing, taking in each line like gospel. She hums once more, a sigh escaping through her nose.

“It must have been a hard decision for the girl. To choose between what she knows or leave everything behind to find her happiness.” You make no comment, your eyes rereading the words in front of you.

‘Tough decision my ass. She did what is right for her. It shouldn’t matter what that prick feels regarding her decision nor did he have the right to approach her with that tone. He deserves loneliness.’

“I hope they both find their happiness in the end. I like stories with a happy ending to them. Sometimes the ending is deserved, the victim obtaining their goal: happiness. Sometimes, happiness should be granted to the villain as well. After all, aren’t we all just seeking to find where we belong in life? To find what makes us ultimately happy?” Your throat vibrates as your mind processes the child’s words, tearing your eyes off the words to glance at Chara. The computer screen glows dimly on her face, accentuating the deep, bruising shadows beneath her eyes. Her eyes appear to shift back and forth as if reading the text on the screen, but the color within is dull, a muted maroon compared to the shimmering rubies. One by one various emotions bubble to the surface, their images flashing across her features before another takes its place, ultimately ending with a neutral façade. The little girl is gone and in her place, a grown woman in her late twenties early thirties. The weight of the world pushes down on her shoulders, shrinking them inward, turning a confident woman into a meek submissive one. Secrets lock her throat in a vice, the quiet pleas to be young again falling on the deaf ears of those around her. Once lush, warm, sun kissed skin appears haggard, worn, like an old piece of leather stretched to its breaking point, the seams ready to snap. Her eyes leave the screen briefly, directing a worn, sad smile in your direction. The skin around her eyes crinkle as she shuts out the world behind a thin screen.

“Don’t you think even the rottenest of people deserve a happy ending too sis?”

There is a moment, a pause, her words sinking into your soul like a body tied to a heavy rock plummeting to the bottom of the ocean. A small bead of water dips into the corner of her eye, the liquid threatening to jump off the lash at any given moment.

“Chara…”

“HUMANS! IT IS I! THE MAGNIFICENT SANS!” Like a rubber band, the heavy silence snaps out of the room, heavy footsteps and squealing hinges filling the space with life. The door moans as it swings on the squealing hinges, giving the wall a hearty chest bump as it impacts. A beam of sunlight shines into the room, a large overly stretched silhouette takes most the light. You both turn towards the shadow, your lips curling at the assault of light on your pupils. Sans stands within the doorway in his usual garb, a bright blue backpack encasing his entire ball and socket joint. Judging by the size and how the backpack is nearly double the size of the smaller skeleton, you can calculate that Sans overpacked without his brother knowing before slipping out the door in a rush.

“I AM HERE FOR OUR WONDEROUS SLEEPOVER!” You turn towards Chara, watching age and stress melt off the child’s face. It springs back to its youthful nature, the light reappearing as though the color change is nothing more than a trick of the light. Her stance weighs heavily on her
left foot, her body coiling from the base of her spine to the length of her shoulders. Time slows as her leg muscles coil, rolling her foot heel to toe as she pushes forward. Chara’s body flies forward toward the skeleton, an unreadable emotion on the child’s face. Sans in the same instance drops his bag to the floor, the weight shifting the floorboards beneath, the house moaning at the sudden pressure. His arms open wide, his legs spreading apart to balance out his stance. A look of determination flashes across his sockets, his soul pulsing the aura throughout his being. As if a switch suddenly flips, time continues at its normal pace. Chara’s body blurs as it makes impact with the smaller skeleton, his feet dragging across the hardwood leaving scorch trails in his wake. They singe the wood black, covering the old grey trails with a fresh coat of color.

“WHOA!” Sans shouts as he loses his footing, the skeleton collapsing to the floor with Chara on top of him. You hold your breath, an annoying pang of worry filling your mind with the fear of Chara possibly hurting herself from the ordeal. There is a beat of silence, the beat lasting longer than your vibrating heart can take. It starts as a sputter, a raspberry escaping Chara’s lips, her body coiling slightly at the waist. Then small chuckles, the light laughter slowly increasing in volume until full, uncensored laughter fills the home, dispelling the air immediately. You let out a breath you did not know you were holding.

‘Wait…why was I holding my breath? I mean for Chara’s sake if she were to get hurt but it feels like…’

“You two are imbeciles.” Frisk’s ‘voice’ rings through the room, his soul matching the disapproving tone written on his face. He appears next to you, his head carefully tapping your shoulder, his body leaning carefully into yours. Ever since that day, Frisk uses small touches, carefully planned taps and nudges to ensure you are alive, to ensure you are real. You allow the child to do this, the little bit of human physical contact soothes a small portion of your soul. Not that you would admit it to anyone.

“I DO NOT KNOW WHAT AN IMBECILE IS BUT I AM SURE IT IS A GREAT COMPLIMENT HUMAN FRISK!” Frisk snorts in amusement, irritation drifting away for a moment, allowing the joys of life to shine into his soul. You roll your eyes, giving the child a shoulder bump to the back of his head. Copper eyes glance up at you, an eyebrow raised in a silent question.

“Play nice.” You whisper to him, your right hand reaching up to adjust a stray piece of hair in the child’s face. He gives you a playful scowl as you fix the strand, twisting his head to allow it to get in the way again. You roll your own eyes, bumping the back of his head again.

“That is mean Frisky!” Chara whines, crossing her arms, puffing out her lips in a full-blown pout. Frisk rolls his eyes, stuffing one of his hands into the denim blue jeans, the other caressing the fabric of your shirt. Light flashes outside, an unusual orange glow flickering in the doorway for a brief second. It is fast enough that a normal human would not take notice, the shadow of a tall figure taking its place, a familiar clacking of bones tinkle outside.

Chills race up your spine, the sudden drop in temperature biting at your exposed flesh creating small goosebumps. The skeleton’s bone clank as a large, imposing shadow looms in the doorway, a wisp of smoke rising from the lit cigarette between his teeth. A growl rumbles within the back of your throat, the sound deep, threatening.

‘What the fuck is he doing here.’

Chara and Sans’ laughter calms down a few notches, their heads swinging to the doorway at the disappearance of light.

“Papyrus!” Chara shouts, untangling her form from the shorter skeleton. She trips and wiggles with
some difficulty, but eventually tackles the taller skeleton’s legs, her body making a solid ‘thump’ against the surface. His face softens, the tight smile relaxing into a softer, natural smile. With his free hand Papyrus ruffles the child’s hair, eliciting a whine but otherwise no protest.

“Hey there kiddo.” His gruff voice mumbles, his teeth taking a deep inhale of nicotine.

“BROTHER! WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT SMOKING?! IT’s BAD FOR YOU!” Sans pouts from his respectable position on the floor, his gloves crossing over his arms, disapproval radiating from the small skeleton. A faint hint of nicotine invades the sanctuary of your space, the deep earthy smell irritating your nerves further.

“No need to air your grievances bro.” Chara lets out a little chuckle, her head burrowing into the skeleton’s legs. Frisk and Sans let out a throaty groan, Sans airing his distain with a few more words and gestures. You roll your eyes at the terrible pun, crossing your arms in defense as the skeleton’s eye lights land in your general direction. Anger and distain radiate the air between the two of you, words no longer needed to air the arguments.

‘It’s not like I asked him to be here personally. Honestly, if his royal asshole-ness hates my guts that badly he should just leave. Speaking of royal assholes.’

A dull throb of pain taps at your temples, the irritation a steady rhythm in time with your heart rate. You shift, your free hand coming up to massage the side of your temple. It takes off some of the edge, but a deep, bruising feeling lingers beneath the surface.

“I should consider what options I have. There is no way he will let remain away for this long...It is surprising that he has not come to claim his most prized possession…”

The throbbing intensifies as you lose yourself to your thoughts, the noise around you falling to static in your ears.

“So why? Why has he not come to claim something he worked a good part of his life perfecting? Why would he allow his creations to run free among humanity with the possibility to expose his practice?”

The world begins to dim around the edges, thick black borders encroaching on your sight. The deeper you crawl through the rabbit hole, the less light appears to shine through.

‘None of his makes any sense... What is his ulterior motive?’

“...DON’T YOU AGREE HUMAN X?!” You gasp, the black background immediately snapping back to the shadows allowing the colors to emerge. You feel a pair of arms wrapped around your waist, the bones digging uncomfortably into your curvature. Digits dig into your shirt fabric, pulling the material taut like a long-lost lover.

“Sans...let go.” A growl rumbles through tight lips, gaze sharp as it turns its piercing gaze down at the shorter skeleton. The skeleton’s eye sockets widen slightly, the smile on his face twitching as fear passes his iris. His body convulses as the chill of the gaze pierces his soul, the vibration coursing through your form. The fear dips into the background of his gaze, another clear emotion pushing to the surface. Sans’ features harden as determination rockets into his soul, his want weighing heavier than the intimidation factor. He digs his digits deeper into the fabric, the tips of his phalanges brushing the bare skin beneath the cloth. Sans takes a bold step closer, his bones pressing flush against your skin, his skull resting on your stomach as he looks up.

A weird flutter brushes against your soul, the accumulation of your being thumping in an irregular
rhythm.

“This feels…weird. Why is he so close to me? Why haven’t I pushed him away? He’s a stupid monster just like his brother. He could turn on me at any moment. Exploit my weakened state and end me here or worse…Why…?”

“O…ONLY IF YOU AGREE!” His grin grows exponentially, the cheekbones pushing like muscle into his sockets causing them to crinkle. You stare down at him, your eyebrow raising in question. Worry darts across his iris, a faint flicker of the pupil that would otherwise go unnoticed by an untrained eye. Silence passes between the two of you, the room growing silent as the exchange proceeds on. You feel the static of a familiar asshole skeleton’s magic tainting the air, the particles brushing over your skin like fire. Another type of magic hits the air along with his, dampening the effects like a cloud on a particularly hot summer afternoon.

“To what am I agreeing to?” You release a breath you were holding, a fraction of the tension easing out of your chest. The skeleton’s features brighten considerably, stars appearing in place of his pupil. His arms squeeze your waist for a moment, relaxing to his current hold a second later. A light, cool magic flutters against your skin, the particles soothing and tingling your skin in an oddly relaxing manner.

“To the sleep over of course!” Chara’s voice chimes in, effectively breaking the silence within the room.

“PRECISELY HUMAN CHARA! YOU MUST AGREE TO THIS SUPER AWESOME SLEEPOVER HUMAN X!” Sans chirps from his position, his jawbone digging into the center of your stomach as he talks. You bite the inside of your cheek, the points of your teeth digging into the soft, damp cavern. You roll the flesh between your teeth in thought, the bits of teeth digging with a dull pain to keep you focused. Blood wells to the surface after a few seconds, the cells coating everything in its path with a metallic taste. You sigh, glancing between the skeleton and the child. Sans looks up at you with what stories describe as a puppy dog face: wide eye sockets, large pupils, the eyes shining with a bit of extra moisture, and an aura that emits begging like a dog wanting scraps from its owner. Chara makes a similar face, her cheeks puffing out slightly accentuating her baby face further. Her lower lip juts out slightly, the baby pink flesh appearing fuller.

You look towards Frisk, the child giving you nothing more than a shoulder shrug.

“It is your decision, although it appears it has already been made for you. Mom is out of town and has left you in charge of us anyway, so there is no harm in it.”

“It does not look like I have a choice in the matter now do I?” You sigh, earning two joyous “Horary!” from the children. Sans gives your waist a healthy squeeze, the air escaping your lungs as the diaphragm scrunches inward.

“YOU WILL NOT BE SORRY HUMAN X! IT SHALL BE THE BEST SLEEPOVER EVER!” He lets out a gasp, releasing your waist.

“WE NEED TO CALL UNDYNE AND ALPHYS! SURELY THEY WOULD LIKE TO JOIN IN ON THE BEST SLEEPOVER EVER!” Chara gasps as well, running away from the asshole skeleton to Sans.

“You are right! Then we can have some of the best tacos in the Underground AND an anime movie marathon!” Chara and Sans clasp their hands together, determination burning like an inferno between the two of them as a plan formulates. They run out of the room, their bodies nothing but blurs as they race up the stairs to prepare.
An awkward silence soon fills the empty space, tension rising, permeating the air with distain and magic. A hand carefully slips itself into your palm, the coarse hand of Frisk a slight comfort.

“Look, I don’t want you guys to be here and quite frankly I wish you would disappear off the face of the earth.” You growl out, your gaze hard.

“But that would make Chara sad and I am not about to deny that child any shreds of happiness after all she has been through. So you,” You point at him.

“Try to not be such a fucking asshole and I will keep my mouth shut. Are we in agreeance skeleton?”

The skeleton’s pupils shift, glancing between your gaze and Frisk, his bone structure giving nothing away. His hand goes into his baggy jean pocket, the carton of cigarettes jiggling as they shift in the fabric.

“Agrreed, however…” The room bleeds color, the familiar black and white tones outline everything in the room. Time appears to stand still, the children silent above despite their rambunctious nature. Magic crackles in the room; it is the only warning you receive before something flies in your direction. You grab Frisk without a thought, ducking as a single skeletal bone flies close to your skull, the smooth surface brushing the back of your head. It impales into the wall behind you, the bone dispersing just as quickly as it came.

“Harm my brother in any way…” A boney digit grasps your chin, the point digging painfully into the flesh, the point popping the surface. A drop blood runs down your chin, the color a stark contrast against the surroundings. Orange magic encompasses the space between the two of you, your own magic flaring to life beneath the skin. Papyrus stands within a few inches of you, his sockets void of pupils, his smile a hard-straight line. One bright flame flickers in time with his magic bringing a sinister shadow across the skeleton’s face.


“Back off Papyrus. This is my house and I will not have you threaten my guest.” Frisk growls, his real voice echoing in the void. It sounds dark, sinister, a mixture of his normal baritone and a dark, almost static overlay. A thick, suffocating magic hits the air, the sudden release causing you to gasp. It feels heavy like thick syrup or molasses pushing on your soul, on your body. It feels tainted, unnatural, like its existence should not be. You have never felt such an overpowering and negative energy.

‘Is this…?’

“COMING DOWN!” Sans voice snaps you out of your daze, the world falling to color once more. Papyrus appears on the sofa, his feet kicked lazily over the arm. Frisk releases your hand as well, his footsteps quiet as he darts into the kitchen. You stand there nonchalantly wiping your chin to remove the dried blood on the surface, the blemish already healed.

A massive ball of blankets and sheets roll down the staircase, unwinding and unfurling as it hits each step. They open at the bottom, releasing a battalion of pillows and variously sized blankets scattering them across the floor.

“Incoming!” Chara’s hyperactive voice cheers, footsteps growing louder along with her laughter. Time appears to slow as her feet spring off the top of the steps, her voice giving out one final scream as she descends into the mess on the floor. You jump into action racing to meet the child’s falling
body. It impacts a second later, your form slamming into the fluff with a resounding ‘thud!’ A dull pain shoots through your shoulder blades, the pain nothing compared to the relief you feel seeing Chara’s laughing face a few inches from you, her beaming smile settling a pit within your stomach.

“Again!” A weird sound escapes your throat, a mixture of a scoff and laughter. You ruffle the child’s hair, the corner of your lips struggling against an unknown force as she whines in your lap.

“Not again.”

Papyrus keeps a steady gaze on you throughout the night, watching for any flaw, any weakness, any sign that you will turn on them. Something about your being unnerves the skeleton, having witnessed firsthand a portion of power you possess. He knows that it isn’t even a fraction of what you can do as denoted by the insanely fast healing ability your body appears to possess.

‘There is something about her I don’t like. We found her at the institute in which illegal soul experimentation went on unnoticed for years. She lives through a building demolition and a near suicide attempt. Toriel has taken her in without asking for her name or any information. She is too easily swayed by children in danger. So why…’

Papyrus takes a long drag of his cigarette, his elbows leaning back on the porch railing. Crickets chip and play their song into the summer night, the wind giving the blades of grass a gentle prod to join in the merriment. The slight chill outside does not bother his bare bones, his hands reaching forward to tuck into his pocket only to realize he never received his hoodie back. He brings the nicotine up to his lips, the embers burning bright against the painted black.

‘That is another thing I do not quite understand.’ He releases a stream of smoke, the tinted cloud raising into the air, dispersing a few seconds later.

‘Why did I even visit the little monster after her suicide attempt? Even more so why did I leave my hoodie with her?’

“Because deep down, you knew it was the right thing to do.” Papyrus teleports a few feet away, his cigarette sacrificed to the porch as he throws a hand forward, magic pulsing in the bone. A shadow appears around the porch bend, their footsteps quiet, calculated, each one stalking forward like a predator. The kitchen light spills through the blinds, the golden glow illuminating the young face of Frisk.

“Heh. Don’t do that kid. You caused me to waste a cigarette.” Papyrus draws his magic back, his hand reaching into his pocket for a new stick.

“Not like you need them skeleton. Sans is right, they are nothing but cancer sticks.”

“Strong words coming from a hypocrite.” Frisk shrugs, picking up the abandoned cigarette off the porch. He takes a long swig, perching himself in a similar position as Papyrus only moments ago.

“Shouldn’t be smoking that kid. Might stunt your growth.”

“Fuck off smiley trash bag. You know I’m old enough to have this.”

The cigarette lifts away from Frisk, the last of the white stick dissolving into an orange dust. Frisk huffs, shooting the skeleton a glare.
“I know the illusion is all smoke, but in his timeline, you are back to your starting age once again. What would your precious older sister think if she caught a whiff of nicotine on her favorite little soul?” At the mention of you, Frisk’s face erupts into a deep red, his soul thumping against his ribcage. He glares at the skeleton’s smug reaction, holding back the sudden urge to dust him where he stands.

“I don’t care what she thinks. She is an outsider, an anomaly in this timeline. Besides…” Frisk looks down at his form, a frown creasing his childish face.

“She would never take me seriously. Not with this stupid child-like body. The best I can do is be the best little brother she could possibly ever have.”

“Hm…” Papyrus sticks the cancer stick between his teeth, the tip of his finger erupting into a small orange flame. The paper catches immediately, the familiar taste of nicotine slipping into the skeleton’s system. He takes a few drags, watching the commotion within the household through the slits. He can clearly see his brother, the ever-hyperactive skeleton bouncing around to various locations around the kitchen. Alphys is close behind him, the dinosaur opting out of her usual royal guard armor for a white muscle tank top. She raises her hands excitedly into the air, Chara in her grasp squealing with delight. He can see Undyne trying to calm her girlfriend down, the fish woman meekly stuttering through her sentences while using her hair as a shield. All work in harmony, each piece of the puzzle slowly slipping together as monsters earn their place on the surface. This is the perfect life he is looking for: no more hiding, no more fighting, no more resets…everything settling into a peaceful household.

‘Yet this anomaly appears. Why this time? What is different?’

Your frame comes into view, your face lacking any type of emotion. He can see it however, no matter how hard you try to appear as a badass, he can see flickers of something beneath the surface. Papyrus has seen your soul, has seen it cracking and repairing with various swirls of color, determination being a large factor. You wish for death and life, to run away yet stay, a contradiction of life.

‘And yet…’

You stand with your back to the window, your arms crossed over your front displaying your bone structure in the back. Muscles flex across the taut skin, the pointed bone appearing weak, breakable, easy enough for him to walk right up and end you on the spot. Your frame appears malnourished, the shadows of light reflecting through the baggy clothes revealing a crumbling frame of nothing more than bone, muscles, and skin.

‘I could easily take care of this problem now before everyone becomes too attached. I can explain it to the kiddos later, tell them the theories, find out what causes her existence here instead of every other time. I am sure they will agree, opting to figure out the trigger over the body. After all, her being here means Chara sets off on her mission thus causing the trauma and rape. Surely she would wish it all away over the girl.’

Something in his chest beats with disapproval, his soul crying out “Unjust! Unfair!” It fills his head with confusion, the curiosity piquing as his soul flickers other thoughts through his mind. Unannounced to the skeleton lost within his thoughts, Frisk slips inside the house once more, a sad knowing smile on his face.

Papyrus watches the thoughts play out within his mind like a movie, his soul thrusting emotions he is unfamiliar with. It wants to know the feeling of those bones pressing up against the flesh. Is it smooth
like the curvature of her shoulders or is it rough like his scarred bone? Is it brittle, the mere touch or rough housing with it causing chips and fractures or is it sturdy like the walls you put up around yourself? What would you look like if you smiled at the skeleton instead of scowling? Happiness flickering at his visitation instead of anger and distain? What would it feel like to feel that flesh against his…

Papyrus slams his hands into the railing behind him, the wood giving a soft whine at the sudden force. Sweat trickles down the skeleton’s skull, the cigarette bitten into two pieces on the porch floor, embers long since out. He glances through the window, relief flooding his body at the lack of bodies within the kitchen.

‘These thoughts are idiotic at best and should be left buried in hell somewhere. Why would I even fancy the ideas in the first place? And that last one…that will never come to pass. Truly I must have Undyne look at me at a later date. Something is clearly wrong.’

Papyrus goes to reach into his pocket for a third cigarette, his hand halfway jiggling the box out.

“PAPYRUS! THERE YOU ARE!” The door vibrates with a mighty ‘slam!’ against the railing, the glass whining as it readjusts back into place. Lights flood the porch in a wide, artificial yellow cone minus the black cut out of Sans breaking the stream.

“WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO START EATING MY MAG…ARE YOU SMOKING AGAIN?!” Sans stomps over to his brother, his boot crushing the bits of cigarettes remaining on the ground. Papyrus gives his brother a nonchalant shrug, pushing the box back into his pants.

“Heh bro you need to lighten up. It’s nothing but smoke and magic.” Sans stomps his foot childishly, crossing his arms in a huff.

“THAT IS NOT THE POINT! IT IS A BAD HABIT AND I REFUSE FOR IT TO RUIN YOU BROTHER!” Papyrus sighs, carefully tapping the box in his pocket. He will come out a little later when his brother is distracted for another smoke. He will need a lot of smoke breaks to deal with the monster running amok inside.

“Sorry bro.” Papyrus rubs the back of his head sheepishly. Sans takes the apology in stride, his form relaxing slightly.

“YOU ARE LUCKY I LOVE YOU BROTHER! OTHERWISE YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN…BONED! MWEHEHEHE!”

“There you punks are! You are just in time! The anime is about to start!” Alphys cheers from her position on the floor, her claws covered in a thick, indescribable sauce Sans doused the tacos in. From the bit of lighting, you can gather he threw in some glitter, the pieces reflecting small streams of light. Whether it was edible or not was completely up to who you asked, but you are pretty sure it is not. Still, the little stars in his eyes as he showed off his “greatest creation”, the hard work he appeared to put into it, it would almost be rude to shun the skeleton away. Sure, the taco meat is overly spiced with things like cinnamon and glitter and sure, the taco shells are quite crispy around the edges, nearly bordering on black. And sure, the condiments thrown into it are roughly chopped to the point of vegetable massacre, but hey, at least you did not have work for the next week.

‘Well the food could be worse…it could be like that place’s food…’ An involuntary shiver courses down your back as you take a hard ‘crunch’ out of the barely edible food.
“WHAT HAS EVERYONE DECIDED?” Sans asks excitedly as his frame moves into the dark room, tray full of tacos. Papyrus follows closely behind his brother, a tray of his own tacos hovering lazily in the air next to him.

“I…its s…some a…anime a…b…bout h…high s…school.” Undyne stutters out, her face tinting a light shade of green. She sits curled against her girlfriend on the floor, her arms curled protectively into her chest along with her single taco. Alphys slides an arm behind her back, causing the fish woman’s face to darken a shade.

“That could literally be three quarters of anime in general.” Frisk situates himself on the cushion next to you, his plate nearly empty of tacos. He gives you a small nod, taking a harsh bite out of the taco. It crunches painfully within his mouth, but his face remains stagnant, eyes staring dead ahead at the television.

“WHATEVER IT IS, I AM SURE HUMAN X WILL SURELY ENJOY IT!” Sans’ voice screams in your ear, the couch cushion on the other side of you dipping.

‘Great…I get the loudmouthed skeleton next to me. Where is Chara to tell him to scram when you need it?’

“Let’s get it started then!” The child in question cheers from her position in front of the television, her fingers rapidly clicking buttons on the controller, adjusting volumes, adding subtitles, and the like while the introduction of the anime begins. The Japanese stylized music blasts through the speakers, the only English sentence blaring out, “Kiss kiss fall in love!” Through the sound, you can hear the three girls humming along with the music, occasionally throwing in lyrics when an English one and sometimes Japanese one popped up. Sans munches on his tacos thoughtfully next to you, the sound of his crunch softer than the rest of the group as though he is purposely trying not to disturb anyone. His gaze intently focuses on the introduction, the iris in his eyes reflecting the images on the television. You turn towards Frisk, the child appearing lax and uninterested in the anime, but his eyes light up as the pictures pass, a faint hum vibrating in his soul.

You finish your plate quietly in between the two, a flicker of warmth darting across your cheeks.

‘It’s not like I am enjoying this or anything. It is simply the heat between the three of us…yeah that is it. Nothing more than three, well two bodies and magic, so tightly knit together.’

The episode comes to an end, everyone standing for a quick stretch and for food. You quietly slip into the kitchen with your plate, breathing a sigh of relief. As you wash your dish in the sink, you take a glance up at your reflection in the window, groaning quietly at the image before you. Your hair is slightly disheveled, the midnight tresses clinging to the sweat against your scalp. Your face appears alight with a soft flesh pink, the color settling across the bridge of your nose to the tips of your ears. Your eyes appear a little brighter, the colors swirling like a ripple in a lake rather than their usual stagnant coloring.

‘I look somewhat normal.’ You carefully lift your hand up, watching the reflection mimic the action. The window fogs under your heated touch, the glass feeling cool against your fingertips.

‘Funny. Past all the oddities, the haunting look on my face, the deep shadows and obvious scowl lines I almost look…normal.’ You cannot remember a time when life did not revolve around stress, that one flicker of any emotion could cost you your life. Where, if you were not fighting, you were on the gurney with needles shoved deep into your soul. To feel full, to be within a warm household with people who may or may not care about you, to not have to fight to live is almost…

“A. d.r.e.a.m.”
You spin around on your heels, the voice not your own slipping into the silence. An empty room meets your darting gaze, a deep static laughter vibrating off the kitchen walls.

“Do you honestly think you are free of me my dear? I am every shadow you see, I am every creature, every being you encounter. Do you honestly believe this life is R.E.A.L.?”

Your hands fly to your ears in a poor attempt to drown out the sound of his voice, his laughter.

“Shut up…” You whisper to yourself, your soul squeezing painfully in your chest. Laughter fills your mind once more.

“One day my dear, this illusion will fall and when it does, I will be there to collect.”

“HUMAN X! WE SHALL BEGIN THE NEXT EPISODE SHORT…” Sans’ voice breaks through his laughter, the loud skeleton’s tune grounding you to the present, drawing you out of your mind. He stands within a few feet of you, his iris unreadable despite the forced smile on his face. It twitches downward, his nature keeping the frown at bay.

“X…” You hear him whisper, the letter a blessing and a curse on the still air. His worry is palpable, his magic tingling the air with cool little wisps. At some point, you have curled yourself into a ball on the floor, your head tucked between your legs. Your palms remain pressed up against your ears, the force pressing dangerously hard on your skull as though to cause it to shatter.

Sans asks no questions as his boots walk over, the soft ‘click’ against the tile gives the room a little life, a little light. The bright blue boots stop in front of you, the bones making up his knee push the grey fabric of his basketball shorts forward, the shiny mesh reflecting the kitchen lights. Two bright cyan eye lights peak into your line of sight, the soft glow illuminating the black void making up his eye sockets. Soft puffs of breath wash over your face, the cooling effect reminding you of peppermint or spearmint.

“Deep breath.” An odd voice comes out of the skeleton, it is deep, mature, bordering on sultry; a complete contrast to the hyperactive, high pitched, child-like skeleton a moment ago. It sounds sure, assertive yet gentle, deep but not gruff, a command and a comfort. Your body complies to his wishes, your lungs filling, your chest cavity expanding. It holds for a few seconds, releasing a moment later in a slow exhale, the tension melting along with it.

“Good.” He sighs, his bones rattling as he shifts his stance. A skeletal hand slowly moves into your line of sight, the digits cool as they brush against heated flesh. They scratch lightly against the skin, moving slowly up the curvature of your face, following the outline as if memorizing it. It climbs higher, brushing a stray lock out of its way as it ascends behind the ear, pushing the remaining strands out of the way as it scratches your scalp. An involuntary sound escapes your throat, your hands immediately clasping over your mouth. Embarrassment creeps up into your thoughts, a deep heat coating your face. Sans continues as if you did not just release a lewd sound, the quiet ‘scratch’ lighting up the nerves with a tingly-like feeling.

“Frisk has small panic attacks like this from time to time.” Sans confides, his voice vibrating the base of your skull. The sensation begins to calm the frantic nerves beneath, adrenaline slowly wearing off.

“I have found this works best for him…Figured it would work for you too.” He hums quietly under his breath, another wave of air cooling the flames beneath the skin.

‘That is right. This reaction, this feeling, it is fruitless. He cannot find me. He is not here. Do not give into the thoughts plaguing to drive you insane. That is what he would want.’ You take another calming breath, stretching to pop the limbs. Sans releases his digits from the back of your head, a few
stray wisps of hair following his hand until they can no longer reach. There is something within the skeleton’s gaze you cannot pinpoint, the iris darkening a fraction, cyan mixing with a royal blue creating a vortex of blues.

“I shall go back first. Take two more deep breaths then make your way to the living room once more.” Sans’ shadow looms over you, causing your eyes to travel up to his face. The same smile he wears stretches across his face, the dark blue leaving the cyan light alone.

“Know this,” his voice deepens, the words mere whispers on the wind. Something hangs heavily in the air, the emotion difficult to decipher. It flickers in and out of his gaze, the iris melting to the black of his sockets. One light remains bright, a small flicker of flame escaping the socket. It gives his skull a sinister look; the look not quite right on the always jovial skeleton.

“I will protect you from the darkness.” The aura slips away from the skeleton, the eye lights shining brightly, his smile genuine. He gives you a quick wave, running out of the kitchen while shouting excitedly about the next episode of the anime. You stare at the kitchen doorframe for a brief second, your soul humming contently within your chest.

‘I will protect you from the darkness.’

Those words fill your soul with warmth, with promise, as if the words ring true.

‘It is nothing more than a phrase said in a time of comfort. He does not mean that. He does not know what the darkness entails.’

Despite the negative thought within your mind, your soul dispels it, choosing to believe in Sans than the logic of the situation. The thought of someone, be it a monster or human, choosing to protect you against an unseen force, to hold strong in your weakest moment, it fills you with determination.

With a new resolve, you walk back into the living room with the group, taking up your spot between the hyper skeleton and the lax child.

The anime lasts for a few more episodes, each body falling asleep one after another. Chara is the first out, her head hitting her pillow around episode four. Undyne is next, falling asleep two episodes later, her head resting against her girlfriend’s chest. Alphys readjusts their bodies to lay flat on the floor, the yellow dinosaur monster pulling a blanket around the two of them as she drifts off. Frisk is next to go much to the young teen’s distain, his head resting comfortably in your lap. Idly you begin to play with the child’s hair, the soft locks threading through your fingers in a soothing motion. Sans is next on the list, his skull tapping against your shoulder as his body becomes dead weight. You sigh, readjusting your arm to cradle the skeleton better against your shoulder, your fingers brushing the back of his skull. He sighs contently, snuggling into the crook of your neck. You fall asleep around episode fourteen, your mind at peace with the sleeping bodies around you.

The anime pauses after a brief second, the happy image frozen on the screen, the light illuminating the sleeping bodies. It flickers to the television, the sound long since turned down for the sleeping companions. Cooking with a Killer Robot plays quietly in the background, the DJ monster prattling on about some sort of recipe. Papyrus sighs, settling into the couch to the best of his ability. Sans’ feet push up against his leg, pushing the taller skeleton into the arm of the couch. Papyrus sighs, propping his brother’s feet up onto his lap, causing the skeleton’s head to nuzzle further into your neck. It takes everything in his will power not to rip his brother off your form, destroying you and the annoying child in one gaster blaster hit.
Papyrus glances at the kitchen door, a bead of confusion creasing his skull. You went in there as soon as the episode ended, the credits barely begun to roll. They continue until the very end, Chara prepping for the next episode to start.

“Is everyone ready for the next episode?” She glances around the room, noting an empty spot between Sans and her brother.

“Does anyone know where X went?” She hums, scanning the room once more for her older sister.

“I think she went into the kitchen to clean off some dishes.” Frisk chimes in from his seat, his phone already on and within his lap. He is typing away to some unknown body or the internet, the screen’s contents barely visible to any prying eyes.

“I WILL GRAB HER!” Sans volunteers, springing out of his seat quickly. Papyrus opens his mouth to protest, to signal that she is fine and in no means, needs his brother to go grab her. A hand stops him from proceeding, the fleshy tendril connecting to the body of the underground’s savior. Her eyes are hard yet hold understanding within them.

“Let him go. She might need his strength more than you think she does.” Papyrus nods, his sockets never leaving the doorway. Chara releases the skeleton’s arm, heading back to the two females on the floor chatting away about the first episode. Seconds tick by slowly for Papyrus, his hands constantly fidgeting, reaching for his smokes, pushing them back in, trying to put his arms in the front of his hoodie only to realize he still lacks the jacket.

‘That’s it. I need to see what is taking them so long.’

He quietly moves around the chatting group, walking behind the sofa on his journey to the kitchen doorway. Papyrus keeps himself off to the side, his skull peaking around the corner. His eye sockets widen at the scene before him, his magic flaring to life, his soul roaring with an unknown emotion. He notes you sitting on the floor, your hands pressed roughly against the side of your head, your eyes pinched closed. You appear to be sweating at the scalp, dampening your skin and hairline in a salty mess. Distraught contorts your face into a mix between a scowl and fear, your eyes opening at the new form in front of you. Sans kneels before you, the small skeleton appearing larger, dominate over your shrunken frame. The sight catches Papyrus off guard, his soul demanding to step in and scoop you up while the other half struggles to take Sans out of there, to tell him it is not his place to comfort you.

“I will protect you from the darkness.” Papyrus stills, his breath caught in his throat. Sans magic thrums through the air, the cyan mixing with a deep royal, the intensity sucking the negativity from the room. The tail end of his flame flicks the side of his skull, affirming the use of magic. He can see Sans soul, the cumulation beating in sync with his magic, a faint yellow mixing around the blue. He can see it beating against the skeleton’s ribcage, the being pushing painfully, begging the skeleton to release it to comfort the broken soul. It causes the taller skeleton’s soul to beat painfully against his own sternum, the cumulation reaching out to a similar broken soul.

‘Why does this thing keep going after that monster? I don’t understand it. Does it see something I do not? She is a broken killing machine working on borrowed time.’

“How long were you standing there for.” Sans’ voice shocks the skeleton out of his trance, his soul resting back into place.

“Not long.” The taller skeleton replies, his hands shoving back into his pockets. The shorter looks up at the taller one, his iris searching for something within his sockets. He appears to find it rather
quickly, his head bobbing once before returning to the group, mentioning that you will be a moment longer. Papyrus finds himself leaning against the wall for a brief second, catching his non-existent breath. His skull turns toward the kitchen once more, his thoughts scolding him for the childish action.

You sit on the floor, the threat of an emotional breakdown wiped clean from your face. You stare ahead at nothing, your soul flaring to life, repairing a few holes of damage. It is bright like the children’s, the beacon of red flaring your determination.

‘I still do not understand. Why am I preforming these actions? She is nothing but a parasite. A waste of space. An anomaly.’

Still. Papyrus finds his gaze lingering to you, how easily you sleep with the two bodies next to you, your arms wrapped protectively around both. You appear at peace, your head tilted back onto the ledge of the sofa, your hair spilling down the backside. His body acts on its own accord, his shadow looming over his brother, his digits pushing a stray lock out of your face. Despite having short hair, the strands appear to consistently fall into your gaze, giving small kisses to your face. It is most likely due to the rough cut, the strands just now starting to gain some body back into them, the dull color slowly washing into a vibrant black.

“Hm…” Papyrus pulls his hand back swiftly, shifting his gaze to the television, forcing it to relax. You shift from your position with the two bodies, your eyes unfocused as you glance around the room.

“Papyrus…?” You mumble, voice thick with sleep. He lets out a hum, his iris looking over at you from the corner of his socket.

“…Could you…get your hoodie…?” The skeleton stills, his head slowly turning towards your direction. Your head rests back onto the sofa ledge, eyes closed, a content sigh escaping through your nose.

“…Can’t…sleep without…it…” Just as quickly as you awoke, you succumb to sleep once more, moving the child and skeleton closer to your form. Something thumps within his sternum, the rhythm steady and calm, his usual nightly anxiety quelling. He glances over your form once more, the light of the television setting your skin aglow like a light on a dark city street. Your face remains stoic, the previous fears of the night long gone from your mind. The tip of your lip curves upward in a small smile, the gentle gesture keeping his attention longer than he would like. He teleports from his spot on the couch, the void a quick journey as he appears in your bedroom. The moonlight shines in through the window, the silver beams giving an eerie glow to the room. Everything surrounding him appears normal, nothing out of the ordinary of a typical young adult bedroom. The bed is a mess, the sheets and comforter askew from previous night antics. Your i-pod is thrown haphazardly onto the pillow, the headphones leaving a bulky imprint on the pillow. Everything is silent within, the space smelling vaguely of earthy notes that Papyrus cannot place. It is a warm smell, subtle but once you notice it is there, the smell hits you like a ton of bricks the woody smell encompassing the senses. He glances around the room briefly, his half assed look around coming up short. Just when he is about to jump through the void, the familiar orange pokes the side of his socket, the hoodie laying parallel to the mess of sheets.

‘…So, she wasn’t lying about it.’

Papyrus walks slowly to the bedside, his hands hanging down at his side, his mind racing a mile a minute. The hoodie appears worn, the fabric wrinkled in a few areas. His hands reach out to grasp the soft material, his phalanges running over it as he brings it closer to his face. It is exactly how he left it that night, not a hair of damage to be seen, no acts of anger inflicted on the clothing.
He takes a small inhale of the fabric, the faint traces of cigarette smoke and citrus hitting the background notes of the scent. Hints of earthy tones mix in with his other scents, everything hidden beneath a hit of eucalyptus. He takes another deep inhale, the dominant smell imprinting on his senses, relaxing his nerves.

‘Wait…what am I doing? This is disturbing, inhaling the scent of my own hoodie. The monster must have put something in this room. Used her magic on me or something. That has to be the only logical reason.’

Papyrus’ scowls, quickly jumping through the void back into the living room. A commercial for a late-night diner appears on the television, kids out past midnight smiling as their parents feed them pancakes filled with diabetes. He throws the hoodie at your sleeping form, the fabric falling over the three bodies like a tarp. It jolts you awake for a brief second, a startled gasp escaping your lips. The skeleton does not care, situating himself at the end of the couch once more, sleep escaping him one more night.

“….Thank you…Papyrus…” You whisper, your hand on Frisk moving the hoodie closer to your face, falling asleep once more. Papyrus turns his head away from the light of the television, a faint orange hue tinting his cheeks in the dark.
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 17

Moonlight finds its way into the household, poking through the nooks and crannies left vulnerable to its rays. It casts shadows along the floor, the looming makeshift figures intimidating to those who cannot actively see in the dark. The light grazes by the sleeping couple on the floor, the dinosaur’s arm wrapped around the fish’s torso, their steady breathing breaking for a moment as they shift closer. The children sleep peacefully in their locations, one on the loveseat with a blanket pulled taught up to their chin, the other snuggling deeply into his elder sister. You sleep on peacefully with your companions held tight against your torso, the comfort of the other bodies strafing off the nightmares temporarily. The taller skeleton is nowhere to be seen, his hoodie remains draped over the three bodies.

Sans rouses from sleep, his body tightly pressed against something soft, malleable. It takes his mind a second to process the hand around his ribs, securing his body to the object. Another second of silence allows the dream to slowly dissipate back into his skull. Beads of perspiration line the top of his skull, the droplets of blue magic clinging his clothing tightly against his bones; the faint brush of night air doing little to quell the heat. He shivers involuntarily, the hand around his torso tightening in response. A jolt of something shoots into his soul, the heat suddenly not so sweltering, the arm a comfort rather than a restraint, the darkness lightening up a bit. It leaves the shorter skeleton with confusing thoughts, his body wishing to curl into the body, inhaling the sweet scent of dew on a cool fall morning. Sans knows that scent all too well, his body taking a slow, deep breath as if strengthening the earthy notes to memory.

Cigarette smoke smacks the skeleton’s senses awake, his bone bridge crinkling in disgust. He looks down at the blanket draped over the three bodies, noting the luminescent glow of orange reflecting specks of moonlight. Sans wrinkles his bone, taking a careful whiff of the material. His eye sockets widen at the lack of cigarette smell, the hoodie infused with your natural smell and something vaguely reminding the skeleton of citrus.

‘Where is that smell coming from?’ Sans’ glances around the room. A quick survey of the bodies answers his question immediately at the lack of a certain tall skeleton. Agitation radiates off the shorter skeleton, his mouth quirking downward disapprovingly.

‘He knows how much I hate him filling his body with that nasty tar and it is far too late for someone to be up! After all, we need our energy for the day ahead of us!’

Sans attempts to remove himself from your arms, each bone rattling louder than necessary to his ear bones. He is able to free one arm before your subconscious notices, your arm pulling the skeleton tight against your skin. A soft sigh escapes your lips as cool bone connects with your heated skin. The cool air caresses the exposed part of his skull, the chill keeping the skeleton from succumbing to sleep once more.

‘I did not think she was this strong, let alone to keep me trapped in one place. I am the magnificent Sans after all.’

The skeleton carefully twists his body in your grasp, a smile coming naturally to his features. You look at peace to the skeleton, the dark shadows of the past hiding away even if only for the night.
Your skin looks smooth like porcelain, a mere touch could shatter you.

‘Yet even though she looks like a doll, she can definitely hold her own. Especially if she can keep me here... I like this look on her...’

It takes the skeleton a better part of a few minutes to wiggle out of your grasp, the last bone structure pushes the child fully into your arms. Your hands immediately wrap around the small child, a content hum rumbling through your chest. Frisk snuggles into your body, a content sigh escaping through his nose as he nuzzles further into your chest.

Sans stands there for a moment, the chill spring air dampening with humidity, the talk of an early summer whispering on the night air. It will not be long before the skeletons are consistently over, the children long out of school and the neighboring kids vandalizing the skeleton’s house. Sans notes the two humans he is fond of snuggling on the couch, the protective arm of the older human clutching the small child close, her chin resting atop of his head. Strands of midnight cling to your skin, the pale complexion causing the surface to shimmer like the river in Waterfall. Neutrality and peace rest on your face, the sharp pinpoints of your gaze hidden behind a thin curtain, taking your mind to a peaceful land. Frisk too looks calm, the child not once waking the crowd with his screams nor awakening mere hours before the moon has a moment to settle high in the sky. You both look tired to the skeleton, the shadows amplifying the dark circles lingering under your sockets. He leans over your forms, adjusting the hoodie to fit snugly against your bodies. After all, if you catch a cold, you will not be able to hang out with everyone. Just the thought of your gaze empty, the hollow void of nobody home within the shell of flesh sends a chill up the skeleton’s spine.

‘I will not let that happen again. They all deserve every happiness in the world after what they have been through...’

The skeleton’s gaze lingers on the room for a moment more, something not quite right settling in his bones. The stillness perhaps, the lack of his protective older brother and his immediate disappearance due to the company. Whatever the cause, the skeleton will figure it out in the morning. His phalanges tuck in the little girl curled with a love seat cushion with a similar gentleness as the other two, his sockets burning the image to memory. When he is content with the state of the room’s occupants, Sans leaves through the front door, the scent of nicotine leading him in the direction of his brother.

Deep vibrating music thumps against either side of the room, the handles of the doors shaking in rhythm. Two different clubs share a single wall: one filled with the lustful moans of those within the city. The other, various pitches and tunes of music thumping in rhythm with the souls inside. Soft panels of lights act as beacons along the walls, the pure white fire illuminating the cadet blue walls. Crystal clear fixtures hang from the ceiling like icicles, their transparent surface reflecting those below. A bar backs up to the north wall of the room, the snowflake surface shines proudly against the blue wooden base; stools line around the counter in their regal blue clothes. The bartender works in rhythm with the performer, the shakers click ice against the metallic top, shooting the cubes to the glass bottom. Air bubbles break through the oddly colored substance within, the illuminating glow of the room adding a surreal effect to the drink. Occasionally he shoots a crystallin glass down the ice top, the spectrum of color sparkling brighter than a diamond. Some bodies huddle in tall, lavish booths, watching the show from afar, their talk mere whispers under the powerful chords. Others take to the illuminating dance floor, their souls moving, mingling their corporeal form to the bass-like trance, the souls igniting the colors beneath their moving feet.

“I refuse.” You growl at your “boss”, your body letting out a gasp as the bunny monster tightens the
“Sorry.” Her words lack apology, her fingers deftly moving over your form as she shapes your body with the medieval torture device. Grillby hums, the earthy sound reminiscent of a log splintering in a blazing inferno. The elemental adorns himself in his usual dork costume, the wide circular frames scrunching with his face as it twists in thought. His flames appear brighter compared to the last time you had a run in with the elemental, the orange and yellows flickering like a well fueled fire.

“Do you think we should put the hat on her head or leave the disheveled locks alone?” You feel a piece of stray hair lift to your left, the fingertips warm against your face. You whip your head, effectively tossing the strand out of the elemental’s hand.

“Leave the locks be. It suits her personality better than the little hair band hat.” The bunny hums in thought, her fingers giving one final pull on the corset causing a grunt to escape through your lips. You feel her presence move from behind you, the sound of rummaging through a trunk filling your ears. You hear the shrill of a guitar in the distance, heavy bass thumping the walls around you. You refuse to acknowledge the second area of the building, the lustful sounds causing a faint blush on your features.

‘At least he did not demand a job in that area. He should know if anyone lays a hand on me like that they will die.’ The mere thought of a stranger putting their grimy hands over your body, the lewd look of lust on their face as they deem you worth it of their sexual escapades causes a chill to course up your spine.

After a few moments the bunny monster huffs, pulling you from your thoughts. You feel her eyes disapprovingly looking in your direction, the dagger-like glare leaves an annoyance twinge in your lower back.

“Do we have anything to replace those... things she has on her feet?” You smile wolfishly at the bunny, giving a good tap of the steel toe shoe against the wooden floor. The wood groans under the strain of the pressure, the floor bending slightly to accommodate. The black boots are worn, tears in the leather give some personality to the otherwise normal work boots. Much to your annoyance, the children have replaced the chewed black laces with bright fire red laces making them stand out in most of your outfits.

“If you don’t like my choice in footwear then don’t look at it.”

“But there are more appropriate looking shoes…”

“They are. staying.” You cut her off, shooting her a sharp glare. Her head turns back into the trunk. She snorts under her breath as her paws dig through various other totes and troves.

“They are surely not staying unless you plan to fight sometime soon.” She retorts after a moment of silence, the whisper easily heard by you. Grillby appears to not have heard her, the elemental looking at a rack of clothing off to the side of the room. Anger blooms within your gut, the room tinting red around the edges as you glare at the monster.

“Who says one isn’t about to start?” You retort, venom dripping from your lips. You feel your magic begin to stir under the surface, bubbling and curling, wanting to escape. The little bunny monster’s head shoots up, her throat growling a warning, a challenge. You reply in kind, the inhuman sound vibrating the vocal chords.

‘You want to come at me with your little weak ass level four? I would like to see you try.’
“Ladies I will not have you fighting in this establishment. This is an outlet of creativity not violence.” Grillby’s voice crackles in the stillness, his magic washing the tension out, replacing it with his warning. Despite the cheerful tone of his words, a deep hum of magic crackles beneath. Dryness coats the inside of your lungs, stilling the breath beneath. The temperature slowly rises in the room, the bright orange appearing to glow like a building lit on fire. Beads of sweat dot your forehead; the bunny monster appears to struggle against the heat of her boss.

“Sorry boss.” Her voice is rough, dry like the air around her. Immediately the room dissipates to its usual comfortable levels, a faint breeze brushing away the heat. She lets out a sigh, returning to her task at hand.

“It is quite alright my dear. We shall let her keep her boots if she so desires.” You watch the elemental walk over to you, his usual gait gone. His steps are precise, poised, determined. His spine is erect, standing the elemental at his full six-foot height. There is an air about him now, the goofiness gone and instead…

‘A well-groomed gentleman...What the actual hell.’

Grillby steps in front of you, the glow of the elemental lighting your skin with a golden glow. His hand carefully caresses your face, brushing a stray lock behind your ear.

“After all, we don’t want to scare away our newest performer.” Without thinking you grab the elemental’s arm, throwing his hand away from your face. The warm trail of his fingertips lingers on your face a moment longer, the streak disappearing with the chill in the air. Your eyes glance down at his other hand, your eyes narrowing into slits. Without another word, you snatch the object out of his hand to which he merely grins at you, a crinkle in his glasses. A steel dagger rests in your hand, the familiar form of the weapon causes a growl to slip past your lips.

“Don’t take things that belong to others.” The dagger slides easily back into its side compartment with a smooth ‘shink’. The elemental chuckles, his two fingers pushing the glasses to settle better on his face.

“I knew there was a reason my blueberry talks so much about you! You may keep it my girl. After all,” His voice drops an octave, a different air circling the monster. “A girl needs her protection from those who wish to do her harm.”

There is a round of applause from the other side of the door, the music ending. A voice muffles something over the speaker system, the audience screaming over their speech. Idle chatter filters through the walls, the bunny monster appearing in your peripheral a moment later.

“The act is leaving for the night sir. Shall I go announce the newbie?” Grillby continues to stare at you, his hand waving away the bunny monster.

“If you could my darling that would be fantastic!” She says nothing more as she leaves the room, the sound deafening for a moment as the door opens and closes. A feeling bubbles within your stomach, the odd sensation confusing you. Your stomach is alight with the light flutter of wings, your palms increasing in moisture as noted by the sudden increase of cold encasing them. The elemental hums thoughtfully under his breath, his glasses looking over your frame one more time. You take a glance at yourself as well, grimacing at the lack of air circulating through your lungs as you bend slightly at the hips. Not that you needed a lot to begin with, but the constant pressure on your diaphragm gives a small, painful reminder of the torture device surrounding it. The outfit is impractical in your mind, the silken fabric caressing the bare skin not constrained by the corset. Baby blue material circles around your neck, the material held up by a small ribbon beneath your hair. It cascades down the breastplate in a v-like pattern, keeping close to the body like a gentle lover. It flairs at the hips, the
bottom puffing out slightly to allow easier movement. The outfit is designed for a shorter person as denoted by the hem of the dress ending before your knees; the faintest draft causes the dress to sway out of alignment revealing your intimates. Thankfully you wore your black boy shorts beneath the dress, but it is something you do not wish to deal with to begin with. Your shoulders remain bare, silver slits and discoloration of skin travel up each arm, visible reminders of your trials. The only accent added to the dress is the employee bracelet. It glows against your skin, a contrast of color yet complementing it with bright shimmers of golds and sunrise orange.

‘Cyan blue... just like the color of my soul before it all... Fucking prick. Putting me in something to remind me how ugly it looks now.’

It thumps painfully in your chest, the small being giving a reminder that it too feels the pain of the experimentation. That it too wishes for normality once more. The thought only tightens your resolve, revenge searing deep in your veins.

‘I will find him one day and make his death slow... tear him limb by limb. Bathe in his blood. Let him see what a true monster looks like.’

A warm pressure sits on your shoulder, your body instinctively attempts to shove it off. It holds fast, the warm tips digging into your collarbone. You look up at the fire elemental, his glasses softening, his body illuminating a comforting warmth.

“There is no reason to be nervous my dear. I am sure they will love you.”

“Me? Nervous? That is a laugh boss. Nothing makes me nervous.” Despite the words spilling from your lips, your frame shakes beneath the skin, your soul hammering nervously against the ribcage. He gives you a reassuring squeeze, removing his hand before you can shrug him off. The door on the other side of the room opens, the bunny monster from earlier popping her head in.

“They are ready.” She states, her frame leaning against the wooden doorframe. Light conversation filters in through the crack in the door, the room dark compared to the dressing room.

“It is time my dear. No more stalling.” He guides you forward, your feet walking on autopilot to a familiar wooden door. The bunny monster stands next to it, an unimpressed look on her face. Her paw carefully twists the door handle, the mechanics within clicking softly compared to the chatter on the other side. The elemental gives one gentle push towards the door, his warm breath tickling the outside of your ear.

“I know you will do exceptional.”

The lights shut their eyes, coating the room a thick blanket of black. A hush falls over the crowd, the souls thumping in anticipation. There is no introduction this time, the music starting its haunting melody in time with a solid thump of drums. Speakers allow the music to exit, the vibrations bouncing off every wall. One by one, souls begin to leave their corporal bodies, the music giving jitters of excitement across the group. A shadow walks up onto the stage, the faint sound of the fabric brushing against their body, the sound of the thick steel toed shoes hide behind the music.

First things first

I'ma say all the words inside my head
I’m fired up and tired of the way that things have been, ooooh ooooh~

Lines ignite the dark into a fluorescence of color, a shadowy figure standing in front of the web-like fixture blocking the bottom portion. An odd color soul hovers within the handheld microphone, the cracks splintering outward, pulsing with the beat of the music. It gives the microphone a fractured rock from the Waterfall area, the iridescent glow ready to shatter the rock suppressing it.

Second thing

Second, don’t you tell me what you think that I can be

I’m the one at the sail, I’m the master of my sea, ooooh ooooh~

A hand flies away from the microphone, the fingertips alight with a cyan color. Strands of tainted thread fly in its direction, adding to the intricate spider web behind you. The audience lets out a sea of ‘whoa’ as a pair of eyes emerge from the dark; the blend otherworldly as it swirls with emotion.

I was broken, from a young age

Taking my soul into the masses

Write down my poems for the few

That looked at me took to me shook to me feeling me

Singing from heartache from the pain

Take up my message from the veins

Speaking my lessons from the brain

Seeing the beauty through the…

There is a pause, the instruments playing faithfully in the background as the stage plummets into darkness, the strands dissipating. You lift your left hand into the air, the lights igniting behind you as the chorus drops.

Pain!

You made me a, you made me a believer, believer

You close your hand into a fist, quickly pulling it down and throwing it out on an angle. Threads shoot from your tips into the stage, the strands swinging along with your hand as you create a new scene behind you. One you are all too familiar with.

Pain!

You break me down and build me up, believer, believer

The room is slowly coming together behind you, the cell wall you often stare at when they are not torturing you, the thin plank of mattress barely held together by its seams, the tools, the blood…

Paaaaaaiiiiinnn!
Oh let the bullets fly, oh let them raaaaiiinnn
My life, my love, my drive, it came from….

The image is clear as day, screams pleading for their lives behind the metallic doors, those final breaths of the people. It echoes in your soul, the sound frightfully beautiful along with the music.

Pain!

You made me a, you made me a believer, believer

You pause to take a breath, your body turning around to witness the room behind you. It fills your soul with an odd sort of feeling, one of anger yet acceptance.

Third things third

Send a prayer to the ones up above

All the hate that you’ve heard has turned your spirit to a dove, oh ooooooh

Your spirit up above, oh ooooooh

You whip your head to the side at the introduction of a male voice, the lyrics dying from your throat as a familiar face joins the stage. Cyan eyes dissipate into piercing red eyes, the words flowing from his pale lips as the song continues forward. His voice is higher than most males, the words hold more meaning from his lips than are let on. There is a challenge, a playful poke in your field, yet a softness coats his words.

‘I don’t have time to analyze the meaning now nor why he chose to break into my performance.’

Are you deranged like me?

Are you strange like me?

Lighting matches just to swallow up the flame like me?

You take a calculated step forward in his direction, your head tilting up a fraction, a small minute amount that only he would notice. A broad grin stretches across the spider lackey’s face, his feet taking a similar step forward.

Do you call yourself a fucking hurricane like me?

Pointing fingers cause you’ll never take the blame like me?

And all the people say

You shatter the room behind you with a flick of your wrist, the shards of thread trickling down like glass. The sound vibrates over the music as each piece ‘tinks’ against the floor, crunching under your boot as you walk.

You can’t wake up!

This is not a dream.

You are part of a machine
You are not a human being

With your face all made up, living on a screen

Low on self esteem

So you run on gasoline

You continue to take steps toward the spider’s lackey, his steps mirroring your own until the two of you are side by side. You stare into his eyes, the color a shock and wonder compared to the first set you saw not too long ago. A smirk slowly makes its way on your face, your head tilting to the side in challenge.

‘He wants to know more about me huh? Well how’s this for you big boy? Can you handle the truth?’

You use the words to call out to him, the song lyrics nothing more than such to the audience, but to the boy…

Oooooooh–

I think there’s a flaw in my code

Oooooooh–

These voices won’t leave me allooonnee–

Well my heart is gold and my hands are…cold

A look shadows over the boy’s face, various emotions flickering behind his eyes, but one dominates the rest. The background slowly changes behind the two of you, purple light flickers in your peripheral.

Last things last

By the grace of the fire and the flames

You’re the face of the future

The blood in my veins, oh, oooooh–

You take a step back, his body taking one forward to match your stride. A hand reaches out, the porcelain skin cool as the fingertips brush your shoulder.

The blood in my veins, oh, oooooh–

Your body collides with something sticky as you jump away from the boy; purple resin from the object behind you sticks to your skin. One glance up shows the purple web from the beginning back in place, a few spiders mingling on the web along with the song. They weave as they dance, small indescribable images taking shape under their eight feet. The wall no longer feels sticky, the material turning into cloth beneath your fingertips. You flip away from the body, your foot kicking out in hopes of impacting the intruder. Beads of sweat trickle from your brow, the soul beneath the microphone thumping erratically at the sudden change. The boy emerges from the shadows an inch from your previous location.
But they never did
Ever lived
Ebbing and flowing
Limited
Till it broke open and rained down
You rained down like...

The web pulls itself apart like a curtain, taking shape into a familiar giant spider monster. It does her little laugh, her silken hands lifting as it covers the fangs beneath. The image shatters a moment later, the little spiders at work creating larger artworks of their selves.

Pain!
You made me a, you made me a believer, believer

The boy rips off his shirt, the female patrons of the audience letting out a scream of delight as the fabric falls to the stage. Your feet begin walking forward on their own accord, your magic igniting the skin beneath your scars, filling the broken flesh with color.

Pain!
You break me down and build me up, believer, believer

The boy’s face falls a fraction, not enough for the audience to notice but the slight downward curve of his lips, the sudden jagged stop of his body is all you need to come to that conclusion. Suddenly his chest alights with a purple color, the lines of his flesh fill with a bright light in a similar fashion as your own.

And all the people say
You can’t wake up!
This is not a dream.
You are part of a machine
You are not a human being
With your face all made up, living on a screen

Low on self esteem

So you run on gasoline

At some point, the two of you gravitated toward the other, hands reaching out to touch the scars of the other. You immediately take a step back, your hand clutching your chest as though to snap yourself out of the near intimate contact.

‘What the hell is wrong with me lately?’
The music draws to a close, the lights shutting down for the night, the magic slowly fading from the stage until nothing but the illumination of the floor remains. Silence fills the room, not even a breath breaks the utter silence fallen on the place. Suddenly, the place is filled with noise startling the ever-loving hell out of you. Your heart races due to the adrenaline spike; the audience clap and cheer excitedly, voices trying to outdo the others. Dim lights wake the stage up, the purity of the light reflects off the shiny black surface casting your face into the floor. You slowly glance your head over to the spider’s minion, shock clearly written on your face. He cheekily smiles at you, his face flush with a pink hue reaching the tip of his ears. He makes a small bowing gesture with his hands, his body mimicking the action as he faces towards the audience. Your eyes slowly gaze toward the eager crowd, the various eyes unnerving, the loud noises strain against the sensitivity of the ears. With one swoop of your hand, you quickly bow, making your way off the stage before something else happens.

“Isn’t she good mom?” Chara bubbles excitedly from her spot in the booth, her legs swinging excitedly as she sips on a monster shake. Frisk rolls his eyes at his sibling, taking a swig of his own monster shake.

“Of course she is good. How could you doubt her for a second.”

Chara puffs her rosy cheeks out defiantly, shooting a glare at her brother.

“I never doubt big sis!” Frisk scoffs, shooting a glare at his sister.

“You just did!”

“Did not!”

The two continue to bicker on much to the queen’s displeasure.

“What did you two think?” The Queen inquires to her companions, her amethyst eye crinkling in displeasure as Papyrus takes a rather large sip of the magic concoction.

“IT WAS VERY GOOD YOUR MAJESTY! IT APPEARED TO BE THERAPEUTIC FOR HUMAN X!”

“Therapeutic Sans?” She hums thoughtfully to herself. “Yes I suppose it might have released some old wounds…”

“THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE I NOTICED YOUR MAJESTY.” Sans wrings his gloves anxiously, the smile on his face falling a minute amount. It is enough however, for his brother to notice the change.
“Is it something that can be discussed here?” She gives the smaller skeleton her undivided attention, her brow crinkling in worry as she watches the blue gloves twist and bend.

“No…perhaps this is not the best place to discuss the matter…” Sans whispers to himself, his voice quiet, unsure, like a child deciding if the action is worth the risk of punishment. Papyrus stares ahead, his brow scrunching down in thought. His eye lights follow your form as you walk off the stage with Muffet’s underling, the dress swaying suggestively as it gives a few people a sneak peek at your undergarments. Zanos continues to talk animatedly with you, his eyes shoot the taller skeleton a mocking stare, taunting him with just one look. The glass nearly breaks in the skeleton’s grasp, the splinters holding onto the shreds of glass, refusing to break. You feel eyes glare at the back of your neck as the two of you make your way to the bar, the familiar scent of nicotine and citrus tingling the edges of your smell.

“Ah my little prodigy…you are mine at last.” He hums pleasantly, his body slowly circling your own like a vulture examining its prey. His hand alights with a deep grey magic, the aura dark and threatening as the bone structure in his fingers tugs the air. Your hand moves in time with the tug, summoning your magic forward. It is tainted, blackened, like the goop around your soul. You feel your old soul thrum beneath the surface, screaming, crying in pain as the darkness consumes it. Suffocates, deteriorates, until the will to live is naught. He flicks his wrist again, dispelling the threads from your fingertips. Your body jerks convulsively as he tests his new connection with your soul, your eyes focusing dully on the beast in front of you.

“So long as you hold your end of the bargain.” Your voice does not sound your own. It echoes, an air of static shifting, corrupting the words like an old television. Your mind is fuzzy, the sheer darkness within accompanied by a pressing weight keeping your thoughts at bay. A high pitch ringing fills most of your eardrums, sounds of normality a distant memory. His laughter filters through the static, the deep vibrations stirring a feeling long shelved since your “birth.”

“Now my dear, you know I am a man of my word. No harm shall come to your family.” His shoes crush the grass beneath his feet, the blades falling flat against the pressure. There is no wind, the sky void of its usual bright blue, the animals long gone from the area. Everything appears dull, devoid of its usual brightness and color. A grey tint lingers in the scenery, your mind vaguely wondering if it is dull because of him or his magic absorbing into your soul. The hairs on the back of your neck stand erect; his shadow looms over your form, the outline on the ground making out a familiar shape.

A cold digit slides across your vertebrae, causing the hairs on your neck to stand erect. Heat from his body brushes against your exposed skin, a heated breath caressing the outer rim of your ear.

“But they are not of blood and therefore not your family, are they?” Time stalls for a moment, the blood rushing through your veins fills your ears as your mind clears for a moment. Shock, disbelief, fear race through your mind, your frame refusing to release the tension coiling your insides.

“No….” He hums from behind you, the deep rumble rattling the bones within your frame.

“No, my dear? You have no room to deny me…after all…” Digits dig painfully into your arms, the pinpricks allowing the wounds to remain open, the crimson river appearing dusty red than crimson. Your body spins like a top, your body facing his once more. Through the brim of his cloak, you note the thoughtful look upon his face, the façade disappearing as you stare into his golden eyes. Wicked excitement lights the glowing orbs, like fireflies in an open field burned alive by the inferno of a fire. A cool, sharp object trails the bare of your arm, the nerves wincing as it cuts through the flesh. It mends just as quickly, the droplet of blood the only indicator of the wound.
“You belong to me now.” Your soul thumps against your ribcage, the sheer force nearly causing you to stumble.

“And one by one, we shall eliminate what threatens our livelihood...what threatens our research.” Malice coats his voice, a secret mission, a vendetta against those who have opposed him. You can feel the darkness constricting your soul in tune with his anger, the power calling your magic to the surface. The vibrations feel foreign, the threads of the injections, your old soul color, and the new viscus magic creates a new beast entirely, an arsenal of abilities you have no control over. You struggle against the darkening hold, the world slowly fading to a monotone scale of deep greys and black. It takes the little strength you possess to part your lips, the crisp autumn air a beautifully painful taste.

“You can’t...” Your throat feels as dry as sand, tears threatening to fall from your fading vision. You refuse to let them fall for this bastard, the images of those you love flashing before you. He laughs again, this one filled with mirth, another sound which catches you off guard. His skeletal finger grasp at your chin, forcefully yanking your head up to his level, the digit creating a small flow of crimson down your chin. Golden orbs crinkle in the corner, the amber liquid swirling with a familiar look. It sends a shiver down your spine, bits of his magic spilling from his fingertips, caressing your skin with flakes of fire.

“And I won’t my dear... you will.”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the extreme lateness! I am not dead I assure you! Just a lot going on in life which is still no excuse but still. I finalized my divorce in September and the man did not wait to hook up with his new chick (they started dating before it finalized..) I got me a new man but it is long distance and I still struggle with depression. Basically between work and school, I have had no motivation to write. Period. This chapter literally took me at least two months just to get to this length which is sad. I am really sorry I will continue this just please have patience.
“Well this won’t do.” The male hums, displeasure evident on his features as he stares down at the latest failure. A mass of a creature shrieks and shivers, once human if he recalls correctly. Too many injections, various bodily modifications due to his research. He was hopeful with this one, perhaps making a creature greater than his last. Just like the rest however, their corporal form gives out under the soul strain, the tiny bit of life shattering into thousands of glass shards. The creature belts out another gut wrenching agonizing screech, the sound unrecognizable to most ears. Most technicians compare it to nails on a chalkboard, the high frequency barely registering through the metallic life dripping from damaged ear drums. Those within the business, much like himself, compare the sound to that of machinery revving to life, scraping the metal pieces against the other as it bends the item to their will. Those within the general area of experimentation keep their heads low, occasionally wincing at the high frequency. They will not question him, he knows, curious as they may be, they do not wish to become the next thing on his table.

A mass of pale flesh screams begin to crack much like their soul, their somewhat put together throat growing dry and worn. Large bird-like talons claw at the soil, tiles heaved through various processes of pain. A few of their nails remain broken in the soil, the bloodied tips dangling uselessly as they fight for freedom. A chunk of dirty blonde sticks to what remains of their misshapen skull, the skin pulling taut accentuating the features. They look hollow, ribs sunken in, shadows looming behind the protruding eyeballs, the muscle barely clinging the skeletal frame together. They still wear the clothes they were kidnapped in over two months ago: a baggy, now torn and bloodied lilac tank top and a pair of bloody rose pink undergarments. In their struggling, the bones creak under the strain, snapping one of their wrists clean through the skin. There is no blood, only a thick violet purple ooze sliding out from beneath the flesh. The bone does not appear white, but rather an off grey.

‘Interesting.’ He makes a small note about the change in anatomical features within the human body, circling certain pinpoints on the sheet model. Beady red eyes glare tiredly up at the doctor, the will to fight slowly fading from their face.

“You will not succeed.” The creature manages to grit through their sharpened teeth, a sickening smile tearing the edges of their lips exposing the back of the jaw.

“You will die at the hands of your creations.” A dry cackle escapes the creatures lips through jolts of pain and blood. A few tears slip down their face as their eyes, a final resounding ‘crack!’ follows closely to the sound of glass shattering. The shards fall in front of the creature to the floor, a dull grey-purple light fading as they pass. As they hit the ground, the shards turn clear, the being leaving the corporal plane to hell knows where. The husk of the body that remains behind begins to deteriorate, flecks of remaining skin slowly peeling away like string cheese. Muscles are next to peel.
away, the fibrous material reminds the doctor to something akin to celery: stringy, fibrous, and thick. As the muscular system deteriorates, the ash grey bones beneath begin to dust much to the doctor’s surprise.

‘So it appears that if enough monster magic is implemented, the human aspect deteriorates quickly, however, the internal structure acts like monsters. Quite interesting indeed.’

A foul odor soon follows during the ashing process, the scent of rotting raw meat and ash causes some of the nearby interns to retch unprofessionally, a few quickly excuse themselves out of the room. Everything lands in a puddle of beautiful violet, the color slowly mixing in with the dark soil. The color oxidizes, the beauty snuffed out into a similar blend of rust lining the area. The color reminds the doctor of a similar coloration of a certain child’s eyes.

‘Perseverance should have outlived those of kindness and justice, yet they barely lasted as long as they did.’ He sighs, taking notes on his clipboard with a frown.

‘Yet another useless test subject. Could not bear the simplest and lowest forms of testing. Pathetic. They appear to be weaker as the days pass by. Perhaps they do not birth souls strong enough anymore.’ The doctor mutters quantitative information under his breath, one of his minions scratches furiously on a rather large stack of notes on a clipboard. They halt in their frivolous scribbling for a moment, lifting a tape recorder to their pale lips. There is a slight tremble in the voice, an annoyance the doctor will have to address later in the final print of information.

“Experiment P459 failed to absorb test vial...167.3 through soul insertion. Deceased…” The minion halts their speech, glancing at the digital clock strapped to their arm. “...ten minutes after injection. Cause: magical deterioration. Will require further testing to determine potency, ability, and permanent effect on the soul.” The little ragged device clicks with some force, the gears within still after a moment of silence. One or two cautious feet come forward, collecting the empty vials and syringes, preparing for the next experimentation. They keep their head down, asking nothing about the body as another minion cleans up the remains with no complaint. It takes the crew roughly five minutes to finish the setup and at least another sixty seconds to drag it out of the room.

‘This will need to be addressed as well. Their speed is deteriorating on the turn over.’

He can feel the irritation seep deep behind his eyes, the pain throbbing like ants marching in steady rhythm. Thoughts of that day race through his waking thoughts and when sleep consumes him, your face glows the brightest, mocking him even miles away. He pinches the bridge of his nose with a gloved hand, closing his eyes for a brief moment. Amidst the chaos and destruction, you stand triumphantly above the bloodied remains of one of his minions. He could not care to learn the creature’s name and obviously it made no difference at the outcome. The doctor recalls the blood covering your body, the doctoral suit looking gloriously twisted with dashes of red. Various pieces were torn from it from various fights, all of which you came out as the alpha. Your familiar growl, the wild fire within your gaze as you relish in the destruction of the institution fills the doctor with an odd feeling. Your carnal, savage thirst for blood triggers a primal feeling deep within the doctor, one which he will shower upon you once you return to his care. Oh yes, he looks forward to your eyes aglow with artificial determination, your fiery passion to live striking his soul as yet another injection pierce your glass prism. The doctor shakes his head, dispelling the sight just as quickly as it came.

‘This is no time to be thinking such thoughts. There is still much work to be done.’ The doctor sneers at the paper before him, the number declining faster than the European bubonic plague. ‘

At this rate, we will have more bodies than results. There has to be some useful souls out there. Perhaps a change in the demographic in which we test...’
“Wow…just…wow.” He turns his head slightly to get a better view of the intern, irritation palpable on his tongue. Although the phrase just under their breath, he hears it clear as day: the subtle shake of their words, mystification and nerves lacing together in a beautiful symphony. Their eyes wide with wonder as they stare at the red goo, their face changing slightly green from nausea. There is a subtle shake to their form, not from their rapid note taking of a fast-paced hand nor from the excited jitter at a step closer to the goal.

‘No.’ The doctor conceals a frown deep within the shadows of his hood, disappointment running through his skull. He can taste the feeling on his tongue as though it were a wine: a bitter, hard to swallow, impalpable, poorly made, ten-dollar wine. ‘From fear.’ He glances down at his unkempt boots, the immaculate shine obscured by splotches of mud, blood, and scuff marks from various things. His cloak no longer holds the air of cleanliness, his body no longer exuberates the smell of a fancy pheromone used to hide the smell of death. Stains, mainly blood and ash, cover his form, the material starting from scratch all over again. The doctor did not like the dirty look of the homeless, but it is less suspecting than a well-kept gentleman at least in this current stage of planning.

‘No matter. This will all be worth it in the long run. New employees will come, the building will grow, experimentation will continue on schedule as planned.’ The doctor looks down in time to note the remaining surfaced goo creeping near his foot. It causes a scowl to return to his face as he moves out of its way.

‘The only true issue at this current moment is time. No experiments at this current time can handle this recent dosage thus halting progress. In order to meet our deadline, something will have to accept it soon, otherwise the schedule will have to be pushed back further.’

He discards an object into a nearby waste bin, the sickening crackle of glass fills the near still air. The new intern jolts at the sudden sound, a small squeak escaping through their lips. It causes the doctor some sick joy and irritation.

‘An intern of his should not openly show their emotions no matter how bad the act or sound. They will be replaced soon and perhaps another will be up to the current challenge.’

Still the doctor gives the intern a neutral look, his gaze revealing nothing of his plans. They seem to calm from the scare, finishing the notes before handing it over to him. He takes the papers delicately, making sure to brush his gloved hand along the tops of their hands. A small ounce of shock passes their gaze, but they keep it as neutral as possible.

‘They must trust me for experimentation to continue. After all, a lab does not simply run itself with one person steering the ship.’

The doctor skims over the notes briefly, noting the various experimentations they were able to pass through this soul. Qualitative and quantitative information jump off the page at him, the results pointing to one particular trait holding strong through the experimentation. It causes a sick smile to caress the doctors face.

‘You always have a way of coming back around don’t you?’

He glances up briefly from the paperwork.

“Have Doctor K prep the next experiment. We will get this right before proceeding forward with anything else. Inform the lab technicians too as the potency may need to be lowered before the full dosage can be administered.” His golden eyes meet the nervous stare of the minion as he speaks, watching them fidget with something on the tip of their shirt as he talks. The intern nods vigorously, their feet scuffing up small piles of soil as they run to heed the command. The door swings slowly
closed with an irritating ‘squeeeek’ before settling into the lock, leaving the doctor alone with his thoughts. It would surely take a lot of time to perfect this type of experimentation, but you are worth it.

‘Once we perfect our greatest breakthrough yet, time will only tell if you will overcome or be overthrown.’

I lay down this armorrrrr

‘No no...that isn’t the right keys at all!’

You growl in irritation, your magic fluctuating, flickering, the shape before you barely holding its form. In an attempt to hit the surface, your flesh passes right through, shattering the illusion. The magic holding it together dispels, the recoil a swift slap to your form. Sweat perspires along the ridge of your hairline, every part of your being screaming out in protest. Magic reserves are dangerously low, energy slowly depleting away as your body tries scraping something, anything, together to keep you from immediately collapsing.

‘One more time.’ You grit your teeth, attempting to summon the magic. There is a familiar prickle of energy, the bolts dancing at the tips, the magic flaring in one last attempt. A hiss escapes your lips as the bolt coils back inside, a growl resounding from within. A wave of lightheadedness passes quickly, the unstable illness causes the body to shift, nearly knocking your legs out from below.

‘X...a creature of mass destruction, trained night and day with no rest, is struggling with such a simple task! If he were here you would surely be dead…’

You make a ‘tch’ at the voice, the familiar condescending presence always has something to say much like him. A darkness that is hard to shake, the whispering words, condescending, poking, breaking any walls built to hide it. An inner turmoil, a reminder of the failure you have become. A seed of irritation inflicts on your thoughts, the words pushing against an invisible form.

‘Fuck off. I don’t need to hear it from you right now.’ A distorted chuckle rings through your ears, the room’s music falling into a quiet melody in the static.

‘Oh? And when would it be a good time Miss “mass destroyer”? After your little petty life starts to fall apart?’ The voice mimics your noise of disgust, the static growing louder, the radio falling away to silence.

‘Just look at you now. Playing house with a bunch of pretenders. It is only a matter of time that they will discover your LOVE, your EXP. Then what? You think they will love you? Do you think they will even give you a chance to explain? ’ A static filled cackle fills your mind, the world blurring around the edges, images of the past replacing the present. A deep throb within reminds you not to listen to the toxic voice, to the deep fears it spews from molten lips. You let out a defensive growl, hands clenched into fists, crimson spilling into the void.

‘Stop it.’

‘You are a beast, a monster of mass destruction bent at the will of your master. You think they can love a beast? A monster? Don’t make me laugh! You can’t even tell them your real name is…’

You slam your hands on your ears, the thick dark ink threatening to consume the world around you.
It constricts and coils around the physical form, air suddenly difficult to push past chapped lips.

“Enough. I will not have these thoughts plaguing my mind after I promised the Queen to try changing my outlook.” You whisper, the air humming with artificial determination. There is a little wind, the whisper of a sigh passing through. As the ink rolls off the image, the world returns to its bright colorful nature, a new song humming along pleasantly in the background.

Your lungs release an abnormally large breath, the beats behind the ribs continue on steadily, unsure, as though the voice will come back. You barely begin to even out your breathing when two voices crack the world.

“X!”

“X!”

The voices ring through the household, their shouts joining into one powerful voice. Thoughts rush through in a quick manner, never staying on one for more than a brief second yet enough for the bloody images to imprint on your soul. It beats erratically within your chest, a cold hand of worry gripping every nerve ending. Feet slap against the wooden floor, the door shouting in protest at its rough handling, thumping harshly into the wall.

Your body is quick, your mind quicker as the muscle and flesh attempt to pick up the pace, lagging like a loading screen from overuse of magic. With every couple of steps, you fight the urge to collapse on your feet, sweat trickling down your brow in strain. You take one haphazard step, the world suddenly shifting sideways as you collide into the wall. It rattles in protest, nearby objects rattle in worry as a soft ‘oooff!’ escapes through your lips, a twinge of popped vessels beneath the surface pokes the nerves in their spillage.

It takes your body a moment to push itself off the cold floor, each step nearly causing another tumble down the stairs. With a final leap, your feet land at the base of the staircase, the action causing strain on the already taut muscles. The room swims underwater, the waves crash the image of the room; a high frequency hum. You stagger, your feet refusing to remain stationary, your eyes twitching anxiously like a cat tail. Chara is the first to come into view, the young girl’s brightly colored outfit standing pronounced against the neutral backdrop. You quicken your pace to the child, noting dully in the back of your mind how nice the child looks in her rose pink dress, hair carefully clipped to the side by a ceylon rose butterfly clip. Matching the butterfly’s pattern, her leggings mirror the black abyss, few splotches of a yellow-white light breaking up the night sky. The bright eyes highlight further by the choice in color, mirroring your image as your fingers carefully brush the youthful skin; soul beating erratically through the haze of your mind.

“What?! What is it?!” Fingertips carefully grasp the angular chin formation, tilting the flesh into various lights and shadows, looking for any sign of pain, discolor, crimson. Words carefully move against rose stained lips painted across the sunny flesh, the words falling into the deep abyss, struggling to pass the erratic ‘thump. thump.’ A shadow looms within the mind, whispers of panic fog rational thought. The image coats the corners with a dark, musky fog, the tendrils paint the bright room somber. You feel your lips moving, the sound strange against vocal cords in your throat. It is a language often used in the lab during routine check-ups, a series of static filled words and symbols to create a language. One he spoke, one learned to prepare. to warn, to escape.

“Is someone hurt? Is there bleeding and if so is it internal? External? What of possible soul damage? Possibly mental? Emotional?” Ever so carefully you descend down the child’s form, fingers working efficiently in the physical analysis. She twists and twirls with your ministrations, giggling softly under her breath under the hawk eye examination. After a brief moment, you determine the child is
physically unharmed in this current moment, her soul giggling, basking in its pure determination. Some tension leaves the body, shoulders slumping a fraction shorter, dark, erratic thoughts slowly walk to the corners of your mind. As you stand, you turn toward the other child, your feet making quick work of the distance between the two of you. Frisk is caught in your wandering gaze; the boy makes a strange face as your form towers over him, a faint flush of color darts across his features.

You waste no time checking him out as well, muttering things under your breath neither child appear to understand. Fingertips carefully brush stray locks out of the child’s face; it pushes the brow up into a natural resting position. Chocolate caramel eyes stare up with a weird tint, a slight shine to the normally dull orbs. Over the erratic beating of your soul, you hear another soul beating roughly against the ribcage, the owner trying to quell the nervous thing with a few concentrating breaths. It causes your attention to shift to the chest cavity, the midnight soul cracking beneath the surface. Small slips of red peak from behind its barrier, a similar shine begging to get out only to dull, hiding into the black. There is another spot just between the long narrow crack splitting the soul on an odd angle. It reminds you of a slash mark, the line jagged, imperfect, like an ill-trained assassination attempt. For the brief moment, past the black and red, you note another color, the brightness catching you off guard for a brief second, another for the light to vanish.

‘Strange...was that color always present in the child’s soul and if so, how did I miss it right off the bat? Perhaps it is from recent revelations? Something else? Another person? Another interest?’

You huff, going back to the ministrations of his body. The questions will wait until later. Words flow easier as you slow the pace, the foreign tongue stored back into a dark abyss.

“Nothing to trigger allergies? Nothing immediately threatening your physical as well as spiritual beings? No poison or death threats?” A chuckle escapes the pale child’s lips, his chest rumbling happily despite the seriousness of the question. You give him a level stare, the sharpness causing the child to falter.

“Nothing like that.” Frisk chastise, rolling his eyes. The corner of his mouth twitches slightly against the stoic poker face, the twitch size increasing as Chara begins to giggle in the background. At the lack of the joke or rather threat, your mind screeches like a car attempting to regain traction on ice.

‘If they are okay, then why the sudden shout? There are no physical or soul blemishes other than the typical bruising from rough housing. Is there a threat looming around them? Something more they are not telling me?’

You huff, confusion evident as you glance questionably between the two children, pulling your body to stand. Chara continues to giggle behind her manicure, this time the nails are painted to match the color of her soul. Frisk goes to stand next to his sister, a smirk gracing his pale face.

“So why did you call me down in a panic?” You fold your arms across your chest, nerves cause the body to shift between feet. The kids exchange a knowing glance. Their language is silent as they communicate, subtle shifts of the body, twitching eye sockets, the occasional miniscule dip of the brow.

“Children are you ready?” The Queen’s voice echoes the quiet space, the kids pulling apart before the large goat monster appears. Her eyes widen in shock for a brief second, resting to the neutral kind gaze ever present in her eyes.

“My child, will you be joining us on our outing?” Her voice is smooth as ever, a questioning tone topping the last of her sentence. You glance between the children and the Queen, your brow raising quizzically in her direction.
“Outing?” You parrot dully, the voices inside your head scolding at the bare minimum of a question. Toriel smiles nonetheless, giving you a patient nod.

“Yes my child. We are having a picnic at a nearby park with the skeleton brothers. Would you like to accompany us?” You close your mouth, a bile taste filling your mouth. Did you really want to see the skeletal duo so soon? After the performance nearly two weeks ago, the hyper of the two over almost everyday, his brother showing up more days then not. Your answer takes longer than you expect, the air growing heavy with tension.

“Of course she is coming mom!” Chara pipes up from behind. This answer appears to shock the former Queen, her brow pushing upward in shock. You turn toward the child as well, your face conveying little emotion on the matter. She grins up at you, the smile wide with a flush painting her cheeks.

“I...In fact! She was about to go upstairs to get ready before the brothers come over right sis?”

‘You cheeky little…’

“She is telling the truth mom. Sis said she would love to go out with us this afternoon.”

Frisk walks by, the smirk breaks into a full blown toothy grin, a predatory look squeals happily in his gaze. He makes himself comfortable on the loveseat, picking up a book from under the little couch.

“Oh! Well then I shall make extra preparations for such a joyous occasion!” Toriel’s smile is bright, warm, the feeling reaching deep into your soul. She quickly turns back from her previous destination, a bit of skip in her step. Once she is out of view, you whip your gaze toward the smiling children, each taking up a space on one of the two couches. Words attempt to form on your tongue, the sharp bitter bile within eats the nicer phrases, opting for harsh, stern words. The rational part however, note that they are two of the very few you hold close to your soul. Both voices shout within your mind harsh, kind, cruel, pacifist; the sounds within leave the tongue with nothing to be said.

“You better get a move on sis. The brothers will be over in ten minutes, five if Sans is driving.”

You shoot the child a withering glare, his signature smirk gracing his face once more before turning to his novel. Chara refuses to look in your direction, the child absorbing herself into the plastic device in her lap. With a huff you make your way up the stairs, two at a time, racing thoughts displacing precious thinking space. Emotions run wild with the context, different feelings brushing the surface, flickering with each passing emotion.

“They should not have vouched for me to go. I did not need to know where they go on their little knit outings...I am fine...alone…”

Darkness creeps over your thoughts, the slow, thick sludge reminding you of where you came from, what you are. Without another thought, the door closes behind you, shutting the world away.

Downstairs, the children sit in quiet contemplation, each staring at an object in their hand, their focus elsewhere.

“...Frisk?” A quiet ‘hmm’ answers the smaller of the two, the book shifting out of the molten gaze. Chara twiddles her thumbs, the fabric in her lap catching between the digits. Her gaze, usually sunny and cheerful looks on with worry, fear. The air shifts around the room, a heavy weight settling on their souls.

“Did...did we do the right thing? By forcing her to join us? Was it...selfish?” Her voice is unsure, the usual boastful determination hidden behind doubt, insecurity. Frisk hums, his mind calculating and
replaying the situation at hand. He knows you do not like the skeleton brothers or at least the smiley trashbag.

‘But the younger skeleton is slowly growing on her. Her soul does not shutter around his presence, her body does not convey distrust, uncertainty, hatred. Sans appears to enjoy her company as well and Papyrus…’

Frisk hums under his breath, a quiet curse escapes into the wind.

‘No time to think about his feelings on the matter. The current conversation is about X and how we may have royally fucked up…’

“I think...we did the right thing.” One beat. Two. A shuddering breath, a shift of fabric. His voice is unsure, the tone questioning his thoughts. Nevertheless, he continues.

“I think she needs to see the world is not kill or be killed. There will always be some people like that but…” Frisk struggles to finish, the underlying text applying to himself as well as his sister. Though the thoughts remain hidden, from time to time, the spike appears in the forefront, the thirst for blood palpable on his tongue. The thought causes Frisk to shiver, his spine crawling with sin. It will only be a matter of time before his world falls out beneath his feet, the hopes and dreams nothing more then dust in the wind.

‘Yet I let myself get attached...to allow my soul to slowly take away years of hate…’

“She needs to see the good in the world.” Chara finishes for her brother, her gaze scanning the elder, a small frown tugging within her mind. He appears lackadaisical as usual, his eyes distant, his body betraying nothing. Yet, the subtle darkening under his eyes, the darkness swimming in the molten pools, how his body goes ramrod straight around people he does not know...

‘He still believes the world is a bad place as she does…’

Chara makes a move to say more, her tongue darting out to lick the dryness settling on her words. The front door earns two knocks before it is flung open, the wooden plank no match for the stout skeleton standing heroically in the light of day.

“GOOD MORNING HUMANS! WE ARE HERE TO PARTAKE IN THE DAY’S FESTIVITIES!”

Time slowly ticks by in the Queen’s living room, the clock on the wall echoing as the hands walk at a snail’s pace. Sans taps the corner of the couch he currently shares with Chara, his sockets constantly shifting focus. The child with him sits on the other end of the couch, her fingers twitching deftly across the electronic device, occasionally snapping a picture to send to someone on MonsterChat. Every once in awhile a quiet giggle escapes her throat, her fingers stilling as a video animates across the screen. Frisk on the other hand lounges across the loveseat, his feet dangle over the arm. He holds an odd book in his pale hand, occasionally shifting to turn the worn pages, creating a crack in the silence albeit for a moment. Sans cannot tell what it is about based on what he can see, but the way the child appears to emote along with the text, he can tell it was at least decent. The skeleton glances around the room for his lazy brother, a frown threatening to overtake his smile. There is a faint tickle of nicotine floating from an area, the smell quelling some anxiety, replacing with irritation. He is about to get up from his place, to lecture his brother yet again about the dangers of smoking, when the Queen walks into the room. Her outfit is casual, a bright purple tee-
A shirt flushes against the white silken fur; her pendant displays proudly just above the swell of her breasts. Baggy jeans cover the rest of the silken fur, the dark blue contrasts drastically. She hides parts of her feet within a pair of velcro sandals, a sunflower yellow tote bag finishing off her ensemble.

“HELLO QUEEN TORIEL!” Sans’ voice startles everyone in the room including the Queen herself. She takes the skeleton’s exuberance in stride, a wide smile gracing her maw.

“A pleasure to see you Sans dear.” The Queen looks around the room, the smile falling a fraction.

“Where is your brother at?” Sans huffs, crossing his arms like an angry, disobedient child.

“SMOKING THAT TAR STICK AS USUAL OUTSIDE.” She nods her head, amethyst eyes scanning the room. A small frown falls on her snout, the charming smile covering her trail easily.

“Oh dear. If we do not get moving soon, we will miss some of the festivities at the park.” The Queen sighs, the air escaping through her snout. You are not there yet and, despite the children telling her you are coming, a tinge of sadness dotes on her soul. Without thinking, Toriel glances up at the stairs, her soul calling out quietly in her chest. Noticing the sadness lingering in the Queen’s gaze, the skeleton jumps to attention, the quick movement does not affect either child as though conditioned to his sporadic movements.

“I CAN GO GET HER FOR YOU YOUR MAJESTY!” He does not need a verbal cue from the Queen to know who she is looking for. After all, they would have left already had you said no to the family. Toriel blinks at the short skeleton, a kind smile graces not only her face but deep in her soul.

“If you wish Sans I would appreciate that.” Sans grin widens, a flutter in his soul has him nodding eagerly at the Queen.

“OF COURSE YOUR MAJESTY! I SHALL RETRIEVE THE HUMAN X!”

As if on autopilot, Sans rushes up the staircase, extra energy bubbling through his magical being. ‘This is a breakthrough!’ He notes. This will be the first official outing with the family and friends that you are partaking in. For months the skeleton often asks about your whereabouts when they all go out, each time he is met with a sad smile and kind words.

“I am sorry Sans. She is not feeling up for coming this time.”

“Not todays Sans...”

“She does not wish to partake today though I will let you know you say hi.”

Similar words come from the Queen, from Chara, and occasionally Frisk, all shooting the small skeleton a similar look of sadness. He does not know why he continues to ask about your participation in activities, why he comes over everyday not only to see the small humans but you as well. The skeleton knows he is not on your good list, the hard steely glare often leaves the skeleton shivering in his soul. Yet, without fail, he continues to worry about you. Are you eating? Are you taking proper care of yourself? Is work working out of you? Mundane everyday questions plague his skull, his soul demanding the body to find the answers swimming within his skull. The very indication of you joining today causes the skeleton’s soul to flutter against his ribcage, the wings beating lightly with nervous energy.

‘Everything will be fine! She is a good human friend after all even if she is hard on the outside! This is just the first stepping stone of many great things!’ With a quiet ‘mwhehe’ Sans continues up the stairs, a happy yet unfamiliar feeling pushes the skeleton quickly toward his destination. It feels like a
longing, a want, a desire, to see the real smile beneath the prosthetic one. To see a side of you, one hidden behind so many locks with various keys that leave many, including him, befuddled.

‘Maybe today’s festivities will break her out of her shell! Maybe she will frolic with the children and play a game or two! Maybe...just maybe...we can become...!’

The skeleton stops for a moment, a hard ‘thump!’ against his rib cage causes his steps to falter, the off kilter of his step unusual to the skeleton. It takes only a moment to quell the magic buzzing in his bones; a quiet huff passes through his nasal cavity. Sans glances questioningly at his soul, the baby blue heart hums warmly beneath his shirt, the culmination of his being acting strange as of late. He shakes it off, filing the event to examine at a later date.

‘This is no time to be thinking about my soul or how strange it is acting! I must get human X before the other humans worry!’

He continues on his mission to your room, a grin splintering his face with excitement. Perhaps, today will be the day that you accept him into your close circle of family, even just maybe, becoming his friend!

‘And then much like the smaller humans, we may partake in the extra special friend accepting tacos solidifying our friendship further!’

Without realizing it, the skeleton reaches your door, hand poised in the knocking position. You have, of course, mentioned numerous times to the rather loud skeleton that privacy is something that should be respected...with various objects thrown at the skeletal head. His jaw opens up, the hum of his voice brushing over his spinal cord. It falls silent, a sound on the other side of the door causing pause. It is soft, the air escaping the object holds no static, a little gruff and ragged but the sound sings similar to a velvet texture to the skeleton. It reminds the skeleton of cherry blossoms opening a spring day, the light breeze kissing his cheeks, its touch gentle as though he will shatter beneath its fingertips. Yet the tree is strong, the base keeping it rooted to the earth for many years and elements to come.

A quartet of strings hums pleasantly in the background, the sound following quietly behind the keys leading the song. It is of a somber note; it pulls at the skeleton, the whispers within tell him to listen. His hand falls to the side, bones rattling quietly beneath the symphony.

‘I shouldn’t be tardy! Everyone will be waiting for us to return to them!’ But his form remains frozen in place, his sockets closing without his command. Normally by now, you recognize the presence in front of your door, but today, you seem distracted much to the skeleton’s questionable gaze.

‘But if she hasn’t noticed me by now...surely it is okay to listen for a little bit...?’

I have no heart, just ice and stone....

Made up of nails and teeth and bone....

You lift your hands toward your face, little silver scars cross over your natural tracks. They glimmer and shine in the dull room lighting, but in your mind, you see the red, the blood, nails digging painfully into the flesh. You crush your eyes close, negative emotions bubbling through the electric sparks within your mind.

And I know exactly what I’m for
Flashbacks of that place flicker, their pleas whisper silently within your ear, their corporal forms grow heavier as the last bubbling breath escapes their lips. There is clapping in the background, a knowing smirk imprinting on the back of your head.

To hurt and destroy and nothing more.

Magic flares, your body humming along with your emotions. You slowly open your eyes, glancing down at the pinpoints of magic dotting your palms. One eye flickers with power, the wisp soothing the heated skin beneath its tendril. Thin strands of magic drop uselessly between your fingertips, morning rays cast their brilliance onto an otherwise useless color. Conflict bickers angrily within your mind, the muscles within your face pull the corners down.

Annnnd ifff it’s trueeee that IIII was maaaaddeee

I still don’t know if I can change...

The magic dispels, residue cascades down to the carpet, vanishing as it hits. Hopelessness. Fear. Anger. They drop from calloused fingertips, a flare of determination brushing against your skin with a heated need.

But something has stirred

A beast has awakened

Opened a door

There’s no mistaking

Waging a war

It’s fighting inside of ...meee

You continue to sing on in the background, unaware of the frowning skeleton in the hallway. He waits patiently in the hallway, listening to you belt out the remainder of the song, the words flowing like the strings of your magic. Without looking at it, he can hear your soul humming along in tune with the melody, the cracking life force straining to return to its original color, to return to its normal, unbroken form. It hates the LOVE it has acquired despite the whispers within reminding it that it was necessary. The skeleton does not know all of the details as to what went on in the place, nor will he pry you for information. But the way you sing, that night when you allowed exposure to your inner cumulative being, it stirred something within Sans that he could not place. To see a broken soul, the very being crying for help, crying for attention under the notes of the host…

“Sans?” Your voice breaks the skeleton out of his trance, sockets snapping open. You gaze down questioningly at the skeleton, a faint pink dusting your face. Despite the discoloration, you appear normal to the skeleton, the same residual face you throw on around everyone stares evenly at his sockets. The unnatural blend of your eyes crinkle close to your bridge, an eyebrow pushing the skin above in an inquisitive facial expression. The skeleton glances over your face, appearing to search for something abnormal, a sign of distress, emotion, anything to tell him you need help. Still, you continue to stare back, faint ticks of annoyance slowly pushing your facial features.

“AH! THAT IS RIGHT HUMAN! QUEEN TORIEL HAS SENT ME UP TO GATHER YOU FOR THE FESTIVITIES FOR THE DAY!” At the mention of such event, a scowl breaks out on your face, clear distaste for the event evident. Sans sweats, phalanges twisting the gloves nervously, eye lights searching around, towards, to the floor, the eyes having a hard time focusing.
“A...AH! HUMAN...ER...X! THIS EVENT SHALL BE A JOYOUS ONE ESPECIALLY IN YOUR PRESENCE!” The skeleton halts, eyes widening. Mortification covers his face with a glowing bright blush, similarly colored sweat coats the smooth skull.

“I...I MEAN! JUST YOU VERY EXISTENCE IS EXCITING AND TO JOIN US IS...!” Sans slaps a bright blue glove over his mouth, tears building at the edge of his sockets. A quiet rattling fills the hall, the sound hiding behind the music. You sigh, your lips pulling into a thin, tight line.

“Hey…” The bright blue iris glance to the side, shame and fear radiating off the skeleton like a musky perfume. You huff.

“I said...hey!” Sans’ face covers your line of sight, the bright blush deepening to a rich ocean shade. Tears bubble and swim within the sockets, threatening to fall at a moment’s notice. A gloved grip clutches lightly against your wrist, the plush fabric hiding the digits beneath. His skull is smooth under your grip, the jaw pliable despite the rigid appearance. His magic grazes your skin, the sensation similar to a warm, comfortable electrical shock.

“I get what you are saying Sans. Also know that I did not choose to come willingly.” His face calms down a fraction, disappointment evident by the decline in his smile.

“However, due to these circumstances I will use this to make good on my promise. So…” The flesh connects with a tear trailing down his face, the liquid leaving a colorful trail in its wake. Your thumb swipes it away, your mind reeling at the cool wet texture disintegrating away as quickly as it formed.

‘Magic is...something else.’

“T...thankyouforcomingtogetme.” A moment ticks by. Then another. Heat builds under your cheekbones, the pink flush from earlier returning despite your internal scolding. The skeleton’s sockets widen in shock. The sound is sudden, the laughter boisterous as it belts out through the hall; vibrations tickle the padding of your hand. A grand toothy smile graces the skeleton’s face, tears spilling as the sockets crinkle to a close. The sound itself releases all tension in the air.

“YOU ARE MOST WELCOME X!” With a curt nod, you release the skeleton from your grip, backing slightly into the room once more, the heat remaining.

‘I won’t admit to it. His laughter paired with magic took the tension out of the room. It has nothing to do with me nor the terrible thank you. Just magic as usual.’

Sans glances at you, something in his gaze causes the blush to intensify, to make something thump against the ribs, to make the small accumulative being fill with warmth. The feeling is intoxicating like a good shot of whiskey on a cold day. A promise to keep the villains away, to keep each day filled with sunshine and laughter. You do not like the new feeling nor how vulnerable it makes you feel in the presence of the skeleton. With a final step into the room, your hand grips the wooden door in a near death grip, the wood straining under the pressure.

“This doesn’t change anything though!” You grit through your embarrassment, slamming the door in the laughing skeleton’s face.

“8....9....10! BE PREPARED HUMANS FOR I, THE MAGNIFICENT SANS, WILL USE HIS SUPERIOR TRACKING SKILLS TO FIND YOU!”

A rustle beneath you quietly squeels, the giggles of the children flutter in the light spring breeze.
From your position, you can see the stocky skeleton racing excitedly through the field, a couple of the children shifting their position to prevent being spotted. For those out in plain sight, the skeleton lets out a boisterous laugh, poses, and exclaims loudly how he shall “capture the human”. A few immediately are captured and placed delicately on the playground or “the human holding device” as he put it.

‘This is stupid.’ You lean carefully against the bark, one foot remains planted on a sturdy branch, the other propped against the body.

‘He can use his soul sense ability to find the children quickly, yet he uses the human means of finding them. He is even going as far as allowing the children an ample head start to free their friends before capturing them as well.’

Another gust of wind floats by, this one stronger than the last. It whips against the strands of midnight, exposing the base of your skull to the chilled air. The tree groans with the push, leaves shimming as they hold fast to the thin hands extended. You watch carefully as the skeleton resumes searching, cyan blue eye lights shining brightly at the next potential capture.

“I don’t understand.” You mutter to yourself, watching Chara jump out of the bushes a few yards from your position. She makes a mighty effort in sprinting to her goal but alas, she squeals with unrelenting joy as two skeletal arms circle her waist. She joins the group of children playing in the capture pen, her soul shining brighter than the sun itself. You allow a small smile to slip on your features as you watch on, her bright sundress fluttering around as she runs across various contraptions. An unnatural crackle of energy saps the good mood away from your body, causing every nerve to shoot in attention. It feels sickening, molting, vile. As though the being is made of rotting flesh held together with the strings of decay. Pheromones from the creature waft through the air, the very smell causes an involuntary gag. You growl under your breath, the thick toxic sludge begins coating the interior of your lungs. Slowly you turn around, carefully distributing the weight as to not snap the branch under the sudden change. A thick webbed hand latches to the side of the trunk, ooze dripping off it similar to lava. It burns the tree where it holds, the bark peeling back like a banana. The arm attached to the webbed abomination appears broken in multiple places, the joints bending at odd angles and directions. It looks akin to a mountain range: high peaks with sharp jutting lows. It is not its sickening drip that causes a gasp through your lips, nor is it the wide, predatory smile it attempts to give through bloodied fangs. No, it is the twisted shape it attempts to hold, bright crimson eyes dilated to two red pin pricks. The melting face attempts to hold the Queen’s face, the jagged structure of its skull breaks and caves at weird angles giving the face a disjointed look. Pus oozes from the cracks in its face, the bright red slipping slowly down in a horrific nightmare fueled face.

‘This cannot be real...there is no way he would allow such a thing to exist...With no true conscious or control it would expose his secrets once more.’

It lets out a gurgle of a sound, the words lost on the bubbles popping in its throat. The creature gives you one last feral glance before it leaps, a snarl escaping the molten jaw. You are quick to jump back on the branch, the tree groaning under the sudden strain. A slight ‘crack!’ crinkles under your foot, the branch barely holding on. Threads appear in your hand, the magic weak due to the overuse from morning activities. It flickers as you lash out, the magic hit barely registering to the creature. Instead, it fades right through the being, the slop of skin absorbing the magic like quicksand. It appears to laugh, the gurgle deeper than the previous one.

Sweat gathers at the ridge of the brow, clammy fingertips twitching anxiously at the side. It does not take a genius to realize that one touch of this monster will deteriorate the skin attached to the flesh; one touch of a magical body will kill the captor on the spot.
‘This isn’t good…’

It attempts to lunge once more, the dripping acid chips away at the top half of the tree. It lets out a groan followed by a sickening ‘crack!’ There is only a few seconds before the branch falls from the tree and only a few seconds after that when the creature will begin its terrorization of the park.

You move, taking the plunge down the tree along with the branch you stood on. The air brushes by, the world blurring at the seams for only a few seconds. The ground impact wracks through your body, the tremble causing some discomfort in the ankle bones. There is no time to think of this however, the children within the immediate area must be evacuated. You look up into the tree, a cold sweat breaking out. The tree itself looks fine sans the broken branch between your feet. The air no longer reeks of decaying flesh, the pustules stripping the tree gone with the laughter of children. You quickly survey the surrounding area, blood rushing through the veins deafening the sounds in the immediate area. Survey done, you immediately dart to the children on the playground, eyes locking onto the two of particular interest.

‘We have to get out of here N.O.W’

“MWEHEHE! HUMAN! I, THE MAGNIFICENT SANS, HAVE FOUND YOU!” A squeal of a child is heard a few feet away from you, Sans voice following closely behind in the wind.

‘They will be okay with the stocky skeleton. He can at least manage to dodge if needed.’

Darting around children and parents alike, you keep to the hidden points of the park as you run, keeping a watchful eye to the shadows for the globulant to reappear once more. Something within beats painfully, something deep down saying it was nothing more than an illusion, a facet of the mind. Something that will alter the good to see the evil beneath and shatter the illusion of peace.

‘There is something wrong going on here. There is no way the creature could escape as quickly as it did. Time magic isn’t a thing in this current frame. It should not have just… vanished. ’

A denser part of the tree time shades your body from the children, their laughter close yet distant. Static fills their once sweet voices; the sound drips with malice as they cackle on. Darkness coats the edges of the tree line, a thick pungent ooze drips steadily to the floor burning small holes into the soil. Leaves attempt to hold the thick sludge to no avail, the liquid eating the leaf while others give it a pathway to the floor. Grey coats the scenery in monochrome as you dash through, a pit of dread filling your soul.

‘This is not real. This is an illusion. There is no way…’

“ There is all the way my dear. The life you see is an illusion itself. Why fight the truth?”

The world inches closer to you.

“Life is bleak, the world you see falsified by the souls within it. Come back to the life you know: stagnant, three meals a day, no falsifications. ”

It inches closer, the air suddenly becoming thin, crippling, tight, constraining. Dull colors dot the area where shadows of people stand, the souls tainted in a thick ooze.

“Why struggle through a life that will not accept a monster such as yourself. Come back my little girl. Rest and all will return to once it was.”

Inch closer, thicker the air grows, words race a mile a minute. It is hard, the lead feeling settling deep
in your legs like thousand pound weights. It would be easier to succumb, to finally be free from the shackles of this pathetic life. But…

*Something within begs you to continue through the grey.*

You continue to struggle forward through the illusion, shadows throwing shards in your general direction. It cuts the flesh like butter, the magic refusing the skin a brush of healing.

*There are people waiting for you on the other side. Continue forward.*

The scene melts away, yet the thick, suffocating blanket remains.

*“Don’t fight it.”*

*Fight it.*

You hit something sturdy, a sudden waft of cigarette smoke and citrus filling your senses. Arms immediately wrap around your torso, pressing your face into the fabric they wear. You struggle against the restrictive hold, but it pulls you in tighter to the frame, a deep vibration rattling within the chest cavity of the assailant.

*“G.o.t y.o.u.”*

You blink in shock, your breath hitching in your throat as the senses slowly return. The children’s laughter fill the open air with mirth and merriment, the smell of the flora carefully floats behind the overbearing smell of smoke. A hint of chill brushes against the revealed skin on your back, the tickle of something cold digs with a hard grip against the bone along the hip. Something beats erratically in the person’s chest cavity, a warm yet cold glow pulses beneath.

*“P...Pap...y...r...u...s?”* Said skeleton looks down as you look up, a lit cigarette between his teeth. His sockets are dark, the pin pricks barely shadowing in the gaze. For once in your life, you are speechless towards the skeleton before you. His gaze is hard yet holds a hint of softness around the edges of his eyes. His fingers are no longer painfully tight, only a bit of an annoyance. The cigarette smoke does not bother you as much anymore, the smell of citrus and smoke uniquely his own. A bit of ash escapes the glowing embers, the hot dust bumps your cheek as it passes.

*“What’s the problem? Creature got your tongue?”* The cold snap of reality washes the fear off your face, a scowl pushing the muscles into place.

*‘Of course. How could I be so stupid to think he of all people would change?’*

*“Like I have anything to say to you.”* You shove off the skeleton, a shock of cold immediately replacing the warmth his body provided. You would not show it however as you cross your arms in irritation.

As the two of you bicker, the taller skeleton takes a moment to glance along the tree line, the pustular ooze stains the bark by the roots. What remains of the creature is nothing more than a black stain on an otherwise beautiful scene.

*‘At least it was able to go down quietly without making a scene.’*

He believes there is no need to mention this to you or his brother. After all, it was the cause of the sudden tear in your soul. If it weren’t for the cumulative being screaming out in pain, begging the skeleton to take action, he would be ignorant to the creature just a few feet from its prey. As you hiss below his stature, a small thump beats beneath his chest, the seed of panic settling into relief. He
would admit nothing of course, as there is just something wrong with his soul.

And the main root of the problem revolves around you.

In the distance, the stout skeleton wrings his gloves together, a hard beat against his ribs bruises the bone beneath. He does not like this feeling... it is foreign to him yet he knows it well. His brother’s arms around your waist, such an intimate hold for someone who claims they want nothing to do with you. A look that suggests a need more than a distaste. The flutter of magic beneath the taller skeleton's form fluctuates haphazardly as though it does not know how to process the stimulus. Sans knows it is wrong to feel this way about his brother given the circumstances; after all, he would be a poor hero if he did not recognize the danger that was chasing you down through the tree line. That is why he found the children as quickly as possible in your immediate path, getting them away from the tainted soul and your attempt to guide it away. The act itself is brave although stupid if the skeleton were to be completely honest. Still, the skeleton looks on from his position in the trees, eye sockets glaring at the taller skeleton while a familiar thing bumps painfully within.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the late post but due to the nature of things, I wanted to make sure this chapter was long to compensate! What did you guys think? I think from here on things will begin to slowly progress in odd, exciting ways! As always thank you for the overwhelming support!
“Now children, I expect you to behave for the skeleton brothers while I am away.” The words echo the kitchen, the resounding sound repeating like an old record. Due to the Queen’s political status within the monster community, trips such as these were mandatory to ensure the correct progression of monster society. Danger was often a factor with these meetings, as there are always those in the world who do not seek to perfect society, but rather, stagnate at old values. Toriel does not know if she will come back alive or dust by the end of each mission, but she holds hope that the humans allow her to see her children once more. Incase she is to perish, the skeleton brothers shall take custody of the children per her decree, hence why she calls them a few days prior to leaving.

The children know of this deal, continuing to follow a similar script every departure. Frisk rolls his eyes, tapping deftly on his phone. Chara nods her head, eyes looking everywhere but her mother.

“How long will you be away mom?” Chara chirps. When will you be coming back to us? Her thoughts whisper.

“Within a week, my child.” A week, give or take. Frisk stops typing for a moment, his copper gaze staring blankly at the fluorescent light. Flashbacks of his mother pass through his minds eye, some with tears and pleasantry. Others… Frisk involuntarily shivers, the scent of iron wafting under his nose.

“What is it for this time?” Is it another dangerous meeting again? The queen sighs, her hand stills in her task of writing instructions for the brothers. Although her eyes read kind, beneath the amethyst pools, worry and fear taint her soul.

“You know I must not speak of it my child.” Yes, it is dangerous, but required. Toriel turns her gaze towards two of her children, imprinting their faces to her memory. A risky deal is about to occur during this meeting: relationships between humans and monsters. The topic is a touchy one at best, most of the human population finding a reason to fear monsters, while others wish to wipe them from the earth.

“Frisk, Chara, come here my children.” Chara jumps off her countertop position, arms wide in acceptance of the information. She reaches Toriel first, embracing the goat mother in a hug. Frisk remains stationary, a thousand situations pass in his mind, each more grotesque and terrible than the last. He knows how the humans at these events: angry and full of hate, much like he was once upon a time. This meeting about monster/human relations is large, larger than monsters gaining some independence to run shops or own actual housing units. This is a meeting that could change the dynamic of many relations around the world, not just monster/human.

Frisk can see it all in his head: the meeting’s building on fire, the anti-monster activists shooting up the place, guns blazing as bullets are fired at the innocent. Blood stains the tiled floor, people and monsters alike attempting to fight back only to see the end of a barrel. Their mother… the queen…

He clutches his phone dangerously tight, the plastic holding the metal together groaning under the
“Why…” He grits his teeth, his soul shivers with mixed emotions. A small flake of black chips off, revealing another small token of red beneath. Frisk lets out a noise of distress as the world shimmers behind unshed tears. His eyes level with his mother, his caretaker, the one that took him in when others would have left him out to die. The one who he brutally murdered, again and again, yet still treated him equal to his sister. A drop of wetness cascades down his cheek.

“Why do you have to go?!” Chara turns to look at her brother, a knowing frown settling on her face. She can see the red settling within his gaze, the shift of emotions subtle but enough to be noticed by the other.

“Frisk…” His gaze whips toward his sister, red rage blinding all rational thought.

“Don’t you Frisk me! Mom just got back!” He directs his rage toward his mother. She was the only hand that cared for him, that clothed him, that gave him HOPE that one day he will cease being this…creature.

“You can’t leave! I refuse to let you walk to your death!” A hand carefully settles on the child’s shoulder, giving a gentle squeeze. Frisk whips his head up, a stream of obscenities dancing along his soul. The words die off as shock settles in his gaze, the red receding to allow the bare minimum of color back into his vision. You stand there, an unreadable expression crossing your face as you stare past the anger, stare past the pain, and dig deep to expose his bleak soul. The piercing gaze of your multicolored eyes always fascinates Frisk, the colors swirling as though they are the strongest wall yet shows the most expressions. Red pulls back further, the ringing Frisk did not realize was there recedes further into the recesses of his mind.

“That is enough Frisk. The queen knows what she is doing is risky, but it is a necessity for the advancement of monster-human politics.” Frisk always likes your voice albeit how little you actually use it. Its gruff yet feminine, a soft bell in a clock tower. He takes a deep breath, then two.

‘Of course, I know this…I always know this when she leaves…Why is this time so much harder?’

“She will return when the task is done, but, causing pain for her prior to her departure is cruel Frisk.” Your voice lowers to a whisper, a murmur of fear fluttering on the tip of your soul.

“But you know this…don’t you Frisk?” Frisk checks your soul, the colors swirling around various cracks, essence bleeding from old wounds.

‘She is afraid of her home disappearing but does not wish to worry the Queen.’

He stares with bewilderment between you and your soul. Such a simple admission, a few words more than any expression or emotion you currently express.

‘She is from a broken world as I. It is…selfish for me to act as such when she has just started this new adventure.’

“I…I understand…” You give him a look, one that Frisk has only seen when you think no one is looking. Pain blooms across your eyes, the slight curve downward of your lips, a beat of something…loving within your soul. The bit of trust, an understanding that this occurrence is something rare, it fills the child with an unexplained feeling. Something within his soul stirs, the burden he carries suddenly feels a little lighter.

Frisk closes his eyes, taking one more deep breath. The red dissipates into the background of his strain.
mind, the adrenaline slowing to a comfortable pace. When he opens his eyes once more, the cold expression returns to your face, a mask you hide firmly behind. You give the child a light pat on the head, ruffling a few stray hairs in the process. He scowls in protest, but makes no move to do anything about it. Instead, he leans closer to your touch, his soul shivering at the contact. You pry your gaze away from the child to examine at the goat woman one more time, coding her features to memory.

Amethyst eyes stare in your direction, warmth, love, and tears threatening to trickle from the pools within. Soft, groomed fur shines in the light like a twinkling star. Gone is her typical royal dress and in place, a business suit attire. Collar coifed around her neck, the fabric molds her toned body in a rich plum color. The collar dips low to a modest v above her breast, her emblem hanging around her neck on a thin golden chain. The shirt tucks under an iron plated pencil skirt hugging her legs in a warm embrace. It ends above her ankles, a bit of white tuff peaking out of her heeled toed shoes. Death hangs around this woman like a long-lost lover, yet she holds like a mountain: strong, determined, refusing to allow the elements around her to erode away her beauty.

‘She took me in and gave me a warm home when she could have avoided such a problem child.’

‘She allows outbursts and isolation to a point, allowing me to come to her when needed.’

‘She always shows me…’

An impatient honk rings through the house, breaking the tense moment between the family members. Toriel rolls her gems, gaze sliding towards the front door. A small smile caresses her face at the former king’s impatience.

"Some things never change.” She chuckles quietly, the humor leaving her features as she assesses her children.

“It is time for me to go my children. Please stay safe while I am away.” Chara gives her mother one more squeeze against her leg, mumbling goodbyes into the fur. The Queen laughs as though she was going away on vacation rather than a dangerous mission. She crouches down toward her first child, a giant fur paw caressing the mop upon her head. Frisk hesitates for a moment, his cool demeanor shifting as he too grasps at his mother’s free leg. Words are exchanged in a hush between him and his mother, his head nuzzling deeper as though to memorize every detail. His grip tightens, a small, painful reminder that this is real and that she will return. The motherly goat whispers praise, love, and encouragement to her smaller children, providing one last comfort before her departure. Toriel’s gaze glides upward, her pools hardening with a familiar trait, jaw set as to not reveal the dark words hidden beneath. You give the Queen an equally hard stare, a seed of understanding planted as a nonverbal contract is put in place. A hard thump against your ribs causes an ache to blossom across your chest, a small fracture along the being cracks. You give the Queen a nod, solidifying the contract. Your stance straightens a hair, your eyes hardening, a new protective feeling numbs the pain below the surface.

‘If I am to perish, you are to take the children and protect them with all I know you possess.’

Three taps. Three rapid taps are the only warning before the door swings wildly open, revealing the impatient culprit behind it.

“HELLO FRIENDS! BE PREPARED TO HAVE YOUR WEEK FILLED WITH THE MAGNIFICENT SANS’ PRESCENSE! MWEHEHE!” The door shrieks in protest at the
skeleton’s overexuberant demeanor, slamming into the newly acquired door stop perched in the wall. His boots clomp across the wooden floor, the surface gasping as a rather sizable object ‘thumps’ against it. You hear rustling of what sounds like numerous knapsacks following a sliding sound and a singular ‘click’. Objects begin to slide and shift to the floor; the sounds uninteresting compared to the battle ahead.

War, blood, sweat, smog, destruction fills the screen Chara and you share, the intro to the match pans around the scene. Sounds of demolition, war cries and screams, bombs dropping, buildings massacred to rubble; the perfect outlook of a wasteland. Currently the map stations the opposition on either side of a long stretch of road, the pavement upheaved with various fissures and cracks. Cars are strewn about, scrap metal impaling various organic and inorganic matter. Fire’s light illuminates the back of your character, their face completely hidden in the shadow of the sunset.

“You are SO going down!” Frisk voice taunts, his character hiding strategically behind a blown-up car, smoke and fire raining from behind. You give a disconcerted snort as your character unpins a grenade, lobbing it in his general direction before you too hit the deck atop your building. The explosion shakes both screens, the sound of Frisk’s frantic button mashing hidden by a jolt of sound. You wait patiently for the child to come out, sniper gun poised for his potential and only plausible escape route calculated given his position. You turn your attention briefly to the background noise, listening without much interest as the skeletons and Chara chat excitedly about the week ahead of them. What adventures they plan to have, what potential trips (given your approval) they could have, the amount of friendship tacos that could be had.

The soft breeze of spring’s end and summer’s beginning signals the potential for rain later in the evening, the cooling crisp scent of wet air and flora intermingles with a fresh hit of nicotine. The sharp bitter notes allow your mind to refocus on the task at hand while the underlying sweet notes command your body to relax. The sweet notes cut the sharp taste, yet intermingles with another citrus scent as though they were made together. It leaves you in a relaxed haze for a brief second, your eyes slowly turning towards the skeleton brothers. A loud gunshot smashes through the television, regaining your focus to the sniper bead. You curse under your breath, noting the smoke has completely dissipated leaving nothing but an empty street in view.

‘Why am I letting such ludicrous thoughts impede my mission. Stupid.’ Your character repacks the sniper dock with a ten second timer until completion. You take this moment to grab a stick of pocky from the box between your legs, holding the biscuit between your teeth as your character stands ready. The biscuit, sweet yet bland, allows a surge of cocoa into your taste buds. Air rushes out through your nose in frustration.

‘Where are you hiding kid?’

As if to answer the silent question, the rooftop door swings open, the fabric of his character’s clothing ‘swishes’ from the brief wind. One footstep is all it takes for your reflexes to kick in: thumb swiveling the joystick towards the location, left index holding down the scope to gain accuracy, and the right index pulling the trigger. One shot echoes over the television. We each hold our breath as the game renders the shot. One second, two, Chara’s character’s armor begins to seep with blood, their legs giving out to death. You smirk in victory, causally leaning back on the couch as ‘Winner’ and ‘Loser’ illuminates on the proper sides of the screen. You hear Frisk curse internally as your character takes center stage, their weapon poised in a victorious salute.

“You cheated!” Frisk growls, throwing his controller onto the couch while the other hand points accusingly. You put your controller down as well, giving the child a mere shrug, a cocky look passing your gaze. You nibble on another piece of pocky, eyes twinkling in delight.
“How could I cheat at a game that requires stealth, precision, and a little twitch of movement due to the poor aiming mechanics?” He folds his arms with a sour pout, eyes attempting to give a chilling glare only to soften at the hidden implications. He in turn scoffs, throwing his body back against the couch, finding a new target for his glare.

“Whatever, I could have won if I wasn’t distracted by all the noise!” Chara turns from her companions, her face contorting to mock apology, her limbs striking an over dramatic pose.

“I am so sorry dear brother! Had we not been conversing in such a manor you would have, quote, won.” Her face morphs into a mischievous smile, her body straightening back. Frisk rolls his eyes, muttering a ‘whatever’ in his soul. His fingers swipe at the pocky box, dangling the sweet treat towards Chara. She rolls her eyes, approaching the couch to swipe her own tasty treat. You return the characters to the home screen, humming pleasantly as achievements jump along the bottom of the screen. Each does not hold many points, but the accumulation will allow the stubborn child to buy new material on the Zbox store. Unconsciously you begin to pet the child’s head, the thick strands of brunette sliding easily through calloused fingertips. Footsteps rush in your general direction; your body reflexively preparing for the onslaught.

“HUMAN X! IT IS SO GREAT TO SEE…” Wind shifts from the right causing your body to twist left, shoulder nearly colliding with the small child’s. The tip of Sans’ glove kisses the shell of your ear, but otherwise you successfully avoid the eager skeleton’s grip. You turn slightly, your body repressing a giggle at the skeleton’s wide gaze. His gloves wrap all the way around the previous location, effectively latching onto his other milky forearm. The depts of his sockets widen a fraction, bright eye lights shifting as though a new form of magic occurred.

“You…” The bones unlatch from each other, deciding to rest along the back of the plush sofa. Sans appears to shake out of his stupor, the boisterous volume increasing.

“A…ANYWAY!” Sans awkwardly chuckles. Magic pokes at the neck hairs, causing a slew of goosebumps to caress the skin.

“W…WE HAVE A LOT PLANNED FOR TONIGHT HUMAN X! AND I WAS…I MEAN! WE WERE WONDERING, IF YOU…IF YOU WOULD JOIN US!” The room grows silent sans for the game’s title screen in the background. A lingering scent of nicotine reminds you that the eldest of the two remains close, his sockets glaring in challenge. You sigh, giving the boisterous skeleton your undivided attention. A dusting of blue dots his cheeks, sockets widening a fraction at the attention. He gives a gentle cough in his throat, voice wavering as he continues his pitch.

“W…WE SHALL PLAY THE MOST CHALLENGING AND EPIC OF GAMES! FRIENDSHIP TACOS AND THE FINEST CUISINE SHALL BE MADE IN ORDER TO SOLIDIFY THE BONDS! A…AND…..!” The flush intensifies on the skeleton’s face, igniting the zygomatic bones in a light cerulean blue. Sans fidgets in place, his fingers twisting and squeezing the extra fabric.

“A…AND A MOVIE MARATHON!” Although the smile is set permanently, it strains the corners of his face, rising the cheekbones a hair too high for comfort. His sockets shift away from your face, nervously looking between the kids and his brother. The blush continues to deepen on his face as the heavy silence remains. Sans appears to be struggling within himself for a brief moment; something shifts within causing a look of determination to penetrate his gaze.

For a brief second, the skeleton dares a look directly into your eyes, as though searching for a fragment, a scrap of something. It is as though he is looking at your soul through your eyes, his eye lights examining the broken, beaten, ugly scrap of magic holding the flesh together. It penetrates
deep; your mind screams to put up the barriers before he finds a vulnerability, something to use against you. Your body complies, the metaphysical wall forming as you stare into the void. The beads of light flicker like static on a television, his magic color skimming the outer edges of the pupil. Having sensed your searching gaze, Sans shifts his gaze away, moving to pick at something just out of sight. Sweat dots his cranium in a similar blue tint; an invisible swallowing sound echoes behind a clenched jaw. Determination waivers as he tries to find his voice. Sans does not look in your direction, nor seek something out of your gaze. Instead, one-word dips between his teeth, the hush of breath nearly lost to the wind.

“Please.” The crack in the word is small, small enough to bypass a normal individual. The broken little sound, a silent plea of a man at his wits ends. Tying to appease the children while seeking attention, attention from you, for an unknown purpose.

‘But then, what purpose does he seek my attention for? If it is not for malicious threats as his brother or solidifying promises like Toriel then what?’

‘You are reading too much into this scenario. It is not because he wishes but rather the children’s wishes.’ The words sit like bile within your throat, the acid rubbing pain along the flesh, suffocating and painful. It would be the only reason the skeleton tolerates your behavior: because of the children. They like you and therefore, to be in their best graces, he must attempt to like you as well. Your mind screams out how illogical the thought sounds, but your soul’s cry deafens any protests. Something within it shifts, a small seam unravels as though bleeding.

‘Of course. How could I be so foolish. No one even after everything is said and done, wishes to befriend an abomination.’

You sigh, closing your eyes in resignation.

‘Even if it is only for the children…’

“...Fine.” Their stares penetrate your corporal being, as though in a moment you would phase through the floor. Disbelief and excitement hang heavy in the air, either one flexing to determine which will win. Sans lets out a choke of air, his voice the first to break the pregnant silence.

“R...REALLY?!” His voice crackles, tittering on the edge of excitement and awaiting disappointment. It holds onto the hope that you will follow through. You open your eyes, giving the skeleton an affirming nod in response. Chara’s ear piercing squeals break the tension, her warmth engulfing the torso part of your anatomy. She giggles and wiggles excitedly within your grasp, sparks of fire lighting up her ruby eyes.

“Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Oh, this is going to be so much fun!” She twists her body to meet your eyes, her face encasing most of your field of view. Chubby child hands carefully touch the sides of your face; a wide, beautiful, child-like smile caresses her features. It warms your soul to see her happy after the months of torture she endured, although, you will not admit, had she not appeared that day, you would still be confined.

‘So what if one little event makes the child happy? At this rate, it appears I owe her for the life presented before me. Though, I will never breathe this to her as she will take full advantage of it.’

Her lips appear to move as she speaks, the plans for the night told once more with vigor. As quickly as the words slip, they stop, a gasp parting her lips.

“I need to call Undyne and Alphys! This is a one-time deal! We need to turn this into a super mega awesome sleep over!” Chara whips out her phone, fingers deftly moving over the screen as she
walks away. She rushes to her own room, two stairs at a time as her voice chats a mile a minute. Frisk chuckles from the left, his form pushing gently against your side.

“Do you know what kind of chaos you have released into this house?”

You let out a breathy chuckle, wrapping an arm around the child. He nuzzles into your shoulder, the quiet hum of his soul warming to the gentle touch.

“Something extremely chaotic that could either end really well or a complete disaster.” Frisk chuckles, plucking a piece of stray pocky from the flung box. You move away from the child much to his disappointment, taking one as well. Feeling a little generous, you offer a stick to Sans who, after a moment of hesitation, takes one timidly with a quiet, “Thanks.” There is a comfortable beat of silence before Chara returns, her face aglow.

“Alphys has work at her job until around 5pm and Undyne finishes teaching her classes around 6pm. Both agreed to be over by 7pm and are staying for the whole duration of this super awesome slumber party!” The glowing red soul shines brighter than you have seen for quite some time, the being a beacon of absolute delight. It reflects within her eyes, the color similar to an inferno of a blazing fire. A youthful flush melts deep into her bones, the age of life washing away with one, radiating smile. Sans jumps up from behind you, a gasp escaping through his teeth.

“THAT IS WONDERFUL NEWS HUMAN! TRULY THIS WILL BE A MEMORABLE CELEBRATION!” Chara lobs herself at the smaller skeleton, her laughter contagious as Sans giggles along with her. You glance at the two, a small smile caressing your face.

‘Just this once, if it means I can see her act like a child once more, I will deal with the annoying guests for the night.’

“It will be! So Sans, what activity should we do to lead such an occasion?” Sans glances behind him at the smaller human, watching as a big, goofy grin stretches across her face. One ruby orb dramatically winks, confusing the skeleton.

‘I WONDER WHAT THE HUMAN IS WINKING AT ME FOR? SURELY SHE CANNOT MEAN...’ Sans’ blush overtakes the skeleton’s face, igniting brighter than a firework in the night sky. Steam pours out of the side of his skull; his eye lights completely vanishing to the void. Chara cackles from her position, face alight with mirth. Frisk rolls his eyes at his sister’s antics, reaching around to smack his sibling with a couch pillow. The brief impact muffles the fits of laughter, leaving you stuck in the middle between two emotionally different children and a malfunctioning skeleton.

“Oh for the love of Asgore Chara! Quick picking on the dolt!” She flings the pillow back at her sibling, a spark of determination sparkling not only her stunning eyes, but her soul. You do not understand the situation at hand between the children nor do you care. Well, it would be lying if you were not a little curious as to what silent conversation the children have. Rather than allow the curiosity consume you, you roll your eyes, removing yourself from the potential pillow war outbreak. Bones pop pleasantly throughout your body as you stand, a sigh of pleasure humming in the back of your throat.

While the two of you have a silent conversation, I am going to make the afternoon snacks.”

“You know you wouldn’t have us any other way!” Chara giggles with glee. You roll your eyes at her words, but make no move to rebuff them. A smile peaks at the corners of your lips, a faint blush warming the apples of your cheeks. Within the soul does a little summersault, emitting a comfortable warmth. A gloved hand snaps you out of your daze, eyes quirking to the skeleton. Sans. Eager energy vibrates through his being, little stars igniting within his sockets at the mention of food.
Where the hands intertwine, a tingle of magic slips through.

“L…LET ME HELP YOU!”

Papyrus watches from afar, his hand itching for the heavy weight of smokes in his pocket. His brother would kill him if he left for one of his ‘cancer sticks’ as they are often called. Especially since he had one prior to their arrival of the Royal household. Something itches like an insect within the back of the skull; the soul quivering with an unknown disease. He lets out an irritated sigh though the nasal bone, shoving his phalanges into the front pocket.

‘What I wouldn’t give to have one right now.’

The skeleton does not know what to make of the interaction between the group. The bubble, the aura, the feeling…it was soft. Something he was sure you were not capable of handling let alone showing. Showing anything other than a great distaste or a few words of negativity was strange to the skeleton; an improvement no less but for what cause?

What perplexes the brother more though was not the bit of affection shown to the child, nor how open it was despite not being in what you would deem the best company. No, it was the direct contact you made with his brother, how you provided undivided attention and a simple word to cause the smaller skeleton’s mood to skyrocket. How, despite your personality and bitterness to say no, you said yes, allowing a softer face to form. You are changing and the skeletons have taken notice.

‘If I did not know any better, I would think Sans…’

A heavy beat hits the skeleton’s ribcage, the sudden jolt knocking the air out of his lungs. His hand immediately reaches for the spot where is soul lay, metacarpals twisting the fabric painfully. His eye sockets narrow in confusion, irritation brewing within. The feeling intensifies, spreading through his limbs as his brother grips your hand. The smaller skeleton smiles up with a stupid grin as he announces his plan to assist you. You do not release the skeleton’s hand as you head into the kitchen, a single nod as indication of your attention to Sans. Vaguely he can hear Sans boasting about great afternoon snacks to partake in, his voice quieting at the small mention of bunny apples. Sans may not notice his attitude change, but Papyrus has and he did not like it one bit. Sans listens to your set of rules such as leaving shoes within the doorway. Something about dirt trailing in if left on. Sans does not condone nor scoffs at your outbursts of anger towards the brother, merely nodding his head as though to take notes. What causes Papyrus’ great pain above everything else though, is the look he sees his brother give you when you are not looking. A bread of hope, of courage that one day, his dream to be your friend will come to fruition. There is another emotion there, one the older skeleton is unfamiliar with. When it is on his brother’s face however, a sharp sting within his soul flares, a negative emotion trailing shortly after.

‘I need to figure out what is causing this disease before it causes more than one problem.’

The children’s banter fades into a hum within the background, the television humming along with its introduction music. Papyrus’ gaze slips over to the siblings, their interactions strange even for a pair of siblings. It is deeper, deeper than those simply living together. One red and one black like a card game, the two compliment and level each other out, questioning the motives of the other. It is as though they are one singular unit. His thoughts derail back to your figure as it moves through the kitchen, the shadows dancing in the artificial light. It causes discomfort to settle within his skull; how his thoughts constantly stray to decipher your actions, your attitude, your soul.
‘I don’t understand what Sans sees in a creature such as her. Her LEVEL is hidden, her soul reeks of taint, her attitude is something that could use some major adjustment…’

“Papyrus…”

‘She causes trouble for those who are around her and appears to never be grateful for the second chance she is given. She only works at the job so Toriel won’t have to babysit her as frequently and maintain a life of her own. She does not deserve the Queen’s generosity.’

“Papyrus…!”

‘She constantly has a death wish and attempts to end her life for reasons unknown. Always fighting…always trying to do what is best for the children…Allowing my brother to partake in trivial tasks as though she cares for his company…’

“Papyrus!” Chara’s voice snaps the skeleton out of his rant; his sockets glance down as though questioning the child. Her cheeks crest into her eyes, a wide, knowing smile causes the skeleton further confusion.

“Your jealousy is showing, smiley trash bag.” Papyrus whips his skull toward Frisk’s position, his smug little face giving the skeleton an all-knowing look.

“Tch. I don’t know what you two are going on ‘bout.” Chara lets out a mirthful giggle, pocking at the skeleton’s arm as though it holds all the answers. Her face suddenly appears older, a wealth of knowledge hidden deep within the body of a child, grasping, begging, to get out. Her gaze appears odd, as though another force takes the forefront of the child’s mind, showing her something important, something…

As quickly as it comes, it melts into a softer look, age-old eyes perceiving far beyond a child’s mind.

“Face the truth of your soul Papyrus: you are jealous of the bond between your brother and our sister.” Said being ceases for a beat, a breath held as the words sink into the cranium. Chara threads her pudgy fingers through the magic bones, giving a gentle squeeze.

“Jealously breeds rot through the soul if left unattended old friend. I have seen timelines in which you let it fester, destroying the Papyrus I know. There are others in which you feel nothing, a high level as though you hold no remorse within.” She collects her thoughts as her words swim heavily within his soul, a shaky breath pushing past her lips.

“I have seen you fall because you could not accept the fact your brother is a grown monster. The grief of his moving on, the arguments, it took away the last shred of HOPE you posed.” Her fingers tighten.

“I do not wish to see any of this happen to you my friend. I wish, for this journey, for your happiness to shine the darkest timelines away from your mind. For your soul to soar at the feeling of love and love in return. This timeline is different. It is as far off track as any of the previous ones.” She backs away from the skeleton, a small smile playing on her child-like face. Her voice is but a whisper on the tense atmosphere.

“She is so much like you Pappy. If you get to know her, you will find the love we hold for her and her to us.”

Chara’s face twists back into child-like wonder as Sans calls everyone in for the “MOST
AWESOME AFTERNOON SNACK". Chara is first to reach the skeleton, her laughter echoing the space, lighting it like the sun. Frisk follows closely behind her, his eyes glancing at the taller skeleton with a knowing look. Fatigue hangs heavy on the child, nightmares and dark thoughts plaguing the mind, tainting it, rotting the soul within. With you around however, the child’s appearance has taken to a healthier glow, his soul flaking the negative debris off one piece at a time. Although the two souls often fight, they resonate on a deeper bond: distrust and hate.

Frisk turns away from the thousand-yard stare in time to make a quip at the duo standing in the doorway. His face ignites into a signature smirk as Sans groans, your form appearing in the doorway. Papyrus holds his breath as a sweet laughter tickles your voice, a faint rose dusting the tips of your ears. Your body remains tense despite the laughter, shoulders back, spine straight, eyes glancing around every few seconds. Your hands often brush one of the children’s heads, a grounding technique Papyrus uses after waking from night terrors. Once a steel wall guarding the multi-colored iris now breaks away piece by piece, allowing a small glimmer of light through.

‘It almost looks as if…’

You glance in the skeleton’s direction, a brow raised in a silent question. It does something to the skeleton, a small ‘thump’ urging him forward for the activities. Magic flushes through the skeletal bones, an orange tint lighting under his sockets.

“COME ON PAPYRUS! WE CANNOT START THIS MAGNIFICENT AFTERNOON WITHOUT YOU!” His brother’s grin is wide, cheeks pushing high under his sockets. His sockets turn to say something with a boisterous laugh, a light cerulean highlighting his cheek bones. Papyrus shoves the strange feeling down in his soul, a plastic lazy smile gracing his skull. His phalanges grip the cigarette box a little too tightly, the cheap paper groaning in protest. He moves toward the kitchen, keeping an eye socket on you for any signs…anything to prove you are a true monster.

‘The child cannot be right about something such as this. She cannot be properly judged without the relevance of her stats.’

He will play along for now…but there is only so much time the skeleton can wait before giving a final judgement.

Chapter End Notes

I am currently working on the next chapter named "The Sleepover" in which things will begin to progress. I have been inactive as many have stated, wondering due to almost a year of inactivity if this story will continue. It will my dear readers but I may work on another fan fiction on the side to help prevent myself from getting tired or rush through this. I have been diagnosed with a lot in these past months and lots of doctor visits. It just means that I have to fight everything harder to get things moving and out faster~ I thank you new and old for sticking it out through the long drought of Hell of an Experiment and hope you enjoy the chapters to come. Things will begin to get a little more exciting for the skelababe and you dear reader ;). Cheers~

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