<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Explicit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archive Warning:</td>
<td>Graphic Depictions Of Violence, Major Character Death, Rape/Non-Con, Underage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category:</td>
<td>F/M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandom:</td>
<td>Undertale (Video Game), Horrortale - Fandom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship:</td>
<td>Frisk &amp; Sans (Undertale), AU Sans/Frisk, Sans/Frisk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character:</td>
<td>Frisk (Undertale), Sans (Undertale), Horrortale!Sans, Horrortale!Papyrus, Horrortale!Toriel, Horrortale!Napstablook, Horrortale!Temmie, Horrortale!Undyne, Horrortale!Gaster, Snowdin Canine Unit, Horrortale!Chara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Tags:</td>
<td>Alternate Universe - Horrortale, Pneuma Rot, Alternate Ending, Stockholm Syndrome, Lima Syndrome, POV Sans, POV Third Person Limited, Third-person subjective (hybrid), Female Frisk, Angst, Tragedy, Horror, Violence, Self-Harm, Depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, Suicide, Suicide Attempt, Flashbacks, Stalking, Guilt, Sadistic Sans, Clueless Papyrus, Cinnamon Roll Frisk, Smut, The smut will get worse as the story progresses, forced fellatio, Rape/Non-con Elements, Guro, Blood and Gore, Eye Trauma, Bondage (mild), Omorashi (mild), Menses, Bloodplay, Soul Touching, Soul Sex, Ecto-Penis (Undertale), Ecto-Tentacles (Undertale), Cannibalism, Strangulation, Emotional/Psychological Abuse, pseudo-fluff, Frisk is under 18, Bad vibes, no happy endings here, Enjoy the heartache, Teenage Frisk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats:</td>
<td>Published: 2017-02-21 Updated: 2018-03-31 Chapters: 2/5 Words: 44337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bloodsick Péntalog**

by MothVolka

**Summary**

Horrortale\(^2\)

*An alternate ending & continuation to *Pneuma Rot*.*

Sans, a miserable infected monster, must eradicate the save points.
Hi everyone!

It’s been a long while since I have written anything - has it ever!

After I completed Pneuma Rot I decided to take a much needed break from writing. I know I promised you all that I was going to publish this sequel like a month after finishing PR, but I just couldn’t bring myself to write anything / I was so drained. Trust me, I tried. I really did. But the words… just… wouldn’t… COME. I guess that’s what happens after you write a 280k+ word fic. The dreaded writer’s block.

Anywaaaaaays…

NEW READERS: I highly recommend reading Pneuma Rot first before you read these shorts, especially if you are interested in backstory. This sequel will be filled with many references that tie into the main fic, so it WILL be confusing. It WILL be disorienting. There WILL be unsettling times at hand. Unless you simply want some fucked up smut (which wont even commence immediately), then you should start with my main Horrortale fic/prequel story here.

~MAIN FIC SPOILERS BELOW ~

So, these shorts are basically just an excuse to write more Pneuma Rot Sans/Frisk lewdness (Don’t kill me) >.> These scenarios would most likely have come to fruition in some alternate dimension of the story in which Frisk actually did open the 10th gate. These shorts will not be solely smut, but also a glimpse into Sans’ past, internal dialogue, anguish and twisted mental state. Therefore, this sequel will be written in third-person Sans PoV (hybrid/experimental). Another side note, these shorts take place in the domestic setting of Sans & Papyrus' house in Snowdin forest (Not always. but mostly.)

When I was working on Pneuma Rot I had a few different endings scenarios envisioned for the fic. Ultimately I settled on the ending used because I felt that it was the only appropriate outcome for two such tragic characters. However, I dabbled with 2 other alternate endings and this is one of them. So, this sequel would have probably preceded the ending I devised if Frisk had opened the final gate and everyone lived happily (NOPE) ever after.

Also, some loose ends from PR will be answered here (I.E. Why Sans went missing at times, a closer look at Chara & Sans’ relationship, a more in-depth view of the Underground, the candles/savepoints, etc.)

~ SPOILERS ABOVE ~

So now that all that is out of the way… welcome to a bad time! These sequential shorts contain way more smut than PR did, and the intensity of said smut will increase with the progression of the fic. (Please note that some of the chapters will contain some obscene/taboo kinks - see tags - and violence/blood in one way or another - see fic title.)
In a way these shorts are almost more depressing than the true ending of PR. But I don’t have to explain why, you will see that for yourself soon enough.

Chapter 1 contains a broad recap of the ending of PR and what led up to the current point. It will also be the most tame chapter and contain no smut at all (only suggestive flashbacks). That’s all I’m gonna say about that. Also for those who are curious, this story starts at almost the very end of PR’s Chapter 32 for reference.

Anyway… enough talk! Enjoy!

**Warning:** This chapter contains mild sexual undertones and flashbacks involving non-con sexual violence.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

---

**Lemma** (*lem·mə*): the mental abstraction of a word about to be uttered.

*****

…

…

…

It was cold.
So cold…

But… why?

Why was it cold? How could this be?…

He could not feel.

*Not usually, that is.*

So then why was there a splinter of icy frost creeping deep within the crux of his bones?

The sensation was unsettling and strange, although the temperature was still rather muted. He was a monster. A *skeleton*. Temperature was simply a kernel of annoyance that he barely paid any mind to. He had no flesh, after all. No flesh, no organs, and no nerves that could succumb to extreme heat or
cold.

He had no compassion. No clemency. And barely a soul. *Just barely a soul.*

So then, why? Why did he feel so cold in that moment?

He should not feel.

…

*no.*

…

*it's finally happening.*

…

*my goal. my mission.*

…

*it is finally over.*

…

*after so long…*
Sans ignored the sensation that pricked at his bones. He took in a steady breath through the spaces between his razor-edged grate of teeth. He blinked both sockets once and rolled back his shoulders, curling his hands into fists before stuffing them in either jacket pocket.

It was raining. The rain soaked into the thick, tattered fabric of his winter coat and weighed him to the tiles below. His fur-trimmed jacket cowl was pulled up over his marred skull, but it proved to be a very unhelpful shelter from the storm. The bitter downpour fell in hefty sheets. Droplets streaked his ashen cheekbones and dripped from his chin. And his single, maroon orb of energy pulsed in its lone socket… his eye… as he stared at the back of her head in silence.

He watched her.

The girl… standing directly before him.

…

her.

His obsession. His compulsion. His blighted dove.

Frisk.

my frisk.

…

She looked so small. So much smaller than usual. She stood with her back towards him. The rain
drenched her from top to bottom. The tattered hoodie she wore turned dark with water and its long, worn out sleeves stuck to her outstretched arms like papier-mâché. Her shoulder-length auburn hair clung to the back of her neck. Clear raindrops ran down her bare legs, which were covered in bruises and scrapes… bloodied scratches that he himself had only just inflicted.

Sans’ gaze locked upon the tender lesions, still fresh.

...  

His soul constricted.

...  

haven't you had your fill yet?  

...  

fuck...  

...  

And he ripped his eye away from her wounds.

Based desires relinquished their hold upon his soul for the time being. After all, he had only just acted upon them, moments ago. Instead he forced his gaze to settled upon her shoulders. Frisk was shivering terribly. From the cold or from fear? Most likely both. Yes, both. But why should she be afraid? She was about to open the gate. The final door. The last threshold. She was about to grasp freedom. it’s time to comply, sweetheart.

The two of them stood outside in the courtyard behind Asgore’s castle. What was once a luxurious outdoor space for important gatherings and meetings was now nothing but an overgrown piazza, forgotten in time. Mold and dirt stained the tiles underfoot. Empty flowerbeds lined the side railing and overflowed with muddy rainwater. Either side of the risen platform overlooked a vast wasteland of rocky terrain that stretched on for miles in almost every direction, but it was impossible to see due to the fog. A massive wall of mountains towered before of them and Asgore’s ominous mansion loomed right behind. And the door... the 10th and final gate... was nestled in a small alcove embedded within the mountainside directly in front.

The last gate - covered in desperate claw marks. The ultimate barrier - meager and shabby, yet so powerful. So strong. Sans could phase through it with enough exerted magic, but not even he had the
ability to open it. That power was reserved for one being and one alone. It was a skill that only the True Manumitter possessed.

...  

*it’s time to open the gate, kiddo.*  

...  

“c’mon.”  

Sans’ voice was a drawl. He controlled his tone in a standard monotony to mask his excitement as he urged Frisk to open the door. He was so excited. But of course how could he not be when freedom was so close. Freedom for everyone. Freedom for his dear brother Papyrus. Freedom and redemption. He was on the brink of atonement. Soon they would all see just how strong he truly was. Every monster in this forsaken hell… They would no longer view him as a traitor. No, he would be a savior. His weaknesses would melt away in their eyes and instead they would see a new monster. A warrior. A hero among forgotten souls.

All he had to do was *open that gate.*

The young girl shook as her pallid fingertips brushed over the engraving in the wood. Her head bowed forward and Sans could hear her soft sniffles travel through the rain’s deafening symphony. She was taking her dear time, and Sans clenched his teeth in a scowl. She would not defy him. Not now. She would not dare. Not after everything he had done to maintain her abilities. He had to keep her docile… and compliant. She was just a key. She was only a tool. He had to keep her in line.

*just a key. just the means to an end. nothing else. nothing more than that.*

*nothing more than that... nothing more...*  

*don’t think about the things you have done. she is only a human, after all. who cares. so what if she is the True Manumitter? so what if she is... just a kid? she is still a killer... a threat. she cannot be allowed to exist after this.*

*but the candles... and the resets... what if... what if she could still reboot it all even outside of the*
Underground?

what if death is never final... for the True Manumitter?

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

Excuses.

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

Sans’ conflicting thoughts raked along the inside of his skull. He grit his teeth together firmly and shoved those worries aside. He would deal with them later, once the gate was open, but now was not the time. And his thoughts took a sharp turn back towards the lingering freedom that lay just beyond the barrier.

“let’s go, kid.” Sans had been lost in his head for long enough. Now his mind was stuck in the present. He began to grow impatient and took a step forward. The skeleton wrenched his hands from his pockets and was moments away from clasping at the girl's trembling shoulders, when a bright burst of liquid lavender wisps erupted from the child’s chest. The color was familiar and blinding - a beautiful translucent purple - the combination of both of their spirits. Her magic.

“N-nh!” Frisk cried out.

Sans flinched.

The color triggered a glimpse of a memory. A recent memory. Her trembling form pressed against his chest… pale, bare skin smeared with sweat. The sound of her muffled cries as she buried her face in his shoulder… and the soft scent of her damp locks. A scent he took in with each slow thrust inside… the smell of rain and musky soil. She felt so good. His soul was squeezing around hers. So much heat. He could feel her warmth. She made him feel.
The memory vanished in an instant.

Sans’ fingers stopped quivering. He quickly curled his hands into fists and leered back at Frisk’s purple magic, which had begun to dance high in the air like a heliotrope beacon of fire.

*that is... a dangerous color.*

But Frisk obeyed him. She could have tried something. She could have attempted an attack or outright refused, but she obeyed. Such a sweet child… his manipulation had worked wonders on her soul. Sans’ expression morphed into a sinuous smirk. The lavender ribbons of energy coiled down the girl’s slender arms and wrapped around her hands like two perfect, form-fitting mittens. Translucent liquid glass spilled into the door’s engraving and filled up the chiseled fissure with amethyst. Soon the entire door burned brilliant.

*this is it.*

Sans’ sockets grew wide and his grin wider. His anxiety faded. His spectral breath caught within the emptiness of his rib cage. He stared at the Manumitter’s encompassing power in amazement. Each and every raindrop seemed to slow in midair. Time stilled all around them. Frisk was whimpering loudly. It sounded like a pained cry. *She was in pain.*

“sweetheart… just a little more…” He whispered and took another step forward behind her. His chest pressed against the back of her wet head and he shielded her from the rain. Frisk cringed at his touch, but she did not shy away. She kept her hands where they were upon the door, which trembled under the impact of her palms.
“yes... yes!”

“S-Sans...” Frisk gasped and she reclined back into his chest. Her hands shifted along the wood. She began to pry them from the gate’s symbol.

no!

Sans growled and lurched his arms forward. He slammed his hands upon hers, pinning them to the door with such sudden force that it made her cry again. She would open the gate. she would open the fucking gate, right now. he would not fail. not this time.

“no.” Sans hissed against the back of her head. His wall of sharpened canines pressed flush against her scalp. He took in slow, languid breaths as he felt the waves of power running down her arms, through her hands, spilling into the barrier. The gate began to tremble with even more vigor. Something was happening.

Bright lavender light turned violent, thrashing against the wood uncontrollable.

He could barely see anything.

Sans squinted and stared over Frisk at her radiant beams of soul power.

The light was blinding and he could not see the gate anymore.

He could not see it.

But he could feel it.

...

The door...
The door was opening.

The seal was cracking.

And she felt… so warm

…

…so warm.

…

There was a deafening clatter of wood scraping against stone. Sans shut his sockets to block out the brazen glare. He pressed all his weight into Frisk’s hands, and together they pushed the 10th gate open and outward.

…

…

…

The rain stopped.
It was quiet…

Sans could still feel her warmth - a warmth that had replaced the strange, bitter chill in his bones. He laced his phalanges through her shivering fingers and held her hands tight within his. She was crying and gasping for a breath and pressing her shoulder blades back into his torso. Sans opened his sockets.

“kid…”

The door was open. It exposed a long, dark tunnel of obsidian shadows.

it is done.

it is open.

you did it.

Heh heh…
A gust of warm air spilled from the passage. There was a strange smell… a new smell. There was a hint of pine and fresh soil. A pleasant aroma that could never exist within the Underground. That smell… it was the scent of the Above.

Frisk could smell it too. She stood against Sans in complete shock as she joined him in staring down the passageway, but her body tensed as another breeze bellowed forth and brushed back her dripping locks. Sans could feel her heart start to race. He tightened his grip around her small hands.

“frisk…” Sans whispered.

She tilted her head back and stared up at him, and the monster drank in her dismay. Messy bangs fell over her thick brows and eyes… well… eye. Only her left eye was visible. The right was covered with a thick patch of folded gauze held on with strips of tape. Subtle cuts nicked her jawline and her throat sported three heavy cuts held together with stitches. Her light-brown lone eye was wide. Her expression was overcome with terror. She clenched her teeth hard and held back a sob before she shut her single eye. She tried to pull her hands from his grasp, terrified… utterly terrified of him. Her nose had begun to bleed… Glossy, ruby viscous streamed down her lips.

Her soul was wounded. Sans knew it, but he was grateful for it - she would not dare step out of line in such a state - and that relief kept his bloodlust in check.

“shhh…”

i’ll set you free now, little dove.

is that not what you have wished for? is that not what you have dreamt of for so long?

No… What about the candles?… And the resets?…

What about her power?
Sans released his hold from her hands abruptly. He cupped her jawline and wiped the nosebleed away with a thumb. He took a step to Frisk’s side, wrapping one arm around her shoulders, and pulled her in tight underneath his jacket. She shivered and mewed but she did not struggle. Hell, she could barely stand up straight, and her feather-light weight pressed into him for support.

Sans took a step forward through the cavern’s open maw, but he hesitated. He glanced back over his shoulder for just a moment and took in the sight of Asgore’s castle behind them. It had stopped raining yet the fog had not let up. If anything it had grown even thicker and the castle’s peaked rooftops were no longer visible through the opaque atmosphere.

He turned back to face the cavern and took another step forward, then another, and made his way through the tunnel.

freedom.

He moved slowly… slow enough to accommodate the injured human at his side. The passage was narrow, warm and pitch-black. The only light came from the dwindling pale glow of the Underground behind them and his steady pulsing eye.

redemption.

Frisk was utterly silent. Her pained whimpers had turned to snuffles and then they turned to nothing at all. The two of them made their way down the tunnel. She did drag her feet though, most likely from exhaustion, but Sans would not let her slow them down. He held her tight and noted each one of her trembling inhales. He idly caressed the top of her opposite shoulder, adding just a bit of comfort. her power was his. her soul was his. his.

The warm gusts grew more robust with each passing minute. The light behind them faded into nothing.

It was so dark, but up ahead there was a gentle glimmer.
The light at the end of the tunnel grew brighter. Speckles of brilliance scattered about the velvet canvas. There was a new sound... the sound of rustling pine needles... and crickets. He could feel the child’s heart start to gallop at the sound as her small form nestled against him. They tread forward in silence, in darkness, out to the Above - to Frisk’s forest.

... this is victory. ... ... They reached the end of the tunnel... ... and stepped out into the woods. The human world. ... you’ve done it. ... The soft patter of both their sneakers softened as they exited the stone shaft and stepped upon a leafy forest floor. Sans came to a stop and tilted his head back. He stared up at the inky night sky, just barely visible through the canopy. Pleasant little lights - the size of pinpricks - sprinkled the slate sheet overhead. He knew them... He knew those were called stars. They were only visible in the Above. Only visible at night. He had stared at them only a handful of times prior, back when he would come to this place in search of fresh meat.

Ages ago he had stood in this very spot. He had not been alone then. His fellow soldiers stood among him. They stood here together and stared up at the sky... and contemplated the final gate for
days… for weeks. They were the Underground’s only hope before the infection took hold. *If only they could see him now.*

And although he was familiar with those little lights, they always proved as a distraction every time he saw them, without fail. *Fragile and small, yet so vivid… and unwavering.* He had not even noticed that Frisk had begun to sob.

Her cries shook him from his stupor. Frisk’s knees gave out and she sunk to the floor before Sans could adjust his grasp at her shoulder. She knelted at his feet and leaned forward, pressing her forehead to her bare knees. Frisk dug her hands deep into the soil. She plunged her fingers into the moist loam, grasping at the Earth, crying for the end of it all. The conclusion of her journey.

*i know…*

“S-Sans…”

He heard his name between her gasping lament.

“Sans… P-please… I don’t… Want this to b-be-…”

*it must end here, kiddo. it must…*

“P-please, Sans!”

*don’t do this to me…*

“P-please-…”

*… stop it…*

*… fuck!*

The sound of her sobs tainted the vindication he felt. Only she had the power to make him feel this way. Only she could make him feel… *regret.* She was just a human. Just a small, pathetic, worthless human. She was only a key and now she had completed his task. Her usefulness had run out. He could not… he could not *let her live.*

*She must die.*
She had to.

“Sans… Please… L-let me go home… please…”

That’s right… home was somewhere close.

She began to plead with him. Her cries grew louder. Frisk yanked her soil-stained hands from the ground and clutched at the bottom of his baggy sweatpants. She was begging for her life… god dammit… Sans grit his teeth and leered down at her. His lone eye began to flash rapidly and it shone through the darkness like an orb of scorching sparks. Beads of cobalt sweat formed along his brow. His soul started to shiver and glow through his white shirt, though he stayed silent.

kiddo. i know how far you have come…

…

No.

…

She must die.

That voice. That feeling, laced with rage, cut deep within his spirit.

Sans’ soul steadied itself and it turned cold. She had to shut up. She had to die. He could not let her threaten EVERYTHING he had worked for. If she were to reset now… then she would go back to Asgore’s castle. The final gate would shut once more. Freedom and redemption would slip from his fingers. Her determination would begin to regenerate. And what if… what if she attempted to fight back? What if she did not give in a second time? He could not allow that. She was too much of a risk. Her uncertain actions were too hazardous. Everything she did was a threat to his goals.

He knew of the rumor… the rumor that resets did not work outside the Underground. He had to kill her now. He had to put an end to the possibility of her ruining everything for him. But what if… that rumor was false?

No. It HAD to work.
The age of humans is over. It is time for monsters to surface. It is time for us to reign.

“Sans?…” Frisk blinked and stared up at him. He could just barely see her tear-stained face through the forest’s gloom. She still looked horrified and desperate, with just a tinge of hope. But Sans demolished that sliver of optimism in one fell swoop. He growled through his teeth and his sockets narrowed. He reached down for her and roughly yanked at the back of her hoodie.

Sans pulled Frisk up to her feet and wrapped his arm firmly around her waist. He knew she would refuse to walk, so he would carry her instead - not like it was difficult. *She weighed nothing to him.* The girl’s entire body went rigid and she screamed out for help. Her voice echoed in the darkness and bounced off the pine trees. It startled the buzzing crickets and gentle hooting owls. *shit… she was being way too loud.*

Sans summoned his magic to silence her. A blue, translucent coil of energy spilled forth from his hand and it slithered across Frisk’s torso and traveled up her throat to her jaw. She cried even louder and struggled in his tight grasp as she made an attempt to repel the wandering magic, but she was muted instantly as the cobalt phantasm constricted around her mouth like a makeshift gag. It muffled her cries. She was silent now, yet continued to fight him. Sans was ready to rip out her soul should she try something in that moment.

*will you try it, kid?…*

*…*

*…*

Surprisingly she did not conjure her shield.

“enough.” He spat and took a step forward and she reluctantly turned pliant under his arm.

Somehow they had exited the Underground through a winding tunnel embedded within a mountainside. Although on the surface of the human world those mountains did not exist. The barrier separated both planes of existence with an ancient illusion. Behind them was only a mundane cave. It seemed to sprout directly from the earth and it was concealed under layers thick foliage and climbing roots. One could easily walk right past it if they were not paying attention to their surroundings. The entrance and the exit to the Underground co-existed in the same forest. They had come full circle.

There was still one more door to open.

*The entrance.*
The shed.

And Sans knew it was not far off. In fact, he knew this forest quite well.

His soul coursed with his own revolting determination. That small fragment of sympathy and warmth she made him feel had shriveled up and turned to soot. Sans tightened his cruel hold upon the child and stepped through the forest in a straight line. Frisk began to struggle again. She sobbed into the blue tether, but her opposition was starting to test his patience. Bitter rage soaked his soul and he let out a jarring growl. It shut her up instantly.

“no more, manumitter.”

*just shut up and obey…*

“i’ll teach ya another lesson, right here, right now…”

*s-shut up and OBEY ME.*

“… if you do not shut ‘yer mouth.”

Sans threatened her. His savage words dripped a grudging rancor so heinous that it turned his cobalt soul to ice. He had become stuck in a headspace of revenge… and anger… and *determination.*

*she is a killer. she is a murder. she is… Chara.*

…”

*no…*

…”

*Yes.*
Sans… He had never truly recovered from that contamination so, so long ago. Chara’s disease. Once that demon-child got her hooks in you her essence would always remain. But that monster was dead now. That monster was gone. He had just killed Chara himself only a few hours ago, out in the wastelands before they reached Asgore’s castle. He knew that she was no more. But, Chara’s poison prevailed. It persisted and had begun to manifest in a way so nefarious. It made the skeleton deranged and unhinged and sick for… for blood. For revenge. It turned an already unstable monster so much more dangerous and capricious, into something that should never exist.

His little dove had been infected too, but the signs of the virus inside Frisk’s soul had been erased with Chara’s death. Perhaps that poison affected humans differently. No… NO. It was still there. Just hidden. It had to be. Frisk was still a killer. Frisk was still a murderer.

*she is just like you.*

Sans’ unstable mentality caused his eye to flash like rapid wildfire - so bright that it was painful. He shut his eye for a moment to allow it to settle down and continued on through the woods, weaving in and out between thick clusters of pine trees. The bitter-sweet smell of a hot summer night hung heavy around them.

They came upon an opening in the forest where the trees thinned out. Frisk went stiff. She lifted her head, meekly tugging at the magic bound around her mouth, and stared wide-eyed at the limited clearing. There were some scattered boulders and a small pond on the southern edge.

Sans knew this place. He knew that shallow pool. It was a familiar landmark that meant the shed was near. He often caught wild deer drinking from the stagnant water. This place was a valuable hunting spot and one he used often.

Frisk started to shake, like she knew this spot as well. Like she had been overcome with a memory.

“heh.” He couldn’t help but chuckle at her reaction. *sick, twisted, corrupt.*

Frisk had multiple injuries. A deep gash at the center of her back, a stitched up throat wound, legs that were both bleeding and torn.

*You can smell her blood, can’t you? Her ripened soul? She’ll open the shed and you can feast on her tender tissue and fluttering viscera one last time… So enjoy it.*

And Sans’ smirk shivered. His single pupil constricted into a speck of black within flashing maroon. Azure blue saliva dribbled down the corners of his maw. He ached for a meal, he craved sinew and raw flesh. But more importantly, he craved her flesh. Hers alone. He was so hungry for her.
The skeleton tread through the clearing to the other side. He re-entered the forest and made his way past dense pines and thick vegetation. It was dark, but he knew exactly where to go. The stars no longer interested him, and soon he saw something up ahead. A small structure. A shed.

there it is…

They approached the old, rotten wooden building and Sans came to a stop a few yards away. Frisk had been pulling at his arm this entire time. Her dangling feet were kicking at his side, but she had not attempted to summon her magic, even with her soul still inside her chest. The sight of the shed pacified her hostile actions.

“one more…” Sans muttered his thoughts out loud. “…just one more door.”

He stepped up to the shed door. It was just as rundown as the final gate had been. It was made of thick planks of wood, nailed together horizontally to form a slatted barrier. The faint symbol was etched in the wood at the very center - Three peaks above and a spiral coiling downward. A large, metal padlock dangled from a latch at one side.

The door had been locked shut. It had been locked from the outside.

…

that is… peculiar.

…

He knew that Frisk opened this door initially, so who could have locked it behind her? But Sans did not deliberate. He lowered Frisk to her feet and roughly slammed his stable body weight into her, pinning her to the door. She cried out and contested him and began to thrash her head back and forth. Sans wrapped a claw around her neck and squeezed tightly.

Shut up shut up SHUT UP!

H-he had to shut her up. He had to control her. One more gate. Just one more. It wasn’t exactly a necessity to open the shed, but it would certainly make things easier for the monsters when the evacuation began. And it only added to his glorious redemption.
Open it. OPEN IT.

He ripped his claw from Frisk’s throat and she let out muffled coughs and stifled gasps, choking for a breath against the magic mouthguard. She leaned back into him as if she might faint from lack of oxygen. Sans wrapped his clutches around her wrists and forced her hands down upon the padlock.

*wounded little dove... open the door, sweetheart... open the door... once more... c’mon... open it... open it...

“open it. now” He hissed against the back of her head.

She was too tired. She was too weak. But she obeyed him, one last time. *sweet triumph.*

Her soul shuddered deep in her breast. Her single eye closed slowly. Violet tendrils spilled from the center of her chest, but they were no longer brilliantly glowing or thrashing about. They were... meek. Their translucence was muddied with opaque red. Her soul was still bleeding from the atrocious exertion of strength it took to unlock the final gate. Luckily this one did not require even half the magic needed. This was only the first gate after all, and she had opened it ages ago without even trying.

Frisk’s hands trembled in his. Her fingertips caressed the padlock. The unsteady purple coils slithered down her arms like a pair of listless serpents until they reached her wrists and wrapped around the metal latch in turn.

…

Sans pressed his forehead to the back of her skull like he often did while she opened each gate prior, all ten of them.

He watched the padlock dither in her hands.

He stared at the door as it started to weaken under her power. Her body began to heat up. Her hoodie remained damp with rainwater. Small droplets of sweat ran down her cheeks and the nape of her neck from the summer heat. *So warm... her soul... so alluring.*

…

damn it... do not feel. you are not allowed to feel.
There was a soft clink and the lock fell open.

It unlatched from the door and fell in Frisk's hands. She was so weak that she could not grasp it and it slipped from her fingers and landed in the dirt. The door inched open, just barely, into the Underground's beginnings.

Frigid gusts. The fermented stench of mold. The sable-black darkness. The world of monsters... It all spilled from the condemned desolation to meet them.

The first and last door had been opened. It was done.

... 

it's over.

now you can end this.

end this.

...

...

...

...

Frisk’s magic vanished and she staggered back into his chest. She wasn't fighting anymore... or sobbing. It seemed that she had given in entirely. She had finally accepted her fate. She knew what was to come. But did she regret it...? There was such regret in her eye.

Sans lifted a hand and swiped away the blue magic tether that bound her mouth. She did not cry out as he freed her from the gag. She did not beg him for her life again. She said nothing.

Sans' soul began to feel cold... Cold with shame.

“sweetheart...” ... you knew it had to be this way... you knew it from the beginning...
He led her away from the open door. They turned the corner of the structure to the side of the shed. Sans pushed the girl up against the rotting wooden wall. She did not look at him. She stared forward at his chest with a blank, placid gaze. Even when he lifted a skeletal claw and gently caressed the side of her face, she refused to meet his lidded sockets. She did not flinch. She showed him no more fear. No more regard. She hated him.

His forced smirk twitched at either corner. Sans ran his thumb across the thick, weathered bandage that concealed her right eye… or where it would have been. An old wound. A mark he left upon her so long ago. He lightly pressed upon the bandage. Tears began to swell in her opposite eye, but still she did not glance up at him. She was done with this. She was tired of it all.

“i will free you now, sweetheart…” but why did those words taste so sour?

He kept one hand at her throat as the other trailed down her navel, down to the lower hem of her hoodie. He slipped his claw up underneath the front of her jacket and felt along her bare skin. Slender hipbones… her tummy was quivering and beating with a fervid pulse… her protruding rib cage felt like a stacked tier of delicate sprigs… until his palm finally settled at the very center of her chest.

Her soul…

It was his now.

It had always been his.

And he began to pry it free.

Frisk’s soul burned bright hot within her. So hot… he could feel its pumping heatwave against his bony palm. Her beautiful, tender soul. It was a red glassy orb of liquid determination, as bright as a star. Frisk let out a gasp as the fetters that held her physical pneuma in place began to snap. But she did not scream. She did not cry. She was in terrible pain, but she would not give him the satisfaction. And for some reason Sans did not crave the sight of her agony like he had before.

Soon the orb began to surface in his palm. It sprouted through her flesh like a rising sun. But it was no longer red in color. He could see the gentle glow emanate through her hoodie and it was purple now, just like her magic.

Still purple…

…

Sans clasped his hand around the orb the moment it was free. He slipped his hand out from underneath Frisk’s hoodie and glanced down at the sphere. His sockets narrowed and his vermilion
eye constringed within the hollow alcove.

Something was indeed wrong with it.

The girl’s soul was covered in splinters, like it had begun to shatter under some unknown pressure. It looked like a brittle glass marble and it was the size of a golf ball. It emitted a gentle lavender hue and inside the orb Sans could see liquid stardust settle at the bottom like a snowglobe. But there was also blood… flakes of blood floating around inside. Her soul was bleeding internally. It was damaged badly. It would be so easy to crush it.

“S-Sans…” Frisk finally spoke. Her voice was a quivering whimper of dismay but also heartbreak and melancholy acquiescence.

Was she mourning the loss of her life? Or something else?…

_kiddo_…

The towering skeleton pulled his gaze from her essence and stared down at her with hesitation. He clutched her soul with one hand as the opposite kept a constrained hold on her throat.

…

**What are you waiting for?**

…

Sans’ bone brow furrowed. He narrowed his immense sockets into slivers and glared down at the brittle soul in his palm.

_Do it._

He withdrew the opposite hand from Frisk’s neck. She whimpered. She was so close to him. He could feel her quivering, fevered breath beating against his chest in shallow waves.

_Do it now._
He lifted the free hand to his side and a burst of sapphire fog appeared at his fingertips. It cut through the darkness in a split second. But he was not summoning more magic. No, he called forth something else. His weapon appeared. *His cursed ax*. The hatchet emerged from nothing and he wrapped his phalanges around the blood-stained handle.

**Kill her...**

...

T-that voice... It urged him on. It created a compulsion within him. A desire to *eat*.

Sans’ own spirit started to fluctuate. His breath turned rough. He was so hungry. The smell of her blood... and the scent of her cracked soul... it was driving him wild. He had to do this. He had to end this. But it was not simply for a meal, despite what the nefarious voice in his head said, it was to protect the Underground. It was to secure his success!

**Heh heh... Yeah, right...**

His hands began to tremble. Sans’ sockets widened and his usual lazy smirk morphed into a pensive scowl of unease. He hoisted the ax skyward and let it hover directly above her scalp.

... He readied himself...

It had to be done...

It had to...

Finally Frisk lifted her head. She stared up at him. The girl watched his every action. She could see right through him... She knew him better than anyone.

And she did something unexpected.

...
… she smiled.

…

*She smiled.*

…

…

…

The smile faded.

And she closed her lone eye.

And lowered her head.

And waited for him to take her.

…

…

…

…

…

*why...*
Do it.

...why, sweetheart?...

Go on. Do it now.

...why won’t you try and fight back?

Kill her!

...why won’t you try to run away?

KILL HER NOW!
i don’t understand...

...

NOW, YOU IDIOT!

...

frisk... f-frisk... i’m sorry...

...

CUT HER OPEN!

...

i am sorry...

...

... AND FEAST!

...

...
Sans took in a slow inhale. Frisk did not move. She remained still and waited for his judgement.

...
what if this is a mistake?... what if it all resets? what if s-she is not meant to die?

...

WHAT!?

...

there is... another way...

...

NO!!

...

another option...

...

DO IT NOW, YOU FUCKING TRASHBAG! THERE IS NO OTHER OPTION! DO IT NOW OR SHE WILL KILL YOU! SHE WILL KILL YOUR BROTHER! SHE WILL KILL THEM ALL, ALL OVER AGAIN!

...

...

...

no... no, there is another alternative...
The primal raging voice in his head - *his own voice* - had gone silent.

His hunger subsided. His rancor and resentment crept back within the depths of his soul. He had resisted its beseeched call.

And for once in his life, he felt merciful.
you will watch over her. you will keep her far from death. you will lock away her soul. you will lock away her strength… and you will destroy the candles.

*destroy the candles.*

*no candles. no resets.*

*find a way to destroy them.*

*… by any means necessary.*

…

…

…

…

Sans stared blankly. His thoughts clashed into one another like a treacherous riptide. War was raging in his head, but he knew now what to do. He had conceived a new plan.

Yes. Destroy the candles. Destroy her save points.

He could do it. He would find a way. Eradicate the ability to reset and she would no longer be a threat. She would no longer be the Manumitter. She would simply be… *his sweetheart.*

… heh.
It seemed like hours had passed, but it had only been a minute. Frisk remained still at his chest. She was hushed and motionless, teeth clenched with her eye shut tight… Resolute, even in the face of death. She braced for his final act of cruelty upon her. Yet he could still feel her little heart racing like dragonfly wings.

She tensed up and prepared for the blow.

Sans shifted the ax in his hand and in a swift and brutal motion he knocked the butt of the machete against the side of her head. She had not even known what hit her. Frisk immediately went limp and fell into him face-first, knocked out cold.

Sans whisked away his ax with a flick of his wrist. The weapon dissolved back into magic and vanished. He wrapped his arm around Frisk’s waist and held her tight before she could sink to the floor. He quickly checked her pulse, just to be sure - it was still fluttering. She was unconscious in his arms, still so warm. She was alive. Her body heat made his vivacity spasm.

you are not leaving me… you will stay here… stay here with me…

stay with me, kiddo…

Sans chuckled softly.

i won’t let you go.

He slipped her flushed soul into his jacket pocket for safekeeping and glanced up at the stars overhead. Lovely little lights… lost out there in the darkness… yet they remain tenacious, even in hopelessness.

you are mine.
Eventually Sans shifted his stance. He ripped his gaze from the sky overhead and glanced down at the little dove. He lifted Frisk up and let her limp form rest against his shoulder with one arm under her bent knees for support. Sans took a step back and turned the shed’s corner again, returning to the front of the structure. The door remained open. The cold atmosphere of the ruins spilled forth from the dark emptiness that lay past the archway.

There was much work to be done.

And he had no time to waste.

Sans brushed Frisk’s hair back for a moment before he turned his attention towards the door. He reached his free arm out and pushed open the gate wider to accommodate his girth. It was a tight fit, the door was small, and unfortunately he could not teleport with the kid. He had to make the journey on foot through the ruins… hopefully she’d remain asleep.

He quickly noted the padlock on the floor and crouched down to scoop it up. There was no way in hell he would leave it out here only for someone or something to refasten it shut. Sans stuffed the padlock in his pants pocket and took a step through the gateway.

But there was a sudden sound.

…

…

…

A sound…

…”

Footsteps.

The massive skeleton flinched and swerved around instantaneously. He clutched Frisk into his chest in a protective stance and lifted his opposite hand, ready to summon his ax in a second.

He was not alone.
There was something…

*something else*…

There were *eyes*.

…

Eyes… staring back at him… some yards away. Peering through the hovering gloom past pillars of trees.

Large, delirious, sickly-green eyes.

They were the size of dinner plates and twitched in the corners, unblinking.

Eyes framed by a pair of drooping white ears at either side. A wide-set row of canines below, grinning wide.

Those eyes… those teeth… this creature…

“*tori*…”

…

The monster vanished.

…

The wolf-like monstrosity disappeared within the darkness as quickly as she had come.
“toriel!” Sans shouted into the umbrage shadow. God, his soul was hammering. W-what the fuck… that was Toriel! She was still alive… she was still alive…

How long had she been watching him?! No… there was no way… no fucking way… It was not possible…

Sans was the one who had injured her and brought her to the brink of death, so long ago. Decades ago. It had been so many years. Too many to count. There was no way she could have survived those wounds all this time.

No…

This was a delusion. His frenzied mind was simply playing tricks on him.

Sans clenched his teeth in dismay. If he had not had the kid in his arms then he would have run into the forest in search of that long lost warrior… but he could not leave Frisk here alone. He could not risk it. And something about the encounter made him feel nauseous and unusually apprehensive. He could not stay here. He had to get back to Snowdin and secure the kid… destroy the save points… inform Undyne of the gates… and begin the migration of monsters to the Above.

He took another step back, still cautiously watching the boundless forest. There was no more movement. No more sounds - not even the buzzing of midnight insects. Nothing at all.

“heh…” He forced a shrewd smirk.

“…” But he said nothing else.

Sans reluctantly turned back to face the door and quickly made his way down the cold, constricting passageway. He made his way into the ruins. The only footsteps he heard were his own. He listened to the gentle wind rustle past his skull and the sound of Frisk’s soft breaths as she lay immobilized in his arms.
Sans stepped briskly through the ruins without stopping.

He made his way down a long, winding corridor. Time inched by at a snail’s pace until he finally reached the first open chamber. A vast room at least 10 stories tall as drab as the gloomy night sky. Although a small ray of light was there to greet him. The gentle beam of dusty illumination cascaded from a single narrow window embedded within the stone wall. The window reached high overhead. He could not see out it, but he knew it led to nothing and was unimportant. So he continued his way through the room and entered the second tunnel.

He walked on. It was cold. Creeping frost decorated the stone floor. Sans stared ahead with a steadfast gaze until he saw an emerging light - a flickering glow at the end of the tunnel. Another room. He reached the midway point of the ruins and come to a sudden stop.

A new room. A cramped capacity. And unlike the previous chamber, this room was not empty. This room contained the first flambeaux… the first savepoint… and memories. The small translucent candle sat upon the floor in the corner of the chamber. Its little flame danced gently in the air, hovering over the clear candlestick like some magical essence. *The savepoint…*

Suddenly a string of heinous reminiscence cut at his soul like threading barbed wire.

The memories this room possessed would stick with him for the rest of his life. Memories of rage. Uncontrollable rage and hatred and a desire for power. A desire for revenge.

And a need to destroy his little dove…

Flashes of that night clawed against his recollection.

God… it had felt… good.

*so good… so wrong…*

That first time.

…

…

Sans squeezed at Frisk’s listless form. His soul overflowed with regret and a self-hatred clung to its walls like sticky tar. There were moments of that night that he could not remember, like someone had cut out frames from a film reel, moments of that incident that did not connect to one another. He had been overcome with foul mania and a desire to *destroy her.* And for some reason that terrible state of ire had blocked out some details.
Sans felt ill for a moment. He could not think about this right now. Besides, he was sure to spend plenty of time in this place as he worked on demolishing the candle. He could fawn over his sins then…but not now.

He rolled back his shoulders and let out a heavy sigh and was about to continue on into the next hallway, when he noticed something else on the opposite side of the room. A backpack.

Sans stared down at the small sack. It lay on one side. The top flap was open, like it had been left behind in haste. *frisk’s backpack*… Sans stepped over towards the pack. He scooped his arm through its small strap and slung it over one shoulder. If Frisk behaved, he would gift this to her later.

Sans walked on. He adjusted his arms under Frisk’s weight, holding her close. She was still unconscious. Every now and then she would let out a disoriented whimper in her inanimate state, but she remained asleep and still. Her skin was started to grow cold and Sans wrapped the folds of his jacket around her to retain what little warmth she had left.

He squeezed through the next succession of tunnels. They seemed to go on for miles. Sans was not a fan of the ruins. This place was a bleak vault of nothingness. At one point in time it had been bustling with monsters. But now the only creatures that resided in this tomb were ghosts…and even the ghosts had started to die out. The only specter Sans knew of that still hung around this dreadful place was Napstablook. That is, unless Napstablook wandered out into the Snowdin forest. Frisk had opened the second gate here a long time ago, under Sans’ supervision, so it was possible that Napstablook had decided to go his own way.

But that skulking ghost had always possessed a timid soul, even when Sans knew him before the Underground went to shit. Napstablook would not leave the comfort of familiarity, even if his life depended on it.

Time inched by.

The darkness was stifling and the corridor was grossly claustrophobic. Narrow walls seemed to cave in on him and scraped against either side of his broad shoulders. Sans’ eye pulsed softly and created a burgundy encompassing hue that lit the way. He stepped through a few puddles and took brisk side-steps through the more confined corridors. It was impossible to get lost within this place. There were only two ways to go… forwards or backwards…and soon the third and final open chamber came into view.

Sans ducked his head under the exit archway and stepped out into the last immense dungeon. It was similar to the first room, but it was without the elevated window and it was much more dilapidated. Stone walls crumbled onto the floor in mangled piles. There was no light…none at all, except his lone crimson eye. And as Sans took a step forward his sneaker hit something on the floor. For a
moment he thought it was just some rocky debris, but the sound it made was hollow and unusual. He glanced down at the little object… *a cellphone.*

*frisk’s phone… she had dropped it here, way back when.*

“heh…” He chuckled and scooped up the cell and slipped it into his pocket. *another gift.*

Sans snickered silently and pressed his forehead to the top of her head before he continued on. The hefty skeleton stepped slowly through the space. He glanced up above as if expecting to see a faint glow from a ghost hovering in the upper corners of the room, but there was nothing.

*don’t linger. paps is waiting for us, back home.*

Sans let out a subtle chuckle under his breath. He had almost forgotten. It had been some time since he had seen his brother. But he knew that Papyrus was safe at home. Sans had that ability, after all - an ability to *see* - if he was in close range, that is. And while Sans walked on, he closed his left socket to block out the single glowing eye, yet he kept the right empty concave open wide. He focused his tracking magic upon his brother…

He could see… a snowy forest… and their house… just barely…

A tall, lanky monstrosity shifted among snow in the front yard of the decaying dwelling.

But the vision shuttered and turned to static ink.

Papyrus was too far away. Sans was not within proximity to use his surveillance accurately. He had to be in the same region.

…

Sans opened his left socket and the vermilion flashed in the darkness once more.

Oh well, he would be back in Snowdin Forest soon enough. He had already reached the end of this damn chamber. Only one more tunnel to go.

The third and final passageway seemed to fly by. Darkness soon melted away. Robust bitter frost and a pale somber light became visible at the very end of the corridor. He could see an open doorway and the forest. The second gate - which was just a fallen stone wall - lay on its side out in the cold woods. Layers of snowfall caked the collapsed gateway until it was barely visible. Sans stepped up to the open exit and stared out into the arctic woodland.
Snowdin Forest.

This was his home. His refuge.

A frozen wasteland of ostracism.

…

Sans shifted his sneakers in the snow and closed his left eye again to tap into his surveillance. He saw Paps clearly now. His brother was in their house, making a feeble attempt to scrub dried bloodstains off the kitchen counters. Typical Papyrus. Sans snickered to himself and stepped outside, leaving the ruins behind as he continued through the forest.

He wrapped his jacket tightly around Frisk. Thankfully she was still comatose, yet shivering. Her skin raised with goosebumps as a violent gust of bitter cold hit them at full force. Usually the daily snow storms only occurred at night - these gales were nothing compared to those - but Sans knew humans could not last long in this temperature. Frisk was strong and her body was quite durable for such a small thing, but even she had her limits. He knew from first-hand experience… heh.

He held her in a tight bundle to shield her from the snow and progressed through the covert of dense trees. A mild flurry fell all around them. The sky overhead was a solid slate of grey. No sun. No moon. No stars. Just… nothingness. Masses of trees reached for the heavens like demon’s claws. Each one was dead, rotting and covered in fuzzy patches of mold. Decay fell from the treetops and melded together with drifting snow, turning the icy powder into clumps of iron wool. Sans knew it was unwise for most living things to touch that stuff… the poison. Of course it could not affect his body, but his little pup was a different story, and he made sure Frisk’s bare legs, hands and face were tucked under his jacket for protection.

For a split second he almost burst out laughing. Last time he was in this forest with the girl, he could have cared less if the rot touched her skin and poisoned her flesh. At that point in time he wanted her to suffer. He wanted her to feel the same terrible pain that had struck down his soul. He wanted her to pay for what she had done.

…

it was not her fault, you know that now…

…
The snowfall grew thicker and the trees much more dense.

Eventually the woodland’s surrogate path ran out and there was nothing left to follow.

The forest creaked around them and white haze swelled low to the frozen floor, but Sans was not lost. Never. He knew this place like the back of his carpal bones. He had memorized every inch of this forest. It was massive and utterly desolate, but it was still home.

And after another hour of walking, he came upon a clearing in the trees… and a house.

Their house.

finally.

A dark, two-story ranch-style structure erected from the snow. The wooden paneling around the door frame was weather-worn and peeling. The brick walls were covered in vine-like fissures that ran up from the foundation. The roof was caving into the attic in several spots and mounds of snow had piled on so thick that the tiles had begun to collapse. Each window on the lower floor was caked in soot and grime - the glass had lost any shred of translucency. On the other hand, the second story windows were boarded up with adjacent wooden planks - that glass had been shattered long ago.

The sight was a grim one. Like an abandoned nightmare in the middle of an arctic hell, but it was home to two skeletons.

And soon it would be home to a human.

Sans grinned to himself. It was not his usual sly smirk but a smile of content. He saw a dark figure move past one of the drab first-floor windows. His brother was shuffling about inside. Papyrus knew nothing of the human. Although at one point, there had been a timeline where Papyrus and Frisk had crossed paths. In fact, Papyrus had actually saved the girl from Sans’ cruel hunger. But that timeline had been wiped clean. Papyrus would retain no memory of the child from a previous reality. He would have no memory of the horrible things Frisk had done. And Sans was intent on keeping it that way.

…

any longer out here and this ‘horrible’ child will freeze to death.
Sans clenched his canines in a passive grin and trudged through the ankle-high snow to the front door. He wrapped one claw around the iron doorknob, pushed it open, and stepped inside.

“SANS! IS THAT YOU?!?”

Papyrus’ echoic, bellowing clamor spilled from kitchen. The massive monstrosity of a skeleton peeked around the open archway.

“SANS!!!” He was shouting… “WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN!? YOU HAD ME WORRIED SICK! COMPLETELY SICK!”

“heh… yeah… sorry ‘bout that, bro… i jus-”

“SANS… WHAT IS THAT?!” Papyrus quickly cut him off as his gaze settled upon the top of Frisk’s head peaking out from underneath Sans’ winter coat enclosure. He stepped out from the kitchen immediately and took a step closer.

The taller skeleton was towering and slender. He was quite different than Sans, appearance-wise. His skull was long and narrow and his eyes were minuscule hollow craters, like two restricted cavities that lacked any kind of glow or hue. They were simply empty. His teeth were composed of multiple, massive pillars that interlocked in uneven rows. Each incisor was filed down flat at the end, almost human-like, and stained rusty red around the edges. He wore his usual attire - an off-white ripped poncho that draped over his shoulders and dangled halfway down his navel to expose a skeletal spine, a dilapidated kilt that exhibited femur bones and fibulas, two inky black boots caked with snow-stains, and an enormous crimson scarf that dragged behind him upon the floor.

Sans averted his gaze from his brother and forced a chuckle, but Papyrus was not laughing.

“papyrus… we should probably have a chat.”

It took hours to explain the tale. Sans tried to flesh it out as simple and clear as possible for his brother, who often needed a direct explanation when regarding complicated news. Papyrus already knew of the Manumitter legend, and he had been on guard for a human under Undyne’s distant orders for years… *always on the lookout*. But even Papyrus had grown tired of the constant hunt. The Manumitter anecdote had become a fable to most monsters as time went by, Papyrus included. But now… he stood dumbstruck in the middle of their living room, staring at the back of Frisk’s head with his arms crossed, listening to his older brother’s story.
Sans told him about how he led the human through the Underground to open every gate… and he told him that the final threshold had been broken. He said that they could now be free… and he told him about the save points and his plan to destroy them. But Sans was painstakingly meticulous when it came to the details of the tale. He left most of them out. He left out the horrors and the deaths and the torture. He left out Chara’s role in it all. But more importantly, he left out his perverse desires and what they had ultimately led to…

Sans rewrote history with his words. He sat upon their over-sized, ancient couch in the center of the living room with Frisk in his lap. She was still out of it, but she was starting to stir more than before. It would only be a matter of time until she woke.

“So… that’s it, paps. the gates are open. and for now we need to keep the manumitter alive… until i can figure out a way to destroy those fuckin’ save points. ya’ know, perhaps gaste-”

“SANS!!!” Papyrus cut him off again mid-sentence - *he was upset* - and he flung his arms high in the air. “SANS, WHY DID YOU NOT TELL ME?! I COULD HAVE HELPED YOU GUIDE THE HUMAN! I HAVE BEEN HERE THIS WHOLE TIME, WORRIED AND UTTERLY UNHELPFUL! YOU KNOW THE GREAT PAPYRUS IS A MASTER AT MANY THINGS - GUIDING HUMANS BEING ONE OF THEM!”

Sans winced… fuck, he was loud. he was gonna wake the kid at this rate…

“sorry, bro… but… there really wasn’t any time. besides it’s done. the hard part is over… and we are free now, papyrus.” Sans smiled. “can you believe that?… everyone is free… they just don’t know it yet.”

The taller monster’s anger seemed to melt away. Papyrus’ shoulders softened and he lowered his hands with a gruff sigh.

“I AM PROUD OF YOU BROTHER…” His unsettling smile grew wide. The fact that the doors had truly been opened seemed to be sinking in at last/ “… AND ABSOLUTELY DELIGHTED! WE SHOULD START PACKING UP RIGHT AWAY.”

Papyrus turned on his heels to head towards the stairway in the corner of the room, but Sans reached out and grabbed him by the arm.

“we can’t leave yet, bro. there is still a lot we gotta do. tomorrow i’ll visit undyne.” Sans said, but he began to grit his teeth at the thought of that reunion. “she hasn’t seen me in a while… err… that should be an interesting meeting… heh… but we’ll start making evacuation arrangements. in the meantime, i need to… do some research.”

“RESEARCH?” Paps tilted his gruesome skull.

“the candles, remember? there’s gotta be a way to demolish them… somehow. i am sure the old man has got some books on the matter.”

Papyrus’ furrowed his brow and crossed his arms again. He started to pop his jaw by shifting his teeth to the side - a common, nervous tick he had developed over the years. “SANS…”

But Sans quickly noticed that weary expression and smiled wide. “don’t worry, bro. you know i can take care of myself. besides, i tamed the manumitter, after all.” His smile unintentionally morphed into one which oozed with malice.
Paps took notice of his brother's sudden, cruel smirk. Sans let out a hesitant chuckle.

shit. watch yourself. papyrus can never find out. he can never know.

Sans’ brother was not too unlike himself. Overtime the poisoned decay of the Underground had infested Papyrus’ mind, just like all the other monsters in this hell. Although Papyrus held on for a long time, eventually he gave in to his hunger. And Papyrus was hungry often. It forced Sans to constantly be on the search for a meal. Sans had already cleaned out the Snowdin Forest of the wild Temmies that used to roam. He also was partly responsible for the pillage and murder of many of the Town of Snowdin’s residents - that is, after that place had already gone to shit. But he tried to keep all of that from his brother. Paps never asked where that meat had come from. They had to survive… that’s what it was all about, right?

And although Papyrus had lost most of his integrity to the revolting fall of their world, he had always retained a certain childish innocence about him. Even when he was tearing open a raw and dripping Temmie carcass with his teeth, he still maintained a naive outlook on it all… like a hungry dog that didn’t know any better… a starving animal that simply wanted to survive. Perhaps that was just the kind of monster he was. Or perhaps it was because Sans had decided to shoulder enough savagery for the both of them, a long time ago. Papyrus was hungry for meat, but that was all he was hungry for. He would never condone what Sans had done… he would never excuse the rapes. He could never find out. He could never learn of Sans’ obsession.

this disgusting obsession… i can’t stand my own mind.

Sans caught himself idly playing with Frisk’s locks, lost in thought, and he quickly stilled his fingers - luckily Papyrus had not noticed as he too was distracted by his own thoughts of freedom and Sans’ story.

“you have an important task, bro,” Sans finally spoke up and he leaned back into the couch. “you have to watch over the human when i’m not around. we gotta keep her alive. it is imperative that she remains alive, yeah?”

Papyrus blinked his thin, empty sockets and glanced back at Sans.

“ALRIGHT, BROTHER. WE CAN KEEP THE HUMAN IN THE EXTRA ROOM. IT IS THE PERFECT PLACE!” His forthright smile returned. His gazed drifted to Frisk and Sans nonchalantly pulled his hand back from the girl’s head.

Papyrus took a step closer towards the couch and crouched down to get a better look at her. Frisk remained asleep. He stared at her curiously and furrowed his brow and scratched at the side of his skull with one claw. “SHE IS QUITE SMALL… I DID NOT ENVISION THE MANUMITTER TO BE SO SCANT.”

Sans couldn’t help but laugh at his younger brother’s curiosity. He really did not remember a thing. huh?

“heh heh… well, be careful there, bro. that’s where the humans trick ya.”
“OH SANS. DO YOU HONESTLY THINK THAT I, THE GREAT PAPYRUS, COULD BE EASILY BAMBOOZLED BY A CHILD!” He scoffed.

Sans’ smirk strained. He shifted and winced at those words, and chuckled weakly. “heh… y-yeah… ’yer right.”

Papyrus leaned in a bit closer and continued his examination of the human. “SHE APPEARS TO BE WOUNDED TOO.” He had spotted the eye patch and pointed it out with his slender index finger.

“yeah… don’t worry about that.” shit.

“PERHAPS I SHOULD TEND TO IT-”

“-maybe later, paps.” Sans cut off that thought process instantly. He wanted his brother to stay away from those wounds - **those memories** - as much as possible. He did not want to give Frisk any opening or excuse to tell her story to his brother.

Papyrus frowned and stayed silent for a moment, but he continued to study her over. Soon his gaze settled upon Frisk’s bare legs. They were still bloodied and bruised. The cold outside had muted the smell of her blood, but once inside their warm home the scent had grown more robust. **human blood… had a very distinct smell… and Frisk’s was all the sweeter.**

Papyrus could not seem to pull his stare away from her legs.

“S-SANS………… SANS, SHE SMELLS SO GOOD…” Papyrus’ voice dropped to a rumble. His hunger began to surface. He lifted his claw again and reached out to touch Frisk’s bare thighs which were only partly covered by tattered shorts.

But Sans quickly blocked his brother’s hand.

“c’mon, papyrus… if i can resist it, then you can too.” What a mouthful of lies. If there was a God then surely he’d be choking on those words, but instead Sans shifted his shoulders with a weak chuckle. It wasn’t entirely false. After all, he **had** fought back his carnivorous rapture in the woods prior… **for the first time, he had been able to resist the voice.**

Papyrus looked put out for a moment. But his wide moonstruck smile returned, followed by his naivety.

“I WONDER… WHAT DO HUMANS EAT?”

Suddenly Frisk began to stir in her sleep. Small whimpers spilled from her lips. Her resting head teetered against Sans’ lap. Her fingers began to twitch and her single eyelid fluttered as if it were to open at any moment.

Papyrus let out a gasp. One of nervousness and excitement.

But Sans grew concerned.

“… let’s take her upstairs…”

Sans left Frisk’s backpack on the couch and carried her up the stairs to the second-story hallway.
Papyrus followed closely behind. The inside of their house was just as dilapidated as the outside, albeit warm. It was gloomy and packed full of piles of rubbish. Giant mounds of various things, from blankets to knickknacks to Temmie skeletons to chunks of wood and coils of rope, littered their living room. The only furniture was the single couch in the center of the room and a scratched up dining room table and chair set near the front door. And despite the fact that all the windows were darkened, there was some light. They owned a television that seemed to be stuck on constant static, and a dangling bare light bulb flickered above the dinner table. Their kitchen, although permanently stained with suspicious red splatters, was kept relatively clean by Papyrus, but Sans didn’t go in there much.

The second floor was not nearly as filthy as the first. The hallway was bare except for four wooden doors that lined the shadowy walls. The first door at the very top of the stairs led to Papyrus’ room. The second door led to an empty spare room - which was once for food storage, now barely used. The third led to Sans’ room, and the final door belonged to the bathroom at the very end of the hall.

Papyrus unlocked the second door and pushed it open. The room was pitch-black, warm and entirely vacant. This was the only room in the house that contained no windows. It had proved to be the perfect enclosure for prey throughout the years. The only light came from the pale glow the spilled in from the hallway and Sans’ gently pulsing red gaze. However the room was not completely empty - there was a single object against the wall on the opposite side. A thick metal rectangular plate had been secured to the lower half of the wall. Hanging from the plate was a chunky iron-linked chain, and attached to the end of the chain was a board collar.

Sans stood in the doorway for a moment with Frisk in his arms. A flashback came upon him in full force. This was not the first time Frisk had been kept in this room. No, this room… this was where Sans had first confronted her… And ripped out her soul.

*what is a soul when it turns to rot?*

...

can you even call it a soul at that point?

...

Frisk’s soul was still stuffed in his pocket, and for a moment it seemed to heat up against his femur through the fabric. Papyrus stepped past Sans to the center of the room and glanced back at him.

“SANS?”

His brother’s voice shook him from the memories.

“sorry, bro.” He blinked a few times and flashed Paps a reassuring grin. Sans stepped to the other side of the room and crouched down before the chain and collar. “hey paps, go get that spare mattress, you know the one. i think it’s still in your closet… and get the key for this thing too.” Sans
said as he tapped at the collar on the floor.

“OH, YES! THAT WOULD BE PERFECT FOR THE HUMAN!” Papyrus grinned wider and vanished out the door, leaving Sans and the unconscious Frisk alone.

…

…

Sans hesitated. Then he carefully sat Frisk upon the floor against the wall.

She slumped forward slightly, weary, teetering back and forth with her eye still shut, but she did not collapse on the ground. She was able to hold herself and sit upright, somewhat… She was slowly starting to regain consciousness.

She had no soul. And without it, she was not a threat. But still… Sans felt a sense of urgency to lock her up. He lifted the collar in both his claws. It was still unlocked from the last time it had been used, most likely on some soon-to-be dinner Temmie years ago. For now this collar was only a precaution. In time Frisk would learn that this was her home… with him.

Sans lifted the collar and clasped it around her throat. It was much too big on her. The collar rested against her shoulders loosely, but thankfully it was not big enough to slip her head through. He shut it tight at the latch and waited for Papyrus to return with the key.

…

Monsters are cruel. But humans… humans are worse…

are you trying to convince yourself of that?…

…

…

She looked so calm. Her face was soft. Auburn bangs fell before her eye. The vibrating hue of Sans’ eye illuminated her face a gentle crimson. She did not look tense and terrified, which was how Sans usually saw her. He had never once seen her genuinely smile. But what did he expect, when he had only caused her so much pain.
And as Sans waited for Papyrus to return, he began to wonder how Frisk would react to all this once she woke up. A part of him felt nothing but elation for the monster’s newfound freedom and what was to come once in the Above. Another part of him felt concern… concern for his brother and what could happen now that the Manumitter was here living among them - although without a soul, what harm could she possibly do?

Then there was a third part of him… the *fucked up* part. The part that was savage and hungry and gnashing in the depths of his soul and mind. And that part was excited. So excited to have her here with him. Sans’ red eye started to flash as his gaze wandered from her face down to her bare thighs. He felt himself start to salivate… followed by a lingering memory… of the first time he had tasted her flesh in Snowdin Forest.

So tender… and fevered… and *delicious*. She had screamed and writhed in his grasp as blood spilled from her thighs into his clenched maw. The way she fought, the way she cried, it had only made her taste all the more sweeter. He had been hooked from that point on.

Translucent blue saliva oozed at the corners of his clenched chops and dripped down upon Frisk’s thighs. She groaned softly in her sleep. God, he wanted to taste her in that moment, as she sat motionless and unconscious before him. But he was able to control his perverse desires. Thankfully the raging voice that so often took over his integrity did not surface. In fact, he had not heard it since he refused to kill the girl back by the shed… *odd*. Maybe it was gone for good this time? Maybe, just maybe… he could redeem himself in Frisk’s eyes.

Maybe his existence was *not* for the worse of this world…

… maybe.

…

…

Heavy clunking footsteps echoed in the hall and pulled Sans out of his stupor. He quickly smeared the cobalt salivation from Frisk’s skin and scooted back some, creating a bit of distance right as Papyrus appeared in the doorway. The taller skeleton ducked under the doorway and dragged the ratty mattress behind him in the room.

“THIS SHOULD WORK.” He exclaimed with a haughty chuckle. “NYEHE- I ALSO BROUGHT SOME QUILTS FOR THE HUMAN.”

Papyrus dropped the bare mattress on the right side of the room beside the wall. He plopped a stack of thick blankets in the center. The mattress was worn and stained. There were various springs popping out along the edges - it had been Paps’ old mattress from when he was younger. He then stepped up beside Sans and held out a large iron key. The key to the collar.

Sans took it and locked the collar shut before stuffing it in his pocket.
Papyrus leered over Sans’ head, staring down at the human.

She remained silent and sleeping…

Papyrus shifted his feet, as if expecting Frisk to wake up right then and there.

Finally Sans cleared his throat and glanced up at his brother with a usual delusive grin.

“hey paps… why don’t ya go start some dinner for us? there’s a bit of leftover boar in the fridge, i think.”

Papyrus popped at his jawbone and fidgeted where he stood. He seemed reluctant to leave - he wanted to be there when Frisk finally woke. But Sans wanted him gone. He wanted his brother nowhere near the human when she came to. He had to have a talk with her first.

His brother hesitated and frowned and rubbed the heels of his boots against the wood, but he finally agreed after a bit of convincing.

“CALL ME IF SHE AWAKENS, ALRIGHT?” He huffed and headed out into the hall and downstairs.

Sans chuckled to himself as he watched his brother leave. Then he waited… ‘till he heard Papyrus’ footsteps fade. He swiftly stood up to his feet and moved to close the door as quietly as possible.
With the door shut, the entire room turned as dark as ink except for the choleric flicker of his red gaze.

Sans returned to his spot in front of the child. Still asleep… He sat directly before her with one knee pulled up to his chest and his elbow upon it. He rested his chin in his claw and lazily stared down at her. So small… She shifted in her sleep, but still she did not wake. He started to grow impatient and concerned that maybe he had caused some real damage.

Sans lifted a hand and began to pat at the side of her cheek with some force.

She flinched.

He patted her again, this time on the opposite cheek with a tad more effort.

Frisk shied back into the wall away from the rough touch.

…

Her lone eyelid began to flutter.

…

She whimpered and slowly lifted a hand to grasp at the side of her head.

…

…

And finally she opened her eye.

…

She was in a daze. Everything seemed distant, Frisk stared back at Sans, but she did not seem to register where she was or what she was even looking at. Her pale brown eye glazed over and reflected Sans’ rouge illumination, turning it a glassy cherry chestnut.

Sans stared down at her, unmoving. His smirk vanished and he watched her with a troubled grimace. But Frisk’s vision slowly came into focus… and she finally understood that it was indeed Sans sitting in front of her and not just a terrible nightmare. Her expression changed from narcosis to pure
turmoil. Her eye widened and she went rigid with trepidation. Thick tears began to swell in the corner of her lone eye. They became stuck in her dark lashes and streamed down the side of her cheek.

*kid…*

Then Frisk averted her gaze from Sans. She looked past his shoulder, out into the dark enclosure… to the mattress… to the shadow-painted walls… to the shut door… and finally down to the collar around her neck. She lifted an opposite hand and caressed the cold steel, still grasping at her wounded skull with the other.

She shut her eye tight to obstruct the overflowing tears and the terrible visions all around her.

…

“W-why…”

…

Frisk’s voice had been rubbed raw. It was a wisp on a breeze, barely audible even in perfect silence.

…

“What… w-why didn’t… you kill me…”

…

Her voice cracked. She could hardly hold back the sobs.

*god fucking dammit…*

Sans leaned in close, only inches away from her face. He whispered back to her with a timbre as soft as venom velvet and as biting as dry ice.
“… you’re not gonna give me any problems, are ya kid?”


Frisk said nothing in response but she began to hyperventilate. She must have noticed Sans’ glowing red burn brighter through her closed eyelid because she quickly lifted both her hands and shoved them against the front of his chest. Sans did not move, her efforts were to no avail. She sobbed heavily and Sans knew she was trying to summon her shield…

But she had no shield to summon…

It would not come…

*Without a soul, she had no magic left inside her.*

“W-Why didn’t you kill me?!?” Frisk choked on her words. The hushed whisper in her voice began to fade and she was sobbing heavily now. “You were s-suppose to KILL ME!!”

She began to yell. She was being *loud*. Papyrus was directly downstairs.

*shut her up.*

Sans’ growls reverberate off his rib cage. He roughly grasped at both her wrists in one claw and squeezed them tight, yanking her hands to the side. His other claw clasped around her mouth to silence the loud cries. *shut up shut up shut UP*. He leaned in even closer until his forehead pressed flush against hers. Frisk had broken out into a cold sweat. Her pulse was ramming against the inside of her chest so rapidly that he could feel it vibrate throughout her entire body. She was trembling and gasping against his hand. She refused to open her eye… *She refused to look into his.*

“You will be quiet. you will behave. and you will listen to my orders, understood?”

*how cruel…*

“… you don’t want to have a bad time, do ya kiddo?”

Frisk gasped against his claw, trying to fight back her lament. Her sultry, moist, panting breath smeared against his open palm and turned his frigid bones hot. It felt good… her warmth… her fervency… *the way she moved against him*. Frisk had begun to shudder so violently that the thick
iron chain clattered against the collar.

And she slowly shook her head in response to his words.

… but her eye remained shut tight.

“… be a good girl…” Sans released her wrists. He ran his phalanges through her hair. Frisk flinched at his touch. She pulled backwards only to find that there was nowhere to retreat to… just more wall.

*she hates you…*

Her heart was racing so fast… so fast… as quickly as his own soul. Sans’ pounding orb of blue was bouncing off the walls of his rib cage. Its hue spilled through the white of his shirt and melted with his red gaze to form a delicate lilac. He allowed his fingers to linger upon her head, buried deep underneath layers of thick locks. He just wanted to touch her… He just wanted to feel that warmth again.

*look how much she hates you.*

…

*look at what you have done.*

…

…

*how disgusting.*

…

…

Sans finally lifted his hand from her head and pulled it back into his chest. He slowly released his grasp from her mouth and pushed himself up to his feet, towering over her in a dominant stance.
Frisk sat curled up upon the floor. She immediately pulled her knees up to her chest. She opened her eye and glanced up at him, staring directly into his piercing gaze. But Sans did not linger. There was a flash of blue and he teleported away, leaving her alone in the room. And he reappeared directly outside in the hall in front of the shut door.

…

There was so much more he had wanted to say…

But in that split second, when she had opened her eye and stared back at him with such enkindled affliction, he had forgotten all of his relevance.

Sans pressed the side of his skull against the door and held in a cumbersome sigh. He shut his sockets and grit his wall of interlocking incisors into one another. A barrage of numbing doubt pierced against the inside of his head… followed by the sound of uncontrollable sobbing on the other side of the door. The sound of Frisk attempting to stifle pained screams in the darkness.

…

god, she hates you. and if she could, she would kill you.

…

she would kill you.

…

you are nothing… nothing… nothing at all.

…

Sans lifted his head from the door and slowly made his way downstairs to join Papyrus in the living room.
The next few days were rife with turbulence. Sans knew it would be a rocky start from the get-go, but Frisk’s defiance was proving to be extremely troublesome. She refused to eat or drink anything. Papyrus prepared a large plate of meat for her on the first night of her arrival. He used the freshest cut of boar he could find and left it cautiously in Frisk’s room beside the mattress, along with a bowl of water. Frisk sat curled up in the corner of the room. She had not touched the blankets or the mattress. She coiled into herself with her back facing the door and face hidden against her knees. And she would not move or say a word when Papyrus made an effort to speak with her.

Sans refused to leave the two of them alone. He stood in the doorway with arms crossed, watching them cautiously. *He could not trust her, not yet… even in such a powerless state.*

But the next morning, when Papyrus rushed down the hall to check on the human, he was disappointed to see that she had not touched his meal. It lay there on the plate, cold and oozing with congealed blood - However the water was a tad lower than it had been. Sans convinced his brother to try cooking the meat next time, and he did so reluctantly. Papyrus hacked off a new chunk of meat from the slab and cooked it briskly in their oven. But Frisk did not touch that plate either. However, Papyrus was ecstatic to see that she had moved from being curled up in the corner of the room to curled up in the middle of the mattress.

So Papyrus spent most of his time trying to figure out a way to cook the meat correctly. He was convinced that it was the way he was cooking it that was wrong, and that humans had a very specific preference. The fact that the meat had already begun to rot never once crossed his mind.

Sans, on the other hand, spent much of his time watching Frisk from afar with his surveillance magic. He would laze about in his room, sitting in bed and leaning back against the wall with one eye closed and his empty socket wide open… watching her. He had locked her soul away in an old box and stuffed it towards the back of a high shelf in his closet. Often Sans would open his closet door and stare at the box, tempted to check on it. But the few times he did take a peek at her soul it had not changed. It was still covered in splintered fragments. Its hue flickered softly like a dying star. Yet he did notice that the purple coloration was starting to dwindle and the hue was returning to its original vivid crimson.

But Sans did not leave the house, despite the fact that he had so much to do. He had to speak with Undyne… He had to begin his research on the candles… He had to commence the monster evacuation. But he was too paranoid to leave Frisk and Papyrus alone together. It was too soon and she was still behaving much too audacious, *in her own way.*

Whenever Papyrus would leave a fresh plate of meat in Frisk’s room, he would try to speak with her. Sans hated it, but it would be too suspicious if he told his brother not to try and converse with the Manumitter. Papyrus always kept a respectful distance and would ask her simple questions, usually pertaining to the food, but Frisk never responded. She sat curled up in the center of the mattress with the blankets pulled up around her shoulders - she had finally decided to use them, much to Paps’ elation. Usually her face remained buried in her knees, but she was starting to act a bit more receptive to Papyrus’ advances. She lifted her head slowly and stared back at the taller skeleton with a weary,
troubled gaze. Sans stood in the doorway overseeing each encounter. He leered back at Frisk and caught her eye. His glares were silent threats not to mention a word about the past.

Papyrus truly remembered nothing, but Frisk remembered it all. Horror and dread and unease painted across her features each time she interacted with Papyrus. But she never said a word. She refused to speak. To either of them.

Sans stayed up watching her later that night. It had only been two days since she had been here. The wind roared outside as the usual midnight blizzard commenced right on time. Sans locked himself away in his room, which was a dreadful mess - per usual. Thick stacks of wool blankets and treated furs embellished his bed and toppled onto the floor. The furs were simply memories of better days. Years ago, when Sans hunted Temmies, he would often skin their hides and craft them into shabby fur stoles to barter with. But that had become an impossible task once the Underground fell to ruin, and he still had so many left over. Each one was as plush and soft as lamb's fleece. Sans had no use for the furs’ warmth, but they were comfortable at least, so he kept them on his bed. The rest of his room was cluttered with stacked wooden cases filled with an array of confusion. There was a partly-boarded double window that overlooked the forest in back of their house, the narrow closet door opposite his bed, and a crude desk in the corner where he had placed Frisk’s backpack and cellphone.

Sans sat upon the fur-clad mattress leaning back into the wall. He kept no light in his room and it was painted in dismal shadows. A few pale rays of light spilled in through haphazard wooden planks across his window. He kept his left socket shut tight and the opposite crater wide open as he spied on Frisk, just one room over.

Sans had been keeping a close eye on her, watching her every chance he got. Frisk did very little. She often remained curled up underneath the piles of blankets, sleeping… but in that moment she was sitting upright at the edge of the mattress in the dark. She had lifted the plate of meat upon her knees and began to take small bites of it - *her hunger must have finally surpassed rebellion*. Frisk chewed the meat slowly and stared blankly, lost in thought. But it had only been ten minutes or so until she started to recoil and wretch with sickness. Frisk hopped up to her feet and the plate fell to the floor with a loud clatter.

“… shit.” Sans muttered under his breath. He shot open his left eye, jumped up off his bed and teleported into her room instantly.

She did not even cry out at his sudden presence. She was coughing and clutching at her mouth with one hand and her stomach with the other.

*fuck… god dammit, papyrus… how old was that meat?!*

The iron-link chain that kept her bound rattled loudly as she doubled over and dry heaved against the floor, but nothing came up. Sans pulled the collar’s key from his pocket and unlocked it. He grasped
at one arm and led her to the door, out into the hall, and finally into the bathroom only a few doors down. Frisk did not even fight him. She stumbled behind him in an impaired stupor and looked relieved at the sight of the bathroom toilet.

She pulled free from the skeleton’s grasp and bound for it. Frisk sunk to her knees and heaved up into the basin as Sans stood beside her in the doorway and let out a sigh. She had only taken a few bites... it couldn’t possibly have done that much damage... but Sans quickly reminded himself to check every meal that Papyrus prepared for the kid from now on. If he wasn’t careful his brother was gonna kill her with kindness... *wouldn’t that be hilarious irony.* In fact maybe it would be best if he prepared Frisk’s meals himself.

He listened to Frisk’s sickness without a word. When she had finally gotten it all out he reached for her arm to led her back, but she resisted him. She did not want to move. And for a moment Sans assumed that she might want to shower off. She had once used their bathtub in a forgotten timeline, and she *did* just puke her guts out...

So Sans turned his back to her and stood guard in the doorway, giving her a gift of veiled privacy. But Frisk did not use the grimy old shower. She would never willingly strip near such a monster. Instead she used the toilet as fast as possible, rinsed her mouth out with water from the leaky sink, and sat upon the edge of the tub with her face buried in both hands.

“…” Sans glanced over his shoulder back at her.

“c’mon kid…” And he scooped her up in his arm and carried her back to the room. She did not fight him. She was weaker than ever. Once back in the empty room, Sans placed Frisk upon the mattress. He removed every scrap of rancid meat from the floor and refilled her water bowl.

He lingered at the center of the dreary space for moment. Frisk had returned to her usual position curled up under the blankets to hide away from the world - *but more importantly, from him.* Sans stepped towards the collar. He hesitated. For some reason he could not bring himself to reattach it to her throat. Instead he left Frisk unchained and simply locked the door behind him. It’s not as if she could open the door anyways... and even if she did somehow escape, she would not get very far. What worried Sans the most was the damage she could do to *herself,* if she got desperate enough. And the damage his brother could do to her, *unintentionally.*

Sans returned to his room and continued to monitor her with magic. He watched the blankets tremble and listened to her soft sobs as she cried late into the night until sleep eventually took her.

The next morning Sans told Papyrus what had happened, who proceeded to burst into Frisk’s room and apologize with distressed zeal. Surprisingly Frisk seemed to accept his apology. She lifted her head slowly from the blankets and nodded back at him, still half asleep and sickly with locks of messy hair falling before her face.

“I-it’s alright... Papyrus…” Frisk whispered back at him and pulled a blanket up over her head like a hooded cloak.

“HUMAN! YOU *DO* SPEAK!” Papyrus clasped his hands together. It was the first time he had heard her say a word and he was absolutely ecstatic about it. He vowed to make Frisk a proper meal
and he hurried downstairs.

Sans glanced back at Frisk, who shuttered and quickly averted her gaze from him. The skeleton grit his teeth and shut the door, locking her inside. *Was she thankful for what he had done for her last night? She refused to look at him. She looked at Papyrus… she talked to Papyrus… but she refused to look at him.*

*are you seriously jealous right now?…*

Sans made a quick pit-stop in his room. He stepped over towards his desk and grabbed a bottle of tea and some bags of chips and cookies from Frisk’s backpack. Then he joined Papyrus downstairs, who was in the kitchen toiling away over a slightly fresher slab of mystery meat.

“bro…” Sans muttered as he stepped in through the kitchen’s open archway and glanced at the blood-caked counter tops.

“SANS!” Papyrus huffed and speared the flank of raw beef with a kitchen knife. “I FEEL SO BAD, BROTHER! BUT FEAR NOT, THE HUMAN WILL ENJOY THIS NEXT DISH. I KNOW THAT WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SPICES, THE HUMAN WILL FIND THIS MEAL TO DIE FOR!—… ERRR… WAIT—”

“paps, stop. here, just give this to her later.” Sans held the snacks out in his hand. Papyrus swiveled around in shock.

“S-SANS… IS THAT HUMAN FOOD?? WHERE DID YOU GET THAT? THE ABOVE?” The towering skeleton lurched forward and snatched up the bottle and bags from Sans’ claws. He examined them over in depth, squinting his sockets at the words sprawled across the bag of cookies.

“just give these to her and i’ll get us some fresh meat later tonight… but today i gotta go out for a bit.”

“WHERE?” Papyrus ripped his curious gaze from the snacks and glanced down at Sans with a furrowed brow of concern.

“we gotta start the evacuation. it shouldn’t take too long.”

“THAT’S WHAT YOU SAID LAST TIME YOU VANISHED AND YOU WERE GONE FOR WEEKS, SANS! WEEKS!”

Sans snickered at his brother’s strained features. “heh… well that’s not gonna happen this time. i’ll be back soon.” His cunning smirk dwindled as a seriousness gripped his expression. “be careful, bro… watch over the kid… don’t let her out of the house. and make sure she doesn't do anything hurt herself. it is imperative that she stay alive.” Sans’ words turned somber, but Papyrus let out a haughty chuckle.

“I KNOW, SANS! WE’VE TALKED ABOUT THIS! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. I AM A MASTER AT GUARDING THE PRISONERS! NOT THAT THE HUMAN IS NECESSARILY A PRISONER…” His buoyant words trailed off and Sans’ grin returned.

He knew Papyrus was capable. Frisk was without a soul. Frisk was weak. Frisk was beaten down and exhausted and hungry. There was absolutely nothing she could do to harm his brother… *not this*
time. Sans was more worried about her suicidal tendencies.

He quickly surveyed her in his mind - she lay on the mattress, staring up at the ceiling idly picking at some scars on her arms - before he bid Papyrus farewell and exited through the front door. He stepped out into the snow, shut the door behind him, and teleported.

…

…

Rushing wind.

Flashing lights.

A crimson starshower colliding with a sheet of impassive cobalt smog.

And Sans reappeared in the Waterfall swamps.

…

…

… Waterfall…

…

…

He had teleported from his forest, past the Town of Snowdin and the aqueduct, to the center of a gloomy bog. Sans stood upon a raised wooden pathway that ran through the marshland. It was still early morning and the pale grey light cascaded all around. A dark cloudy haze collected upon the surface of the muddy water. The vast stretch of wetland reached on for miles in all directions, decorated with low-hanging mangrove trees and thick patches of sawgrass. Sans had been to this place a dozen times prior… and much like Snowdin forest, he knew his way around. Waterfall Village was just up ahead, atop the caverns.
He had been dreading this meeting for the last few days, but he could not put it off any longer. Undyne was the most powerful and influential monster in all of the Underground. Her tribe was the only one that had remained intact after the fall. Somehow, she had convinced her people not to resort to cannibalism. Sans had no clue how they survived or what they were eating, but he would probably find out eventually.

you are just a traitor in her eyes.

it has been a long time.

… you better prepare yourself.

Sans’ concerns congealed along the surface of his inner thoughts. Undyne could not defeat him in battle. If a problem arose, he could just teleport out of there. But once she learned of his triumph then she would have no interest in fighting, surely. She would regard him as the hero he once was.

Sans stuffed his hands in his jacket pockets and walked along the raised wooden path. He glanced down at the planks as they squeaked under his sneakers. And he couldn’t help but be bombarded by another memory… a memory of this place… a memory of the first time he had murdered her.

fuck, did she taste good.

His vision shivered. He took in a deep languid breath to calm the hunger. Every time he succumb to a flashback he was just waiting for that deep, inner ravaging voice to overcome him… but it did not surface, thankfully. Sans swallowed down the azure saliva building in the back of his throat and continued on. He tried to spy on Frisk as he walked - surveying her with his magic had become some kind of involuntary reflex - but she was too far. All he could see when he shut his eye was an obsidian, blurry haze.

After a few more minutes of dragging his feet, the caverns of Waterfall finally came into view. Sans glanced out into the swampland and leered back at the massive, towering grotto. The cave’s entrance was a gaping maw of darkness and the obscuring fog did not help its sinister aura. Yet Sans could barely see the gentle blue light within the caves, an ultraviolet light that emitted from the swamps only visible in darkness.

Enough walking. He could teleport, after all. He rolled his shoulders back and vanished in a burst of
blue and reappeared within the spacious caverns.

He was within Waterfall. The caves.

Darkness clung to the edges of his vision. Shadows draped down the rocky ceiling and the cobalt hue wafted up from the clear water that collected around his knees. The cold water just barely chilled his bones and soaked his pants until the fabric stuck to his tibias.

Waterfall was made up of a massive channel of connecting caves. They stretched on for miles and miles in faint turquoise darkness. The upper sections and roof of the caves were home to Undyne and her people. It was rare that the the water-dwelling monsters actually used the bottom caverns for anything else besides storage. However Undyne had built an arena down here... an arena that housed one of the locked gates and above that coliseum was her throne room.

It was pointless to walk, and its not like Sans was unsure where to go. He teleported to the arena which resided about a mile away in a separate section of the caverns. He reappeared in the center of the hippodrome. The large, water-lodged circular room was there to greet him... with its high walls and towering ceiling. Light beams poured down from above through fissures in the lofty stone. There was a rocky balcony surrounding the upper walls which belonged to the second-story throne room. And multiple wooden doors lined the first floor.

They were fake doors. Decoys. Only one was the real thing. And that door stood ajar on the opposite side of the chamber.

The gate... the 5th gate... the halfway point.

It felt like so long ago. Sans had stood in this exact spot when he forced Frisk to open it for a second time. She had unlocked the gate at his command. Her soul had been purple during that phase as well. Sans could clearly remember the heat that spilled from her chest and the brilliant lavender light fill up his vision as she unlocked the door with her magic.

Sans took leisure steps towards the door and peered through the darkness it contained. He could hear a rushing waterfall right below the threshold. Had no one entered this room since the gate had been opened? Had Undyne not even noticed?... Well, it's not like the citizens had a reason to come to this place - it had been created solely to confound the Manumitter, should the time ever arise.

He leaned into the open door frame and shut his maroon eye and he focused his surveillance upon Undyne. It was difficult to see her - his connection to that monster was weak - but he could just barely see the armor-clad creature through the haze. Undyne was far above the caverns in the outside village, conversing with her tribesmen. Sans knew it would only be a matter of time until she decided to make her way back to the throne room... so he would just have to wait until then.

Undyne had not changed a bit from the last time Sans saw her. She was a towering, water-dwelling creature, covered head to toe in sapphire scales. A set of sharp pectoral fins framed her face and her rust-red hair was tied back in a sloppy knot. Her right eye was simply a narrow slit of red with a golden pupil and the opposite side of her head was wrapped up in bloody bandages. Her teeth were thick needles that interlocked with one another in a perfect row of grotesque skewers. Every tooth was stained blood-red and oozing down her gums. Her webbed claw hands were massive and she was wore thick crimson-colored iron armor: a breastplate, plated breeches and tassets that hung from her hips, the usual.
Time passed slowly.

Sans watched Undyne through his clairvoyant socketed eye with passive interest.

He tried to remain alert, but his thoughts kept drifting towards Frisk and Papyrus… and then anxiety would follow. He trusted his brother. Papyrus knew how to handle captives - they had contained a number of Temmies in the past. But the child was no ordinary Temmie and Paps had acquired a bad habit of letting his guard down around her.

No. No, Papyrus was not stupid. Everything would be fine. *it's fine.*

Sans had been busy playing with some wisps of cobalt magic, coiling them around his skeletal digits, when he noticed Undyne finally depart the village and head towards the lower caverns. *it's about time*... He pushed himself up off the door frame. He watched Undyne make her way down a flight of stony stairs into the cobalt caverns. She was treading slowly through the water, through the main passageway… she was heading towards the the throne room.

*finally.*

She was alone and away from the other monsters. She was right outside the arena in the main cavern.

And Sans made his move.

He vanished.

There was an abrupt rush of wind and a flash of indigo.

And he reappeared a few yards in front of her.

“W-What the FUCK!” Undyne stumbled backwards in pure shock.

Sans’ teleportation burst brilliantly around them and blinded her temporarily. Undyne let out a roar and she lifted her massive hand. Flashes of white began to conjure within her claw. The light formed a long, slender spear of pure energy and in a matter of seconds she hurled her weapon in Sans’ direction.

But Sans had expected her to attack. He teleported behind her before the spear had even left her hand and it struck the water in a blunder.

“heh… undyne…”

Undyne swerved around. Her eye was wide with shock. She summoned another spear in her claw but she did not throw it a second time. She stared back at the skeleton with pure bewilderment oozing from her pores and she held out her weapon, ready for an onslaught.

“S-SANS!?” She was baffled by his presence. How long had it been? Years?… *Decades?*

Sans grit his incisors but he forced a smirk to surface. He held out a skeletal claw at the ready,
prepared to summon his ax if Undyne insisted on a skirmish.

“i’m all for a fight if ya got one, undyne, but i think you’ll find what i have to say of more interest.”
He sneered and watched the monster’s expression morph from surprise to dismay.

Undyne seized a moment before she could respond. She took in heavy breaths, her shoulders rising
and falling underneath glistening wet armor. Her rusty hair fell before her face. And her lone eye
began to narrow as she leered back at the skeleton… the criminal.

There was about five minutes of tense silence until Undyne finally realized what she was looking at
was not just another mirage brought on by swamp gas.

“Tch… Honestly, I am surprised you are even alive.” She spat her words and glared back at Sans
from over the edge of her spear. A glare of pure disgust.

Sans’ grin softened. He chuckled deep within his non-existent gut and stuffed his claws back in his
jacket pocket. “heh heh… is that so?”

“Actually, I shouldn’t be surprised by this. You are on par with a foul insect that never dies.”
Undyne hissed through her teeth and adjusted her stance to a more relaxed posture. She lowered her
spear to her side. “What the fuck are you doing here, traitor?”

Sans’ canny smirk twitched in one corner and he shut his sockets.

“traitor, eh?… heh…”

“Well?”

…

He opened his eyes and the lone orb housed within his left socket flashed fire red.

“the gates are open, undyne.”

…

…

Undyne stared back at him with a blank expression, but her snarky glower tensed up and her eye
glazed over as she attempted to mask her hysteria.

“… What?” Her voice turned to a husky whisper and bounced off the dark cavern walls.

“the gates are open.” Sans kept his voice stable. “… we are free.” But he couldn’t help the
excitement that dripped from that constrained confession.
Undyne hesitated. And then she grinned wide and let out a sarcastic laugh. “You were never funny before, and you ain’t funny now.”

“i can show you”

“If this is a joke, then I swear on Asgore’s rotting corpse that I will smash your bones to powder and feed it to the tadpoles.” Her voice prickled along the back of his spine. She was clearly agitated and irate to no end, however there was a glint of curiosity in her gaze.

“i am not joking, undyne. the gates are open. all of them.” Sans chuckled and stared her dead in the eye. “i opened them.”

“You!?!?” Undyne furrowed her brow and clenched her teeth so forcefully that her gums began to bleed down her lips.

She hesitated again and processed his words.

Then she spoke in a low growl. “… Show me.”

The water-dwelling demon was on the verge of an aneurysm, but Undyne knew that Sans would never show up here for no reason… not after the shame he had endured. He would only appear before her if even the slightest chance of atonement was attainable.

Sans guided Undyne down the caverns through a side passageway back towards the lower floor of the arena. They stepped out into the center of the circular room and Undyne’s gaze immediately settled upon the open door on the furthest side. An open door… that should not be open.

“W-what… What the fuck!? When did you-” Undyne’s words trailed off. She stepped past Sans and made a beeline for the unlocked 5th gate. She shoved the door outward with her claw and leered down into the dark depths. The waterfall roared below, but it was almost impossible to see. It was so dark and the only visible element was the inky-black rushing water directly below her feet past the threshold.

The gate… it had been locked for so long. It led to the rest of Waterfall’s recesses and ultimately to Hotland and beyond.

Sans stepped up behind her.

“it is not important when it was opened. what is important is that they are now unlocked. each one. all ten. including the final gate.”

Undyne ripped her transfixed gaze from the darkness and lurched around to face him.

“T-the final gate… The final gate… But… But the Manumitter!?” Her raspy whisper erupted and overflowed with questions. “Did you command the Manumitter to do this!? Is he dead??!? Where is he?! Why did you not inform me!? There was a PLAN, Sans! We were to follow a VERY SPECIFIC, DETAILED PLAN!”

Sans looked past Undyne at the door. “it’s done now. the gates are open and the Above has been unlocked.” He averted his gaze back towards her. “we can leave this hell…”
“... i have freed you all.”

“Sans…” Undyne let out a haughty sigh. She leaned against her spear and rolled back her shoulders. For once her muscles relaxed in his presence. “Perhaps you really were the most capable warrior… Besides… you are the only one left…”

A biting throe of guilt pierced through his soul.

Undyne...

She smiled.

And for a moment... it felt like old times again.

Finally Undyne broke the silence and her words were stern and pure business.
“I will assemble my people. We will start the evacuation of Waterfall, followed by Hotland and then finally Core City.” She tilted her head back and glanced up at the beams of light cascading from the ceiling. “It has been a long time since I could leave Waterfall… Is there even anyone else left out there?”

Her words shook Sans from his wistful nostalgia.

“… there are a few residents in hotland… many more in core city. the canine unit… they are currently runnin’ things.”

Undyne pulled her gaze from the ceiling, lost in deep thought. She contemplated his words. “And are they safe to approach?”

“heh. you’ll have to approach ‘em and find out for yourself.”

She set aside Sans’ arrogance - she was much too distracted by her own thoughts of evacuation and transportation and freedom. “… I’ll just be happy to get my people out of here. Our rations are at an all-time low.”

Sans leaned back into the side of the alcove. He listened to the waterfall roaring through the open doorway and cast Undyne an apathetic sideways glance.

“Well, how about you rally up your troops and start makin’ your way through.” He muttered and lifted a hand from his pocket. Sans slipped two of his skeletal digits inside his empty socket and clasped at its edge, grating his fingertips against the inner cartilage - an idle habit of his. “… it’ll be a hike… alphys’ lab is in shambles, but it’s still standin’. the very 1st gate within the shed had also been opened… but with the aquifer blockin’ your way to snowdin there is really no chance of goin’ backwards. you can only go forward.”

“It is alright. Snowdin Town is a wasteland, last I heard.” Undyne crossed her arms in front of her breastplate and glanced back at Sans in response. “I’d rather travel through villages that aren’t graveyards. It’ll take us a few days to prepare and I am going to lead a small preliminary group with me to the final gate… Just to see how treacherous the journey will be before I take the little ones.”

Sans shifted his sneakers in the water. From the sound of it, Waterfall was thriving. Perhaps they really were the only village of sane monsters left. Sans knew all too well the state of the monsters in Core City… They had lost themselves to hunger a long time ago. But it was not his mission to get involved. He simply wanted redemption… to reclaim his title. And Undyne was speaking to him now not as a filthy murdering traitor, but as an equal.

Had she forgiven him?… Would they all forgive him?…

…

you’re fellow warriors are dead and gone… who are you trying to impress here?… the only monsters’ whose forgiveness you desired are dead… dead by your hands… and ghosts cannot forgive.
perhaps the girl… the child… perhaps you could still win the manumitter’s forgiveness.

…

tyres, she hates you.

…

Undyne was staring at Sans, who was staring down at the stagnant water. His thoughts were climbing up the walls of his skull like wildfire. And he suddenly felt his soul churn up into tight liquid knots. But Sans fashioned his building mania and tilted his head back towards Undyne with a brash, hollow smirk.

“howza ’bout I meet you at asgore’s castle in three weeks? think you can make it there by then?”

Undyne yanked her spear’s head free from the stone and rested it against her shoulder. “Yes. I will make it a priority.”

Sans nodded once and pushed himself from the wall. He stuffed his hands back in his pockets and turned, but Undyne’s stare was fixed upon him. Her brazen grin lessened into one of true gratitude… and recognition.

“Thank you, Warrior.”

…

warrior…
“heh…”

The skeleton pulled his hood up over his head. The fur-trimmed cowl wrapped around his damaged skull and blocked out the beams of brilliance from above.

And he teleported.

Sans returned… to Snowdin. He feet sunk deep into the snow the moment he reappeared among the ice and the gloom. Bitter cold clashed against him in the form of violent gusts, a stark contrast to the rather humid temperature of Waterfall. He had returned to the Snowdin forest, some miles away from his house. He was at the 3rd gate - the black-brick barrier that separated Snowdin forest from the abandoned village. The gate stood open, thanks to Frisk who had unlocked it so long ago, and exposed a more forlorn woodland and the path that led to the Town of Snowdin, Gaster’s Library, and eventually back towards Waterfall.

Sans leaned against the wall. He was within range now… close enough to spectate. He immediately shut his flashing red eye and opened the opposite sunken crater wide, focusing all of his magic upon Papyrus first.

The vision slowly came into focus. Papyrus… his brother… he was outside. He was out in the snow behind the house, frantically running about as if he was searching for something behind the trees. And the front door… was wide open…

The front door was open.

…

fuck!

…
Sans’ soul constricted. He immediately focused his attention upon Frisk. He saw her clearly in his mind. She was trudging through knee-high snow in the middle of the forest. She was lost… she was freezing. Her lips were blue and her skin was ashen white and varnished with frost. Ice clung to her lashes and the tips of her hair. The wind pushed her back as she struggled to continue on… searching for the ruins… searching for the exit and her escape. But little did she know she was going the wrong way.

“fuck…” Sans cursed under his breath. He gathered his magic and vanished once more, only to reappear directly before her.

Sans teleported to Frisk. She was so out of it from the cold that she did not even notice the burst of blue. She walked directly into his ample chest and fell backwards into the snow.

“kid…” Sans ground his teeth together in overwhelming rage. how the FUCK did she escape!? she could have fucking DIED! how long had she been out here? god dammit, papyrus! did she trick you!? did she simply get lucky? fuck… he never should have left them. fuck fuck fuck!

Frisk stared up at Sans as pure horror stained her features. She tried to cry out, but she had lost her voice from the cold. She simply lifted her hands and buried her face against those two little freezing palms. She started to sob and her voice returned… and she cried out to him through the flurry.

“P-please… please kill me… P-p-please… just kill me…”

fuckin’ hell…

Sans would have killed her right then and there in a blind rage, had it not been for a spasm of self-control that surprisingly stuck within his thoughts. He pulled his thick winter jacket off his shoulders, exposing his immense arm extremities. Sans snatched Frisk up by her wrists and quickly wrapped her up in his coat before he threw her over his shoulder. She fought him weakly but she could barely move. Every one of her limbs had gone numb.

Sans kept her tucked under his coat to shield her from the snow and he took hurried steps back in the direction of their house. God, if only he could teleport with her. At least they were not terribly far… She must have been walking in circles to get this lost yet remain so close to the starting point.

And they were back at the house within ten minutes. Papyrus had moved to the the front yard and he saw them approach from afar.

“She called out to his older brother and his sockets widened at the sight of the bundle in Sans’ arms. ‘THE HUMAN!? SANS! I DON’T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED!’ He began to ramble, but Sans was not interested in an explanation at the moment. He stepped past Paps, who followed after him, and they entered the house.

The temperature inside was significantly warmer and stuffy and a tad humid. If the damage had not already been done, then the Manumitter should be alright… She was still alive. Sans could feel her heart pulsating, pressed against his chest.
“AND THEN I GAVE HER THE HUMAN FOOD, SANS! AND SHE ATE IT ALL BUT SHE SAID SHE STILL FELT SICK… I WAS JUST GOING TO LET HER GO TO THE LAVATORY! AND THEN… AND THEN SHE GOT AWAY, BROTHER!” Papyrus shut the door behind him as his echoic words raced a mile a minute. “I DON’T KNOW… I DON’T KNOW HOW… I DON’T KNOW HOW SHE COULD HAVE DECEIVED ME!”

But Sans could not respond. He was burning with enmity. He carried Frisk up the stairs and back to her room. He dropped her upon the mattress, still wrapped up in his coat. Papyrus loomed in the doorway… he had finally stopped screaming and instead he looked overwhelmed with torment.

Sans leered down at the bundle. His massive incisors grit into one another like form-fitting kitchen knives. His red eye was flashing so rapidly, so frantic, pumping with rage. But he did not say a word to her. Instead he turned and joined Paps in the hallway, slamming and locking the door behind him, leaving the girl alone in pitch-black darkness. Alone with her sorrows.

It took the entirety of next day for Sans’ anger to finally recede. He knew Frisk was determined, even without her soul, but he never imagined that she had the gall to try and make her way back to the ruins. Sans knew that she knew that he was watching her. She had certainly taken a calculated risk with that daring escape attempt.

He swore to himself that he would not let it happen again.

That next day, Sans watched her from early morning into the evening. She remained wrapped up under the mound of blankets, buried deep within his jacket. She barely moved. Despite his anger, Sans was concerned that she had succumb to hypothermia… but Frisk started to fidget come noon and eventually she slipped out from underneath the blankets to take a sip from her water bowl.

That afternoon Sans forced himself to feed her. He threw some snacks in her room - a bag of potato chips, a bottle of water, and a chocolate candy bar - but he never entered the space. He refused to speak to her, let alone look at her, not in-person, at least. He would survey from afar with magic. He was still so irate.

Sans was also irritated with Papyrus and they sat down and had a long talk about how they should handle their new house guest. Papy agreed to be vigilant, at least until Frisk learned to behave, and who knows how long that would take. But Sans could never stay mad at his brother for very long and eventually forgave him for the incident.
It had only been a day after Frisk’s escape when she attempted another that night.

Sans and Papyrus lounged upon the dilapidated couch in the living room. Their old blocky television was turned on and it flickered with static before them. However, there was a picture. It was faint, but just barely visible through a flurry of black and white noise. There was a human on the screen. A human news channel. It was almost impossible to make out what the human was saying, but Papyrus didn’t care. He was just happy to watch an actual television show. The mysterious human channel had appeared sometime after Frisk had opened the first and last gate. Perhaps opening the gates had restored the signals, somehow.

“WOWIE, SANS. WE’VE NEVER GOTTEN THIS CHANNEL BEFORE!”

“yeah…”

Sans sat beside his brother but he was not interested in what was on the screen. He tilted his head to the side, away from Papyrus, and closed his left socket to spy on their captive. He was obsessed… obsessed with watching her. It had become some sick compulsion to repeatedly check on her welfare. He wanted to see her.

Frisk lay in the makeshift bed…

She had barely moved all day. He could see the top half of her face underneath the hem of blankets. She wore his jacket and had pulled the hood up over her head, which was much too big for her. She was not asleep but staring blankly. Her single eye glazed over inky black as she stared out into the darkness, lost in her own thoughts. Her fingers idly curled into the fur-trim of the coat. She was feeling the texture… clutching at the pelt. Sans could only assume what she was thinking about.

She remained that way for a while. And although Sans was consumed with watching her every move, it was rather uneventful, and soon he started to doze. The combination of their living room’s warmth and the gentle buzzing of television static lulled him to sleep.

He had only been sleeping for an hour or so when Sans awoke to a startling shatter. The clash came from above… from upstairs.

“W-WHAT WAS THAT??” Papyrus heard it too. He ripped his gaze from the television and jolted to his feet.

fuck…

Sans pulled himself off the couch and immediately re-focused his magic on Frisk… and in his mind’s eye he saw her. She was no longer in bed. She was kneeling in the center of the room in darkness. One of the glass ceramic plates Papyrus had left in there the day before had been thrown against the wall and shattered. She held a fragment in her hand and pressed its razor-sharp broken edge against her wrist… and she began to cut down into her skin. Sans’ jacket had been tossed to the floor and she leaned over it. Blood spilled from the fresh wound as she pressed harder. Liquid ruby trickled down her arm and landed upon Sans’ coat, staining it with garnet droplets.
Sans’ soul leapt and his hollow eye widened. *shit!* He teleported and reappeared behind her instantly. He grabbed at both of her upper forearms to wrench her hands back, which caused Frisk to screamed out and fight him. She cursed at him and thrashed about, so desperate to end it all. Sans pried the glass shard from her hand and yanked her wounded wrist towards him. The cut was not deep enough to kill - *he had stopped her just in time.* The suicide attempt was more disturbing than her escape and Sans growled and slammed her hard up against the wall.

*f-fuck… you want to die that badly? you want to hurt that badly!!*

The door burst open.

“SANS!? HUMAN?? WHAT HAPPENED!”

*he had to put a stop to this… he had to control her somehow… he was able to do it before… surely he could do it again… he could do it again…*

*

*he was not going to be able to rest until he pacified her desire for freedom…*

*

*he had to do something…*

Sans commanded Papyrus to grab some bandages. The sight and smell of her blood made his soul shiver, but he controlled his appetite. He washed off Frisk’s wounds and wrapped them. The whole time she was cursing and thrashing about in his grasp. She was no longer begging for death, she was *angry.* Frisk spat at him and tried to scratch his skull and kick at his knees and do everything in her power to break free from his grasp. But Paps helped Sans control her and once the wound was patched up Sans locked the collar back around her throat… where it would remain until she learned to behave. He removed anything that she could use to attempt another suicide, snatched his hoodie from the floor, and left her alone in the room.

That night came and went.

The next day Sans awoke to the sounds of air sirens and Undyne’s voice bellowing from above. The loudspeakers… he had forgotten about them. It had been some time since Undyne had used them. Ages ago, Undyne set up a system of sirens and loudspeakers in Waterfall. Because each section of
the Underground was walled off from one another, those loudspeakers had been the only form of communication. She would shout orders to Snowdin from afar. Papyrus often followed her every word - those orders had turned him into a human-hunting fanatic in the first place.

But this time Undyne was no longer shouting orders to capture the Manumitter. She spoke of a schedule pertaining to the evacuation. Her harsh voice ratted through the walls of their house - instructions alerting every living sane creature within radius that the gates were now open and any survivors must make their way to Waterfall as quickly as possible to prepare for a journey to the Above.

Sans sighed and rolled over. He glared at the closest wall beside him - the wall that separated his bed from Frisk's mattress, right on the opposite side. He listened to Undyne speak for a good 10 minutes until her voice finally tapered off. He quickly surveyed Frisk in his mind’s eye. She was actually sleeping.

Another day passed, and it was pleasantly uneventful. Sans took Frisk off the collar only to use the restroom, but besides that she remained chained up. Frisk had barely eaten a thing. She was even refusing to eat the human snacks now. If she could not take her life with force, then she would do it through passive starvation. Sans’ anger finally settled down and instead he became troubled… troubled by her rebellion.

This was proving to be more of a challenge than he originally anticipated.

“kid…” Sans sat in the center of her room. He stared at the bundle upon the mattress. The door was open behind him and dim light from the hall spilled into the space. The dingy glow reflected off the bowl of food he held in one hand. She was going to starve to death and he had to do something…

Earlier that day, Sans teleported past the ruins into the Above - the human forest. He hunted down a wild hare and broke the animal's neck then flung it over his shoulder before he returned home. But he did not hesitate to do a couple rounds around the shed, in search of Toriel. She was nowhere to be seen. perhaps it truly had just been an illusion.

Sans had returned to Snowdin and cooked the hare properly. It was fresh meat… and would hopefully provide some nourishment for the girl. He chopped off the feet, skinned it of the hide and sinewy tendons, and proceeded to scrape the lean meat from its bones. Sans chopped up the meat into small pieces and cooked it thoroughly over a small bonfire in the back of the house - he was weary of the old, ratty cookware Papyrus kept in their kitchen. He added a bit of spices and collected the meat in a bowl, then brought it upstairs to Frisk.

But she remained curled up under the sheets, shivering at the sound of his voice.

“c’mon, kid…” Sans stood up off the floor and sat at the edge of the mattress. The mattress sunk under his heavy weight and caused Frisk to roll into his side, which in turn made her immediately flinch away from him.

“doesn't this smell good?” He attempted to coax her out from underneath the hiding spot with food. Sans had no interest in cooked meat, but it actually did smell rather tasty even by his standards. And
if the scent tantalized his senses in that way then it must have been twofold for the girl. “just have a
taste…”

Sans did everything in his power to keep his voice and actions calm. He tugged the blankets from her
face and shoulders and lifted the bowl closer. Frisk recoiled away from his touch, but her nose
twitched as she took in the scent… of fresh, home cooked food.

It had been so long. Much too long since she had eaten anything that was not processed or rotten.

Frisk lifted her head and blinked down at bowl of meat, and it was in that moment that Sans truly
noticed how unhealthy she looked. Her skin was pale and sweaty. Dark circles decorated the bottom
of her lone eye. Her hair was a mess, as she had not bathed in weeks. She was getting thinner and
her face was growing sallow… and the lively sheen that used to coat her auburn eye had turned dull.

“… just give it a try, kiddo…” He felt guilt. A fragment of a sliver of remorse.

frisk… *my frisk…*

*my sweetheart…*

…

Sans lifted his opposite claw and pressed against her back to help her sit up straight. She did not
recoil from his touch that time, but perhaps it was simply due to her weakened state. Frisk leaned
over and much to his surprise she plucked a small chunk of rabbit from the bowl. She reluctantly
popped it in her mouth and chewed once… then again… and again.

*she likes it… she’s eating…*

It felt like progress.

Sans began to spend more time with her after that. He cooked all her meals from that point on.
Usually it was rabbit, sometimes squirrel, and sometimes it would be the more healthy sections of
deer that he hunted for himself and Papyrus. Sans tried his hardest to show her kindness, but the
deep-seated base thoughts always lingered in the back of his mind… and the memories. Sans had not
touched her in that way since Asgore’s castle… since before she had opened the final gate. But those
recollections were as fresh as the day it happened. It created a constant elephant in the room. They were both thinking the same thing, but never spoke of it. Actually, Frisk spoke very little. She always avoided eye contact with him and tried to pretend he was not there each time he entered her room.

But she was behaving, despite it all. As a reward for her decorum Sans removed the collar. He remained diligent about locking her bedroom door when he went to sleep or when he knew he would not be able to monitor her 24/7, yet he allowed her some new freedom. He left the door ajar one morning and watched her from afar. Frisk took advantage of the open door simply to use the bathroom and return. Although she did linger in the hallway for longer than she should have… her eyes scanning over Sans’ and Papyrus’ bedroom doors - unknown rooms. But she did not attempt another escape, and Sans was pleased.

Sans returned her cellphone as a reward for her proper conduct. Perhaps she was actually beginning to come to terms with the situation. She was eating regularly and her nighttime terrors and sweats were become more infrequent. She was starting to look a bit healthier too and the dark circle under her eye had dwindled and her gaunt, sunken cheeks began to fill out a tad. She even took a bath much to Sans’ surprise. It was difficult, but he was able to control his appetite and Sans reigned in his surveillance magic when Frisk was in the tub.

it's wrong… it's wrong…

The voice… The malignant voice that festered inside of him and drove him to act on those audacious, vile impulses had not surfaced since the shed. How long had it been? About a week? Usually that voice was a constant parasite, but it seemed to have vanished when he had refused it. It was… a relief… and without it he could control his bloodsick, perverted notions with enough will.

After Frisk was clean and back in her room, Papyrus re-dressed the bandages over her right eye with fresh ones. He dug up a white medical eyepatch from a pile of miscellaneous clothing they had in their living room and placed it over the bandages to add more protection to the wound. He also found warmer clothing for Frisk to wear. A large, baggy cable-knit sweater to don over her hoodie, black tights that were thick and tattered and must have once belonged to a monster as small as her, and a pair of brown fur-inlay boots that were much too big, albeit warm.

Frisk seemed thankful for the winter clothes. She bowed her head in gratitude as Papyrus happily left the clothing in her room. Although the two of them seemed to be getting along more and more, Sans could not help his paranoia. A creeping feeling of alarm clutched at his soul each time the human was near his brother…

There were still remnants… remnants of a murderer in her subtle actions…

Remnants of Chara.

…

she’s just like you… one in the same…
And Papyrus would often linger about in Frisk’s room and converse with her. He would mainly question her about the Above. About the human world, about the state of the rest of the Underground, about what type of meat was her favorite… And Frisk would respond, reluctant at first, but she was starting to open up. The fear that she might spill everything to Papyrus was a constant weight on Sans’ mind, but Frisk never broke their unspoken pact of secrets…

why?

Sans was being lazy. He had to get to work on the candles. He had to start prepping for the move. He had to try and break this obsession he had… for the girl…

my frisk.

my sweetheart…

…

…

…

…

It had been exactly a week and four days since the Manumitter became their captive.

Sans sat in his room in his usual spot upon the bed.

It was late. He cast a sideways glance out the haphazardly boarded-up window. The midnight snowstorm was particularly violent tonight. He peered through the murky black at the savage flurries. The wind roared with such force that it could have been confused with an oncoming train. The entire house shuddered under the force of the winter tempest, but even the uproar could not pull Sans from his thoughts.

Had Undyne finally left Waterfall for the final gate like she said she would? He could go hunt her
down… Teleport to every section of the Underground and spy on her journey, but he had to meet up with her at Asgore’s castle soon enough. He still had some time before then… Besides, there was an extremely important task he had planned for tonight. Something he had been putting off.

Tonight… tonight was the night that he would return to the ruins and attempt to destroy the first candle.

Those candles were small, meager little save points. They looked so delicate. Surely it would not be that difficult of a task… but some ingrained hypothesis told him otherwise. He had other options, should he fail… He would have to take to research in the library… perhaps Gaster would know how to demolish those savepoints… That is, if he wasn’t completely deranged by now. The last time Sans had seen that monster he paralyzed him with his magic so that both Frisk and himself could pass. He had not had an actual conversation with Gaster since the fall.

Sans pulled his gaze from the window. He slowly rolled up off his bed and stretched his arms up over his head, popping his joints with a lethargic shrug.

It was time to go and conduct the first experiment. He could not put it off any longer.

Sans tugged his hood up over his head and stepped out into the hall. He walked past Frisk’s room and peered inside. It was pitch black but he could still see her. She was wrapped up under the blankets, sleeping soundly. Her bundled form rose and fell in a steady rhythm and her gentle breathing matched the slow tempo.

Sans pulled himself from her door and closed it, but he kept it unlocked. She had been behaving well enough to earn the luxury of voluntary bathroom access.

He headed downstairs. Papyrus was still awake, watching television. The human news channel was no longer on the screen, only vibrating static.

“SANS?” Paps turned his head at the sound of his footsteps from behind. He blinked slowly.

“goin’ out for a bit, bro”

“OUT? BUT IT’S ALREADY LATE.”

“won’t be long. two hours tops.”

“WELL, ALRIGHT.” Papyrus responded in a sleepy mutter and turned back towards the TV.

Sans knew he did not have to remind Papyrus to stay vigilant. Everything would be fine. Besides, he was not going far… The kid was sleeping… Everything would be alright. But perhaps… perhaps he should go back upstairs and lock her door just in case?

…

no. it will be fine.
Sans tamed his anxiety and walked through the living room. He stepped outside and closed the door firmly behind him. The violent wind almost knocked him back into the house. He was no light monster, yet this storm was brutal even against his solid form. But there would be no walking through the snow for him. Sans teleported in an instant.

He reappeared in the ruins… within one of the corridors. It was so silent compared to the outside forest. A painful silence. The still dark absence wrapped around him like an old friend. His flashing maroon eye shuddered and created flickering shadows upon the stone walls at either side. But he was not in total darkness… there was a light, up ahead. His objective.

Sans stepped into the smaller room. He glanced down at the candle that sat in the corner of the space. Nothing had changed. Everything was exactly where it should be. It was… so terribly quiet. The silence cut at his mind and released those trapped memories which oozed out like sticky liquid mortar.

… those memories…

He glanced at the opposite side of the room, at the empty corner.

frisk…

He stepped closer and stared down at the space where the two walls met.

... frisk...

... i was just… so resentful…

...

... you were resentful. you were so angry. you could not control it. she had killed him… she had murdered them all… in the most brutal of ways.

...
she deserved it…

fuck…

…

s-stop it-…

Sans sunk down to his knees. He ran the tips of his skeletal phalanges against the cold brick floor. There was a faint trace of a stain upon the stone… rusty red smears… blood.

A wave of remission pulled him under.

God, she had been so terrified. He had been so angry. She had cried out for help, but nobody came… nobody came…

And she had felt… so deliriously amazing… that first time. Her blood had tasted so delicious, even more than those times he tasted her prior. He could taste her fear. A flavor that could never be emulated. In that moment, when he took her, that fear was as authentic as it could ever be.

Nothing could ever compare… to that first time…

…

…

maybe that was not true…

…

you can do it again…

…

shit…
Sans growled and cut down those shivering desires instantly. Waves of excited magic were running up and down his bones and the sensation made his eye flutter like a freshly nourished bonfire. no...
He took in a deep, slow inhale and stood up. The skeleton turned his back on the sullied corner and he stepped over towards the candle. there was work to be done. control yourself. you must secure their freedom.

He glared down at the little candle before his sneakers. It was only about 5 inches high and its meager ember floated above the tip of the candlestick without a wick. The stick itself was made up of a clear, glossy off-white wax. Liquid collected underneath the flame and oozed down slowly to form a little puddle at the base, but it never seemed to melt away. It never got any smaller.

Sans crouched and he wrapped his hand around the candlestick and squeezed. Nothing happened. The wax was barely lukewarm. He squeezed harder, hoping to crush it in his palm, but it was as solid as an iron pole. He could not squish the wax, despite its appearance. Sans furrowed his brow and lifted his fingers through ember. The flame was of a ghostly consistency and he could not extinguish it.

... well what did you expect, a cake walk?

enough of this.

He stood up and leaned back and summoned his hatchet instantly. Sans rolled the weapon over his shoulder, aiming directly for the candle, and brought it down with all his force in an attempt to cut the object in two. But... the ax head phased through the candle like it was not a physical object at all but a projected image. His ax hammered loudly into the stone underneath.

fuck...

Nothing happened. The ember continued to flicker. The candlestick remained intact. Not even a scratch could be seen within the wax.
He yanked the ax from the floor and willed his weapon away. Sans summoned a different weapon this time. He lifted his hand and called forth an array of spiraling bone daggers. There were about a dozen of them and they circled around his risen hand in a constant gyration. Each one was blood-red and as sharp as a steel spearhead. Sans commanded the bones downward and they drove forward through the candlestick.

But again they phased through, just like the ax, and pierced the floor instead.

c’mon.

He let out a sigh, frustrated by the whole ordeal, but not necessarily surprised. He had expected this as much. The candles had withstood the fall of this world… surely they could withstand a beat-down by an ax and some bones. But there had to be a way… There had to be a trick to it. something.

Asgore had known about the candles before his death… Therefore Gaster should have some tomes on the matter. Or perhaps even some old journals. There had to be some information out there somewhere about these relics. Frisk’s ability to reset was somehow tethered to their existence. Perhaps only Frisk could destroy them?… Or perhaps it was so much more complicated than he could even comprehend…

Sans tried one last thing before he left. He summoned some of his magic and directed the cobalt serpents of energy to wrap around the candle in an attempt to break it and extinguish the flame, but just like before it remained resilient. He stood back up to his feet and teleported through the ruins, directly in front of the second open gate at the end of the tunnels.

The storm was raging harder than before…

Sans leaned against the side of the open alcove and watched the sweeping flurry. It was dark, yet the sky retained a gentle glow of grey that illuminated each snowflake amongst the treetops.

The snow was dark. It melded with ash that continuously fell from the sky.
It did not look like snow… it looked like a swarm of insects.

…

…

His soul… felt cold…

…

A familiar sensation, one he had felt quite a few times prior, back at Asgore’s castle. The same bitter titillation he felt while he commanded the Manumitter to open that final gate…

And she did.

She had opened it.

She had obeyed.

And she had longed for death, something Sans could not give her.

…

*i thought i would feel something, once the gates had been opened…*

…

*i thought things would change…*

…

*b-but… it’s gotten worse… sweetheart…*
my thoughts are alive with many voices…

…

… telling me i am made of rancor…

…

perhaps it is just one voice… just one voice…

…

…

… Heh

…

His eye was burning in the darkness.

His head… hurt…

He lifted a claw and ran his fingers along the jagged open cavity at the side of his skull.

A phantom ache…

And he shut his radiating socket and clenched his teeth and his shoulders began to tremble. Sans was seconds away from using his magic to survey Papyrus and Frisk, when he heard a soft shuffle behind him. *f-fuck…* He swerved around and lifted his claws, ready to fight.

There was a glimmer in the tunnels. It was moving forward towards him… a pale white afterglow.

he was not alone.
A ghost emerged from the shadows.

A familiar sight.

The creatures multitude of ombre insect-like limbs protruded from his spectral body all directions. Each arm had a claw at the end, decorated in sharp barbed nails. His many legs seemed to be erupting from underneath a ragged white cloth draped over a round form, which was surprisingly the ghost's torso. It almost looked like he was clothed in a tattered tablecloth, but it definitely was not cloth. The fibrous substance emitted an unnatural gleam of light. And through his glowing, drooping flesh were two narrow holes cut out at the upper center of the material, exposing a pair of confined white hues for eyes.

“Ssssskk…” The gentle hissing came from the creature. And he recognized Sans instantly and seemed to pick up his pace, moving closer. “… Warrior?… sssk…”

Sans lowered his hands at the sight. His anxiety dwindled. His cunning smirk returned and he let out a chuckle and shoved his hands in his pockets.

“heh… i'm no warrior… not anymore…”

It had been some time since Sans had seen Napstablook. Well, that was not entirely true, he had paralyzed the ghost only recently… similar to how he paralyzed Gaster, back when he was leading Frisk through the underground. But it had been years since he actually had a conversation with the creature.

“Sssssk… What are you doing heeeeere?…”

Napstablook’s slithering tone was echoic and hushed and laced with stealth mischief. He stepped out from behind the shadows and stood a few yards away from Sans. His limber multiple set of arms clutched onto either side of the tunnel walls and he leered back at Sans with emotionless, eerie orbs of light. He was a hard one to read… without any real expressions to make out… and his voice remained a constant steady monotony.

“napstablook… it’s been a while.” Sans forced a grin. He leaned back into the wall, relaxing a bit - Napstablook was not the kind of monster to attack another, especially one as strong as himself. “i was takin’ a look at the open gates.”
“Yesss… the gates are open now… They have been open for a while… ssskk…” The specter crept closer. He peered over the skeleton’s shoulder out into the snowstorm. Napstablook lifted a limb and tapped at the side of the open alcove. “… Well… at least… thissss one has been open for a while…”

“why are you still here then? the gates are open… the shed door is open… why do you remain here?” Sans was genuinely curious. He knew Napstablook to be a demure monster, one that would never take a risk no matter how calculated. But when it came to freedom… Why remain in such a somber labyrinth?

Napstablook did not respond.

He ignored Sans’ question and simply gazed out into the blizzard.

And the awkward silence hung heavy against Sans’ soul.

...

does he know?...

...

does he know what a villain you are?

...

“So you gave you credit… Undyne… I heard it… over the loudspeakers.” Napstablook whispered. “She sssssaid you opened the gateessss… Did you open the gates, Warrior?……”

And Napstablook pulled his gaze from the flurry and stared directly into Sans’ vermilion eye.

Sans felt his soul flinch at the creature’s words. There was a faint hint of derisive scorn in the ghost’s tone.

“undyne…” Perhaps she had made an announcement when he was asleep… had she truly given Sans credit?… heh…

Napstablook fluttered closer towards the open gateway, right besides Sans, and he lifted a claw out into the snow and watched as the sooty flakes landed upon his thin limb.
“It is dangerous… The monsters… All leaving sssssimultaneously……”

“undyne will control the chaos…” Sans muttered and leaned his skull back into the stone. He did not care either way… And Napstablook could tell. The ghost pulled his stare from the woods and glanced up at Sans like he knew exactly what was going on in that broken skull.

There was another awkward silence.

Sans leered down at the creature, half tempted to provoke him, but Napstablook spoke again before he had a chance.

“… I saw a Temmie out here… the other day… ssskkk……” Napstablook said.


“Yessss… perhaps they have come back… Perhaps they never vanished in the first place, ssssimply hiding.”

“…” Sans glanced back out into the decrepit woodland. Murky shadows, like that of demon claws, cast along the snow from the lifeless trees. The branches creaked and snapped against the rough winds. If Napstablook was being truthful and there really were Temmies out there in that forest, then he would have to set up some traps. It had been so long since he had a piece of Temmie meat… Flesh from the animals in the Above could never take its place.

Napstablook was silent, as was Sans. The skeleton cast a sly glance at the phantom, but Napstablook was staring into the woods, unblinking and speechless. After the fall… after Sans had been banished to Snowdin forest, never to return to the villages again, he had seen Napstablook. He saw the ghost a number times when Sans would teleport into the ruins in search of food. Those few, isolated times they had conversed a bit. They had spoken of the outside and the human world. Napstablook had mentioned peering through the shed’s slats… and watching animals in the Above’s woods.

But the ghost had always seemed weary of Sans… like he knew what he was. Like he knew… of his infection.

…”

The silence lingered and Sans finally pulled himself from his slouch against the wall. He bid farewell to Napstablook, blaming the late time on his departure. But the ghost accepted the excuse and turned and vanished back within the ruins.

Sans teleported back to the house directly outside the front door. It remained shut. He wrenched open the door and stepped inside. It was dark. Papyrus had turned off the solo hanging light bulb over their dining room table, however the TV remained on. it was always on.
Papyrus was no longer on the couch and Sans quickly surveyed his brother with his magic. He saw Paps in his bed upstairs, sleeping soundly. *he’s alright… everything is alright…* Sans shifted his magic to spy on Frisk, but something in his soul cut the surveillance short before he could even catch a glimpse.

*this obsession… you must break this habit…*

…

*it is eating away at your judgement… your stability…*

…

*don’t you get it? the one that you long for most is what will destroy you in the end…*

He had to stop haunting the child. **He had to stop this.**

Sans forced himself not to see. He opened his maroon socket slowly and took in a rough inhale through clenched teeth, rubbing at his forehead with one hand. *enough. she’s fine… she’s asleep…*

He made his way up the stairs and stepped past Paps room, but he stopped in front of Frisk’s door. It was still shut. It had not been opened… She was safe inside… *let it go.*

…

He reluctantly trudged forward and entered his room, closing the door behind him. Sans pulled off his jacket and tossed it on his desk. He glanced at the back of his coat… at the small blood spot stains that Frisk had left on the cloth from her suicide attempt - cherry red splotches that turned shades of rosewood after a day or two.

Guilt clung to his soul. His remorse was *painful.* It made his essence shutter beneath his bones. It turned his soul cold. The memories of that room, back in the ruins, hung fresh within his mind.

Memories of what he had done.

Sans sat against the edge of his mattress. He was exhausted and disappointed from the failed experiment. He was disgusted with himself… and he just wanted to sleep. *just sleep.* But he felt something move.
Something *moved*.

Something buried underneath the thick pile of furs and blankets atop his mattress.

Sans swerved to the side and tugged at the blankets.

... *what?...*

... *

*frisk.*

...

The girl… she lay underneath the furs… she was *sleeping*.

She was sleeping in his bed.

...

*what the fuck...*

Sans was so shocked that he dropped the blankets back upon her small form. She shifted slightly and clutched tight onto one of the thick pillows, but she did not wake. She was locked within a deep sleep and Sans could see her single shut eyelid twitching in a REM-sleep state. *she was dreaming.*

Why was she here?

Why would she leave her room… and enter this one?…

Did she know that this was Sans’ room?

Surely she must be unaware of that fact. She *hated* him, after all.
W-why the hell was she here!?

Sans could not understand. He stared down at the little human in a state of shock.

She was sweaty… Minuscule beads of perspiration decorated her cheeks, forehead and neck. And Frisk twitched in her sleep and clutched at the pillow with a bit more effort. *perhaps… a nightmare.*

…

Sans lifted his claw and caressed her feverish jawline. She shuttered. Her flesh warmed his bones instantly… warm and soft… but she did not wake. He had done this before… He had soothed her during these night terrors in the past during her journey… Heinous dreams that he evoked within her subconscious.

*my frisk…*

*my little dove…*

*how can you forgive me, after everything i’ve done?…*

…

*i thought i could escape within you… but that's impossible, isn't it?*

…

*it's impossible…*
Sans kicked off his sneakers. He pulled his feet up and rolled over on his side, facing her. Frisk was curled up in a small ball beside his chest… The clear perspiration turned to little orbs of red as Sans’ maroon gaze illuminated off each one. He watched her with lidded sockets and his smirk curved downward into a stoic glower. He just… he just could not understand… why… why.

He lifted one arm and wrapped it around the girl’s waist, pulling her in closer. He half expected her to wake… but no. She was still asleep and she was not pretending. He could tell due to her steady pulse that beat gently against his touch. Sans pressed the front of his skull to the top of her head. She was safe here… she was protected in this place, from all the horrors of the Underground and the Above…

sweet, little dove… my darling frisk… mine… mine.

She was so close to him, like this… So close… The subtle scent of her skin filled his senses. Sans’ hand inched underneath the blankets and grazed across her navel. He could feel her stomach through the multiple layers of clothing she wore.

Her belly… pulsing softly with each breath… hot, supple insides… murky red and sweltering and so, so luscious.

…

f-fuck…

…

He groped across her stomach… and clutched at the front of her sweater…

His fingers dug into the thick cable-knit…

He could feel her heart beating…

…

you have shared your hurt… shared your pain… with this child.

…

you have sullied her spirit, and still you do not allow her one shred of sympathy…
Sans clutched tighter at the fabric. He could hear the sound of his teeth grinding into one another. His eye pulsed faster… and faster…

…

you thought allowing her to live was **mercy**?…

…

**that was not mercy.**

…

you want her alive… to satisfy that sick perversion inside of you.

…

…

His eye burned so bright. It hammered rapidly in its socket and ached like a boring awl.

It… it **hurt.**

He felt sick. Yet… **hungry**

His soul felt cold… **and dead.**
He could barely see through a dark crimson film that swept across his sight.

...

don’t you remember?……

...

remember……

...

remember……

...

the taste of her flesh.

...

His head was splitting in two.

...

the texture of her insides.
Cobalt saliva oozed through the spaces between his canines.

... 

_just how long do you think this little dreamworld of yours would continue on for?_

... 

_sure, you freed the Underground. you saved the monsters._

... 

_you saved them all._ 

... 

_Haha! AH-HAHA!!!_

... 

_Suuuuure you did. WHAT A JOKE!_

... 

_Don't go and act all self-righteous like you're some complacent, well-adjusted monster, you worthless piece of trash._

...
Hehe-…

I mean… you knew I've been here all along.

... SINCE WHEN WERE YOU THE ONE IN CONTROL?

And his vision turned carbon black.

Coming up: Neurosis.
Wowie Sans. You got some deep-seated issues, buddy… but we all knew that already.

Welcome back Chara, you depraved nefarious demon, you.

And poor, poor Frisk *sigh*

Writing in Sans’ PoV is difficult, but I am finding it to be a fun challenge.

I want to point out that this chapter will most likely be the longest one in this sequel (It’s 100 pages in Word, for reference.) The reason for this is because of all the recapping, but the next 4 will probably not be nearly as lengthy. Also, as mentioned somewhere before, I am going to write these chapters at a much more leisurely pace than I did with PR. So expect a chapter maybe once every 3-4 weeks? Maybe less, I mean it just depends when I get into that writing groove. And get ready for some SMUT comin’ up in Chapter 2 ¯\_(ツ)_/¯ *fuckin’ dies*

Anyways, feel free to ask any questions or just hit me up on my Tumblr. Until next time!

ADVANCED WARNING: The next chapter will contain graphic and explicit sexual content (soul-sex). Please proceed cautiously!
Hello everyone!

Well, I have not written in a year (LOL wtf… Seriously. A year.)

I am so, so sorry. I feel terrible. Pleeese forgive me T_T I did not intend on taking this long of a hiatus.

It seemed that I had developed an extreme case of writer's block? I just had no motivation to write. None at all. And I tried, believe me! I think I was mentally and emotionally exhausted from writing all of Pneuma Rot in a very short span of time. I did not realize how much of a toll it took on me until I had finished it… and then I jumped into another stressful fic and it just became way too much. It did not that help that I subconsciously put this absurd pressure on myself to try and make the fic as perfect as I could. When I first started PR it was mainly just for myself. It was a therapeutic exercise and I didn’t care if people liked it or not, but then it become something else. It had to be flawless and completely refined. It became so stressful and boosted my anxiety way too high.

Also, and I hate to admit this, but reliving some of those traumas through writing Pneuma Rot seemed to trigger something in me that resurrected an old eating disorder that I thought I had overcome ages ago. (DON’T WORRY, I am recovered again and even healthier than before!) But shortly after I began working on Péntalog I had become consumed with restricted eating, so much so that I didn’t even have time to think about continuing this fic. I won’t get into it too much detail, but now anorexia is in my past, forever. I am stronger than that. I will never succumb to those thoughts and actions ever again.

I know I probably should have waited on starting Bloodsick Péntalog back then, but I guess it was a good thing that I began the sequel in the first place, because I promised myself I would complete it someday. I always knew I would have to return to it eventually. I hate leaving things unfinished, and while I have left this unfinished for quite some time, I am back for now.

Nah, I am kidding, I am back for GOOD, at least until I finish this series. I do not want to leave you all hanging again, I felt so bad about that, really I do >< And I am writing it for myself again, so hopefully that false sense of perfectionism will stay away, FAR away. I just have to keep telling myself that not everything has to be perfect all the time, especially a simple hobby that I do for fun… (I blame my Capricorn-ness on that.)

I am not sure what my next project will be after this one is finished. I guess I’ll cross that bridge when I come to it.

Anyways, I had to re-read the entirety of Pneuma Rot and the first chapter of Bloodsick Péntalog to work on this chapter, and that took some time (I also had to force myself not to become consumed with fixing grammar and spelling errors I came across, or I would still be working on that right now.) I apologize if this chapter seems lacking and shorter than the previous. I have to brush up on my writing skills since it has been quite a while
since I have written anything at all besides work copy. Hopefully it will all come back to me soon.

Regardless, I hope you all enjoy the continuation and I am so glad to be back in the swing of things!

**THIS FANFICTION IS A SEQUEL TO THE HORROTALE AU STORY PNEUMA ROT. PLEASE READ THAT BEFORE YOU BEGIN THIS FIC.**

Warning: This chapter contains a scene of graphic soul-sex.

---

Penchant (*pen-t-SH-ənt*): a strong or habitual infatuation.

---

“my name is sans. first infantry division, second squadron of the underground royal battalion. i swear my soul and sword to serve under asgore’s royal army. i swear my loyalty to obey the king. i swear my valor to defend the monsters. i commit my determination to ensure freedom for all.”

“i have taken my vow.”

“… trust no one. be strong. fight!”

He recited his pledge - his acceptance speech - the oration he had memorized months ago.

Sans stood at the end of a row of monsters, proud Warriors, outside in the empty barren field. Asgore’s castle rose from the multitude of mountains far behind them. The monsters formed a perfect row of ten, standing directly before the stony path to the castle.

The sky overhead shone with dull grey light. It glittered down in alluring rays through the early
morning mist. The wind was gentle and it brushed back Sans’ lowered fur-clad hood at his shoulders. He stood silent after his speech, staring dead ahead at the King… King Asgore.

The King stood before the row of newly inaugurated Warriors, each one more unique than the last. Asgore smiled serenely with his paws folded at the front of his breastplate. He was a massive wolfish monster, decorated in short white fur with draping ears that boarded his features and a pair of grandiose black horns atop his head. He proudly sported full silver-steel armor from neck to toe, an exceptionally crafted fur stole and a shimmering crown decorated in sapphires.

Asgore nodded to Sans when his pledge was complete, who said nothing in return. This was Sans’ final test. The initiation into the Royal Army was done. And he couldn’t be more relieved. what a pain in the ass it had been.

Sans couldn’t give two shits about the Royal Army. Fuckin’ Grillby was the one who had convinced him to join in the first place.

damn it, grillz…

Asgore stepped away from Sans and made his way to the center of the row of soldiers.

The moment he was no longer being surveyed, Sans relaxed his stern stance and let his shoulders roll back. He leered to his side down the succession of monsters, down at Grillby who stood erect at the midway point. God, he looked so proud. What a little kiss-ass. Grillby bowed his head low as Asgore swept past and his flaming ember flesh dancing high in the air with pride.

Tsk…

All the new warriors looked so illustrious. Little did they know…

There were ten of them, including Sans. Ten proud champions, handpicked to defend the Underground, protect the monsters, and free every citizen from the cold and the rot. Ten chosen intrepid heros that would light the way.

Grillby was Second Squadron leader. He stood proud at the center of the row, newly indactorated just like the others. He wore his typical black leather cloak that reached his knees and tall matching boots. Beside him stood First Squadron leader - Toriel. She looked just as honored and smiled gently as Asgore, fluttering her lashes as he past. ugh…

Sans knew the other seven warriors well, having just endured several brutal months of excessive training and initiations together.

There was Madjick - A mercenary sage turned soldier, decked in an enormous black hat. Doggo - A Core City Canine Unit recruit, highly versed in the art of knife-throwing. Dogamy and Dogaressa stood side-by-side, more Canine Unit recruits, but Sans’ knew those Dogi were not to be trifled with, what with their lethal dual-style method of combat.

Aaron stood at the opposite end of the row and Sans almost rolled his eye-sockets. Aaron was the most inexperienced warrior, and simultaneously the most narcissistic. The muscular merhorse could just not stop flexing his biceps and grinning haughtily at Asgore at the far end. Shyren stood beside Sans - a shy scaly siren from Waterfall, hand-picked by Undyne to join Asgore’s service. And finally there was Greater Dog, the largest of the ten and probably the most empty-headed monster Sans had
ever met, albeit strong and skilled with a greatsword.

“Congratulations, my proud Warriors.” Asgore exclaimed in his cavalier, echoic tone. He lifted his paws high in rejoice and Grillby started to clap, followed by everyone else.

“At ease, soldiers. I am so proud of you all!” Asgore let out a hearty laugh and the warriors relaxed their rigid stance and began to talk calmly amongst themselves.

Sans scoffed to himself and shoved both claws in his pockets. His two azure eyes pulsed softly in their socketed alcoves, lidded and apathetic. Shyren turned to Sans and tried to converse, but he wouldn’t have it.

*this is so fuckin’ pointless…*

Grillby stepped up to Sans and placed a heavy ember-adorned hand upon his shoulder.

“Congratulations, my friend. Now you can finally accomplish something.” Grillby said. He flashed a snide, sarcastic grin and chuckled down at Shyren who nodded back.

“You sayin’ hunting temmies and drinkin’ in snowdin isn’t an accomplishment?” Sans responded, but he couldn’t help but snicker at his own words. “hell, i should get a medal for that.”

“No, no, Sans. Now you are doing something worthwhile. This is an important task we have been given.” Grillby said. His words often turned serious at the drop of a hat. His narrow red slits for eyes feathered back towards Asgore, who was now guiding all the warriors down the rocky path back to the grand castle.

“I have prepared a celebration feast! Let us return and celebrate!” Asgore bellowed out over the small crowd and they followed after him in a messy row, conversing with one another as they walked.

“Let’s go.” Grillby released his hold on Sans’ shoulder and followed after the group. Sans hesitated for a moment. *god damnit, had he know this shit was gonna take all day then he would have warned papyrus…* Papy was back in Snowdin, probably worried sick. It was a shame Sans couldn’t take him to witness the acceptance speech, but it had been a closed ceremony. Also, Sans knew his brother was jealous, he could read him like a book. So it was best not to rub it in his face, even if it was unpurposeful.

*sorry paps, i’ll treat us to a nice meal later, i promise.*

Sans’ thoughts simmered in his mind and he turned back towards the retiring group and followed behind them.

He did not care about freedom. He did not care about loyalty. He was loyal to himself alone (and Paps of course, but that was family.) Technically, he was already free. He could teleport to the
Above if he wished, all ten of the Warriors could. It was a trait they all possessed from birth. It was their job to free the rest of the monsters. But how the fuck were they suppose to do that? They couldn’t teleport with others. The final gate had been sealed shut for centuries. No one knew how to open it. Every previous group of Asgore’s Warriors had failed. So what made them any different?

Sans’ dismal speculation weighed on his thoughts and before he knew it they had already reached the castle.

It had been decorated in glorious velvet red banners and candles. Several servants of the castle were at the doors to greet the party. They were led through the varnished castle, through the glamorous throne-room, to the back patio where the banquet awaited them. Tables had been set up embellished with trays upon trays of food: Temmie pies of every variation, meat pastries, a variety of cakes and savoury choux, shortcrust egg puffs, strudel, fried meat muffins, an overflowing red wine fountain and so much more.

Sans’ immediately recognized some of the pies - Muffet must of catered some of this - but she was not here.

“Warriors, please relax and enjoy yourselves.” Asgore luled everyone outside onto the balcony courtyard. The newly indocturated monsters all smiled, thanked Asgore as they past, and began to grab plates of food as they mingled amongst each other. They leisurely discussed the task of opening the gate to the Above, and the current politics of the Underground, and the state of Core City.

Sans leaned against the side of the stone balcony wall with a glass of wine in his claw. He stood alone and away from the others. He was not in a talkin’ mood. Well, he rarely was. It just wasn’t his thing, small talk. And most of his fellow warriors already knew that and seldom bothered him. Besides, he proved his strength on the battlefield, they did not want to peaque his irritance.

god, i despise these functions...

He took another sip of wine through a row of sharp grated teeth and leered to his side, out at the gloomy wasteland that stretched on for miles. Early morning was fading into afternoon and the dismal overcast light grew more vibrant.

Sans pushed himself forward and was about to step over to the table to grab a Temmie pastry, when King Asgore himself stepped up in front of him, blocking his path.

“Sans, my friend, Congratulations.”

Err…

Asgore was singling him out… and being disturbingly kind.

“thank you, king.” He had to fake it. Sans bowed his head in forged respect.

“Sans, my I have a word with you?…” Asgore lowered his timbre and narrowed his beady black eyes. “… In private?”

Sans blinked. He glanced around at the other warriors, who all seemed to be distracted with good food and cheer, and he grudgingly nodded up at the massive wolf.
Asgore led him to the other side of the veranda, away from the party towards the wall of mountains that hoisted high overhead and blocked the Underground off from the rest of the world. Asgore’s castle had been built into the side of the mountainedge, right before the single solitary wooden door. The door. The final gate. The threshold.

It was a small door constructed of veteran rosewood. It was nothing special itself. It looked like any ordinary egress, despite the fact that it was covered top to bottom in scratch marks and deep cleaved cuts. Monsters had tried to tear it down for ages and their failures decorated the wood in the form of scars.

On the other side of the gate was freedom. The Above. It had been locked from the beginning of time, the plight of all ordinary monsters that resided within this subterranean.

Sans had seen the final gate many times. He did not care about it. It meant nothing to him, but now he had to pretend that it did… great…

“Sans… You see this door?” Asgore said and patted a giant palm against it.

“… yeah?” Sans tried to keep his voice as placid as possible, which proved a challenge to him since it often became laced with sarcasm, even against his will.

“I had a dream, Sans.” Asgore’s voice lowered to a whisper. His eyes grew wide. The paw at the door started to shiver.

“huh?…” Sans blinked his sockets again, leering up at the King with building skepticism.

“A dream about this door. A prophecy. It was as real as day, right before my eyes. I was visited, Sans, by an unearthly being. I know how to open it now, I know!”

Asgore began spilling his guts. “what the fuck?…” Sans stared back at the King in bewilderment as Asgore rambled on. The King lifted his paws up high in the air as he frantically confessed his dream, his prophecy.

“The human will come and deliver us from evil, Sans! They will open the gate. This human - the True Manumitter - they will descend upon us from the Above and unlock the gate. I know it to be true, it was so clear in my dream, a vision of the future! A revelation!” Asgore proceeded to go on about some human that would supposedly save them from the rot and the Underground’s increasing famine. He placed his heavy paws at either of Sans shoulders, who shifted backwards with clenched teeth and a concerned furrowed browbone.

“errr… have you told toriel about all this?” Sans muttered in response. Asgore quickly shook his head side to side.

“Oh, no! Not yet, you are the first one I have confided in. They will all know in time, but I wanted you opinion on this matter first. I value your astute judgement, Sans” Asgore said with an expression so stern that it almost looked fictitious.

Sans couldn’t help but chuckle slightly and almost responded with a ‘uh… why?’ But instead he
smirked and sent a sideways glance at the door beside them, examining the violent scratches and cleaved fissures.

“the ‘manumitter’, huh?…”

Sans muttered and his thoughts roiled.

The manumitter…

His double blue orbs shivered softly in their sockets, cerulean shade cast upon the door.

…

\textit{manumitter}…

…

His vision turned hazy.

…

\textit{the manumitter}…

A black shadow crept along the corners of his gaze.

…

\textit{sweet manumitter… my manumitter}…

The blue vanished and turned to black and \textit{red}.

…

\textit{mine. all mine}.

…

Darkness swallowed up the sight of King Asgore and the final gate and the ten mingling warriors and the outside castle.

Ombre shade draped along the memory… the dream.

His sight turned velvet black.
Crimson cut through the black again, this time with extorted fury. And seeped within his recollection.

*i remember that day so clearly.*

Pain and confusion melded into one abhorrent fiend inside his skull.

…

*my sweet little dove, had i known back then what you would mean to me…*

…

It hurt. His skull felt like it was being split and fractured all over again.

…

*… had i known what was to come…*

…

The pain was unbearable.

Darkness clutched at his soul and pulled him into cherry rotten sleet. Cold bitter agony pierced through his socket and burrowed in his head. F-fuck… he was breaking. It hurt, these memories.

They were clawing his soul to shreds, piercing deep within and rupturing it from the inside out like an explosion of gunfire and shotgun shards.

…
But… it was fading away.

The pain subsided.

And Sans opened his sockets.

… A dream…

It was just a dream.

No… *A dream of a memory. His past. His former life.*

“shit…” Sans lifted both claws and grasped at his skull. It was throbbing - a terrible headache - he was trembling underneath the furs in his bed. He was nowhere near Asgore’s castle or the final gate. He was in his room, in his house, all the way back in the Snowdin Forest.
King Asgore… his fellow warriors… they were long gone. They had been dead for ages. That past was nothing more than a fleeting reflection that rarely visited him in his sleep. A vision of simpler times. before the infection… before her.

Sans clenched his sharp, thick canines tight into a wall of ivory fangs. He sat up from his pillow and leaned forward, releasing harsh breaths against the furs that covered his sheets. His billows rustled the soft furs and blew them back in succession.

He stared dead ahead in a trance as the memories washed over him. His single eye shivered… no longer gentle blue, but putrid maroon.

It had been red for a very long time…

…

… the manumitter…

Immediately Sans flinched in his seat and quickly glanced to his side.

His little dove.

The girl…

frisk.

She lay asleep beside him. She had her back to him. Her knees were curled up at her chest. Thick blankets and furs wrapped around her form and kept her concealed and warm.

what the fuck… she was still here?…

Sans was completely disoriented. The dream, the memory, it had felt so real. Well, it had all been real at one point, but life was no longer that way. Asgore’s prophecy had been accurate, to an extend. If only they had known back then how nefarious things would have turned out to be. If only…

Sans pulled his thoughts from the dream and his gaze settled upon his sleeping obsession. He placed a hand upon Frisk’s shoulders, but she did not flinch. She was completely past out. It was strange not to feel her shy away from his touch, which she did constantly while awake.

An expanding clog of shame began to build within his gut. He remembered… last night. His desires… and that voice. That tainted voice calling out to him from the darkness. A voice that he believed had finally left him, had finally freed him from its grasp. But no. No, he had been wrong. It had never left. It was just buried deep, waiting for the right time to surface. The voice of a contamination he had endured so, so long ago.
chara.

He had been seconds away from succumbing to that voice last night. Thankfully he had been able to push it down and shortly became struck with lethargy from the exerted energy used to control it. He had not acted on that debased hunger. Frisk was still alive and sleeping soundly beside him.

*but she should not be here... fuckin' hell... paps cannot see this.*

Sans lurched his claw from her shoulder. He teleported silently from his bed to the middle of the room. He pressed a hand to his forehead and let out an absent sigh. Why the fuck had she crept into his bed last night? Was she lost? Disoriented on her way back from the lavatory? Clearly, she knew this was not her room, but Sans’ instead. She hated him... *she hates me...* So why?...

*She fuckin’ hates your GUTS.*

Sans glanced back down at the sleeping child.

He took a slow step towards her and fought the urge to brush back the chestnut locks from her forehead and feel that soft, feverish flesh. He had not harmed her last night when he found her in his bed, he had not touched her, somehow he had resisted those repugnant cravings.

He knew they were sick and perverted and repulsive. *He knew they were so wrong.* The persistent hunger, so desperate for a taste of her... An eagerness he possessed to feel her squeeze around him, buried deep inside. It was disgusting. Flawed, on hundreds of levels.

His cognizance had been submerged deep down into filth... into darkness... for so long.
once i got a taste i was cursed.

always cursed. damned for life. possessed by regret and shame and infatuation with you.

He did not want that. He did not want that life. No more. He had opened the gates. He had freed the Underground. He had proven himself a genuine Warrior. Ultimately he was the one to free them all, in an ironic twist of events. Now he had tasked himself with a much more important feat: Destroying the candles, and secure freedom forever more.

Sans stood wearily. He stared down at his captive, his fateful fixation, his frisk, for what felt like hours.

He had no desire to wake her.

Finally, he pulled his gaze away and turned, leaving her her sleeping in his bed. He exited the room and his way downstairs. He could hear his brother, Papyrus, who was awake particularly early and toiling away in the kitchen.

He could not waste another day. It was time to work.

Sans had a quick breakfast of leftover raw deer flank and boiled hooves with Papyrus. They ate at the dining room table. The TV flickered static on the opposite side of the room and the single sparking light bulb swayed overhead. Paps was his usual self, despite the mania from their upcoming departure into the Above. He was much too excited and would often ramble on about it for hours if Sans let him.

“-AND WHEN I FINALLY SEE UNDYNE, OH SANS, IT WILL BE GLORIOUS! SURELY SHE KNOWS OF MY ENDEAVOUR TO CAPTURE THE MANUMITTER! I HAVE FOLLOWED HER ORDERS FROM DAY ONE, YOU KNOW!”

Papyrus was rambling, chewing away at the gore, blood spewing between his large askew incisors as he shouted with his mouth full of meat.

“mnhm… yeah… “ Sans responded, only half listening.

Suddenly he heard the sound of a door opening and closing quickly in the second-story hallway. Sans sat up in his seat and tilted his head to the side, away from Papyrus, so that his brother could not see him activate his surveillance magic and spy on Frisk.
Sans quickly closed his single eye socket, blocking out the red, and opened the empty opposite cavity. He honed in on Frisk in his mind’s eye and saw her. She had left the confines of his bedroom and had hurried back to her own room. She must have woken up quite confused in that foreign space… and Sans almost chuckled to himself.

*heh… had she wanted him to try something?… why else would she skulk into his sheets like that in the middle of the night?*

But he quickly suppressed those thoughts and watched her pace around the room and plop down upon the mattress. Frisk pulled her knees up to her chest and curled into the smallest ball possible, nesting at the center of the tattered quilt.

Sans closed his empty socket. He glanced back at Papy with his crimson pulsing orb.

“hey paps… i gotta full schedule today. you mind feeding the kid?” He asked in a drawl.

“WOULD I MIND!? HEAVENS NO! I SHALL FEED THE HUMAN ONLY THE BEST CUISINE I CAN MUSTER!”

“no cookin’, bro. i already prepped her breakfast, you just gotta heat it up.” Sans pointed at the alcove that lead into their dingy kitchen. He had already primed a fresh piece of venison loin for her the other night.

Papyrus looked put out by Sans words, but there was no way in hell Sans would allow his brother to cook another meal for Frisk, not after he almost killed her with a medley of rotten meat last time, unintentionally of course. He just could not risk it. She was already so weak.

“I’ll be back later.” Sans stood after he finished his meal.

“ALRIGHT, BROTHER!” Papyrus grinned wide, exposing a daunting row of blood-stained filed fangs, and continued to gnash away at his breakfast.

And Sans stepped stepped from the table and exited through the front door. He stood outside in the bitter early morning chill. He quickly surveyed Frisk one last time - She was idly looking at the cell phone that he had gifted her for good behavior a few days prior - And he teleported instantly in a flash of royal blue.

He reappeared in a burst of flares and rushing wind.

The surrounding room was bleak. A boreal forlorn cavern with nothing but a single candle in the far corner. Sans glanced at the candle, the savepoint, then back at the narrow exitway on the opposite wall. He could see a river out there in the shadows. He could hear the slow-moving water surge through the caverns.

He was in Waterfall, right on the outskirts of Hotland, at one of the many resurgent lights.
Sans narrowed his sockets at the meager little candle. So small, yet overwhelmingly resilient. He had tried to destroy its counterpart last night back in Napstablook’s tunnel, to no avail. Perhaps this one would break first.

He had tried a number of things last night and each one failed miserably. This time Sans decided to try a different tactic. He took a step back to the center of the room and lifted one claw. He grit his teeth and narrowed his maroon eye and his soul began to pulse as he summoned fourth his magic. The ground shook underneath the candle, and soon it split open.

One single large bone drove up through the earth’s rocky crust. It was heinously jagged at the tip like shards of broken glass woven together. Fissures ran throughout to its core and exposed the grotesque marrow within. The whole spear had a gentle blue glow around it, Sans’ controlling magic. The bone spear pierced through the candle in an instant. But… it phased right through it.

It did absolutely nothing. It continued to burn bright.

shit. just like before.

Sans hissed and dropped his hand to his side.

“damn…”

He cursed under his breath and crouched down before the candle to examine it. The massive bone spear bore through the meager candlestick, which had simply turned into a phantom apparition.

Sans swiped away his aspired bone with a flick of his wrist. The massive weapon shivered and vanished in an eruption of cerulean blaze. He leered at the candle, at the little flickering ember. Its flame wavered gently. It was taunting him… mocking his fortitude. His steadfast thaumaturgy was useless against the resurgent lights. There was no destroying these things. At least… not with the skills he currently possessed.

There had to be another way.

Sans slowly rolled himself back up to a stand. He made his way out of the cramped room into the long hollow cavern. He stepped up to the riverbank and stared down into the rustling glassy surface. The water was pitch black and only a perfect circle of illuminating red shivered in the reflection - his lone eye.

there are more candles out there. you must check the others… just to be sure.

He knew it would most likely result in the same outcome, but he had to be thorough.

Sans vanished.
And he re-appeared in an even smaller chamber. It was darker than the previous and the bubbling stream had turned to silence. It was warm and the scent of firewood saturated the atmosphere. He was back in Snowdin, but this time he had returned to the town. He was in the Snowdin Village library. A scanty candle sat in the corner of the room - a small starfall of brilliant perseverance.

Sans tried everything. He summoned every ability he possessed in an attempt to destroy it. Nothing worked, not even when he attempted to pry the candle from the floor and smash it into the wall. It was like the save point was sentient, like it knew exactly what Sans was attempting. It would not be abolished that easily.

“c’mon… “

This was getting tiresome.

He clicked his azure tongue to his teeth in annoyance and teleported again.

Sans re-appeared at the candle in Core City. But it was the same shit. The candle would not budge. He used every attack that he could muster, to no avail.

“fuckin’ hell…”

He teleported again.

Sans re-appeared. He stood in a new modest space - A small crumbling building on the dreary outskirts of Hotland Village. He leered down at the candle embedded within the corner of the room. In a swift burst of blue, Sans summoned his ax and he flung the blade down. He attempted to hack the flambeau to pieces. He growled out as the brutal weapon’s sharpened blade collided into the torch over and over and over, nonstop, relentless.

fuckin’ die, you little!-

He panted hard after exhausting himself and leaned into the blood-stained handle of his weapon. Sans glared down at the light on the floor… It remained intact. Nothing had happened.

He let out a loud irritated growl and whisked away his ax and stepped out of the room in frustration. Sans marched through the darkness with both claws stuffed in his jacket pockets, breathing sharply through his teeth in an attempt to settle the rage. He stepped past the white ruins, past the shadows, lost in his own fuming thoughts.

Old decrepit runic buildings began to sprout up all around him as he headed deeper into the village. Sans knew this place… At one point in time it had been quite a thriving village in the Underground. He had… friends that used to reside here. Well, the closest things to friends that he could imagine.
Sans was never one to have many acquaintances.

Grillby… He had lived here. Along with his partner… Muffet.

Sans walked on through the buildings, weaving in and out of the narrow alleys and confined walkways. He stared at the surrounding buildings, studying each one.

He came to a sudden stop.

A familiar abode.

It resurrected before him from the rubble, a domestic two-story hovel. Although it had been terribly weathered with time, he recognized it instantly.

They had lived here.

His friends…

And a stifling recollection washed over him like a fatal riptide.

After the fall… when he had come to this place…

He had stood before the door, skull broken and eye bloodshot scarlet. He told Muffet… what he had done. He confessed his sins to that monster. He remembered the look she gave him as clear as crystal. Muffet’s usual clairvoyant stare had morphed into a look of pure anguish… and disgust.

She was disgusted with him.

She saw him for what he was in that moment. A murderer… A betrayer… A traitor to Asgore and the rest of the Underground.

...

...

you are too lost.

too broken.

too hurt.

too far gone.

... to be saved.
nothing has changed since then and now.

…

… That’s right.

shut up!

T-that fucking voice. Shut up shut up! i am drowning in a sea of rage and regret. there is no room to breathe. no room to think.

Sans clasped at either side of his skull. His head was throbbing as quickly as his pulsing eye. The red illumination flashed brightly upon the wall of Muffet’s old home. That voice… that contagion… it was stroking his despair. Feeding into the self loathing. It made him hungry.

…

The static buzzing in his head subsided.

And after a few moments of deep inhalation and medication, he was able to compose himself.

The voice had gone silent again.

nothing good comes from reliving those painful memories...

…

Sans slowly released his skull from his hands. He dragged one claw down the side of his head, letting his sharp fingertips dig into his empty eye socket, clutching at the edge of the crater. He stared back at the door, red eye shivering, blue soul pounding.

And he vanished.

Sans teleported to the candle in Asgore’s abandoned castle. He quickly focused on work, and nothing but work. It was difficult to block out the painful memories, especially when he was visiting
so many locations tainted with them. But he centralized his cognizance and thought only of the candles.

This one was the same as the others. The candle would not budge. He used every attack that he could muster, to no avail.

*just like all the others.*

After a long day of experiments and defeat, he teleported to the final candle. The last ember resided within the core of Hotland. A candle among dozens of magma rivers.

But… it was just as stubborn as the others.

“fuck.” Sans scowled and slumped down to a sit at the top of the steps amidst the ruins.

He rested an elbow on his knees and leaned his chin in his claw. He cast a lazy glance at the expanse of the caverns. Crimson red shone brightly from various lava rivers that ran in all directions at the ground. It was sweltering hot in the chamber, but it did not bother him. Dancing maroon mirages wafted up from the floor and shivered in the air. The gentle sound of bubbling liquid red bedrock decorated the empty soundscape.

Sans sighed and automatically closed his eye to spy on Frisk, but all he could see was shuddering darkness. He was too far away to survey her here, and he knew he would be. It was just an impulse. Instead the memories of his time with her in this place came rushing back.

This place… They had fought here… twice. He had defeated her here… *twice.* This was where his anger had burned at its peak. This was where she had defended herself with steadfast resolution. Back then, even in her hopelessness, she was precarious. Did she still possess that determination? Even without her soul?

…

This place… *he had ripped her to shreds here.*

…

…

The gentle sound of bubbling molt clouded his thoughts until they all turned to vapor.

Sans blinked his sockets and lifted his head. He slowly came to a stand and cast one more glance down at the candle - it was unscathed, unchanged, completely undeterred by his severe advances.

He had spent the entire day teleporting around, but at least his travels had not been a complete waste of time. He had learned something, that his attacks were useless. It was time to put his energy into research. There was only one monster who had possessed knowledge about these candles. Unfortunately he was dead and long gone, but his memories and dreams remained intact… in the form of text.
Asgore’s journals. Ancient tomes. Sacred words kept locked away.

Good thing he had an in with the keeper, although it had been a while. Meeting with Gaster was something he wanted to delay… at least for the time being.

Sans snickered to himself.

And he teleported in a split second, returning home.

Sans spent the next few days procrastinating.

The failure of demolishing the candles weighed heavy on his azure soul.

Instead of work, he spent his time conceding with his obsession - spying on his pet. His captive. his frisk.

When Frisk was not physically with him and Paps, he would watch her from afar with his third eye.

It had been a little while since her last escape attempt. She had become much more well-behaved with each passing day. And Sans rewarded her docility with her backpack. He had removed all the snacks from it - those were treats for special times, not everyday - but he kept the other things within. It was filled with a variety of human knicknacks. Books and pencils and pens and bandages and other little miscellaneous objects. Sans had briefly scanned over the contents and they all seemed harmless enough. And Frisk was delighted as she could be to have her backpack with her once again.

So she spent most of her long days sleeping. She slept a lot. When she was not sleeping, she sat in her room and wrote in the old school text books or fiddled with her cell phone or doodled little temporary tattoos on her ankles and arms. Small inky star and hearts smudged her skin, Sans found it kind of cute. When she was not locked up in her room, she often sat with Papyrus in the living room and watched the static-suffused television.

The human news channel had vanished and now the channels either consisted of a screen of black and white snow speckle static or fuzzy old re-runs of human movies. The movies were ancient, even Sans could tell, old Hollywood classics from the beginning of the golden era of cinema.

Papyrus seemed entertained by them and Frisk enjoyed them too - a fleeting reminder of her past life and the Above.

One night the three of them sat upon the couch. Frisk created as much distance as possible from Sans, she always did. She sat on the opposite side with Papyrus in the middle forming a barrier between them. But it did not matter, Sans could see her in his phantom eye if he wished. And he leaned back against the padded cushions and lazily surveyed her.

She seemed quite taken with whatever was on the TV. She was curling a strand of hair around her
index finger, transfixed by the movie on the screen. Her hair had grown since the first time Sans saw her... it was down to the tops of her shoulders now and knotted like it had not been brushed in months.

“I DID NOT KNOW HUMANS HAD SUCH STRANGE HEADS!” Papyrus said suddenly. He dramatically pointed a gloved hand towards the screen. The TV displayed an ornate woman dressed in 30’s garb wearing an overly large feathered cap.

Some old human film, Sans had no clue.

“i think that’s a hat, bro.” Sans chuckled.

Frisk said nothing, but that was not unusual. She rarely spoke.Sans preferred it that way, honestly. And the sole reason for that was he did not want her telling Papyrus anything. He did not want her spilling those secrets they shared.

Every now and then he would catch her staring at him wearily, at the table during meals, or when they would watch television, or when he would step past her in the hall. Each time her gaze met his, she would quickly avert her eye and stare down at her feet.

little wounded dove.

So gentle and timid, completely under his control now.

She was his, and only his.

... 

... 

... 

... 

It was cold.
And an opaque grey fog spread across his vision.

So thick, like congealed seafoam.

Falling speckles of ash decorated the heavy blanket of granite.

It was raining rot.

And so quiet… except for the breeze.

Constant, steady gusts that played on repeat in the background.

Silent gloom.

Fluttering patches of black mold fell silently all around him. The gentle breeze tousled the fur-trim that adorned his jacket’s hood, pulled over his skull. Sans stood on the cobblestone path between rows of collapsing abandoned homes…

His soul… it was hammering. Like an electric volly. His whole body was shaking.

His sockets were wide. His lone eye palpated in succession.

He could not… see. He could not see him… *papyrus*…

*where*… *are you*?…

Sans stepped down the stony path in a daze. Twining dread and regret and rage squeezed at his soul, a feeling he had not felt in a long time. *w-why had he not been keeping a closer eye on him*!?

He could not see him in his haunting psyche, his brother was lost, but his aura felt close. And… broken. Something was wrong. He did not shout for Papyrus, instead Sans examined the interior of every building he past.

Sans walked slowly.

Steadily.

His beloved brother…

He was nearby.

*he is close.*
T-there…

He is here…

Sans came to a stop.

He slowly turned his head, staring inside one of the many dilapidated homes.

There was a figure…

It lay upon the floor in a heap. It lay inside the shadows. T-there was a rock… no…

“p-papy-”

Sans couldn’t help the name that spelled through his grit canines. He stared back at the fallen skeleton in shock and dismay. His brother did not move. He lay still and broken, the remnants of a fallen monster. His rib cage was cracked open wide. His broken soul lay some feet away upon the floor, orange fluent and crimson gore leaking from a jagged gap at the center.

Papyrus’ crimson scarf was torn and the ripped remains fluttered silent in the breeze like a blood-stained flag of surrender. His exposed vertebrate bones and frayed poncho was soaked with apricot solvent - lifeless magic.

And a solitary large rock - a boulder - lay some inches above his clavicle where a skull should be. His cranium had been shattered under the slab, splintered into a million pieces.

…

He was gone…

…

T-there was nothing left…

… but a miserable corpse.

…
A symbol of her *revenge*.

... Sans stood in the doorway, hands shaking, sockets wide. He stepped up to his brother and fell to his knees and clutched at his shoulders, shaking him, screaming out. He could not hear his own voice. Everything was silent, except the burrowed palpitations of his soul. His head was buzzing with strife.

*papy... papy... y-you... this is... a nightmare...*

... *t-this can’t be-...*

... *this cannot... no. this cannot happen...*

... *You know who is responsible.*

*this was not suppose to happen!*

*She did this.*

*papyrus!*

*She deserves your hell.*
Blood-stained fabric slipped through his fingers. Red and orange stained his jacket sleeves and his shirt and his bones. His solitary crimson sphere shivered into nothingness and he stared forward with two empty open cavities.

And the voice… it sung within the silence inside him. It lulled his furore. It turned his soul bright hot.

**Hunt her down.**

**Make her pay.**

*she has to pay.*

*she has to die.*
Sans jolted upright, clawing at his scalp. He was growling and smashing the side of his jagged open cavity into the wall beside him. He was in darkness, in his bed. He was dripping with beads of cobalt perspiring, down his forehead and his spinal cord.

And he could barely catch his rapid breath.

*just a dream... another nightmare... another memory...*
He stilled his movements and leaned forward, pressing the front of his skull into the furs. Rage was overflowing within his soul. The mania had a mind of its own. It was overwhelming and he slipped a hand under his shirt and pressed a claw through his ribcage. He wrapped his fingers around his soul and tried to hold it still. It was thrashing so fast and oozing blue all over his palm.

These heinous memories…

They were nonstop.

They had not once let up since the girl’s arrival… They were haunting him. *She was haunting him.*

Sans quickly shut his eye and spied on the girl one room over. He half expected to see her standing there… dripping with the blood of his brother and the blood of her kills. He could see her standing amongst the lava pits, dauning his brother’s scarf, her smile manic and wide, sword and shield in hand. *Chara’s spirit.*

But when he honed in on her, she resembled nothing of the sort. She was asleep in her makeshift bed, curled up under layers of thick blankets and quilts. She had no sword. Her hands clutched at the sheets, her shoulders rose and fell in steady silent breaths. She was no monster. She was no killer. She was just a timid, frail little dove.

*just a dream.*

*a memory of a timeline that was erased.*

*it never happened.*

*it only exists in your head.*

*it’s all in your head…* 

…

…

…

…
Snowdin Forest grew colder as the days went by.

The snow piled up in sheets, making it almost impossible to leave the house. Although Papyrus was quite good at pushing back the snow from the doorway. They had no shovel, but Papyrus used his magic to cut through the ice and melt it away. He stood in the doorway, hands lifted, and created a path. Frisk watched behind him from the warmth of the living room.

She seemed to encourage him on. She was actually… smiling. It was faint but it was there. She clapped her hands as Papyrus whisked away the layers of snow and stood proudly in the outlet, beaming down at his work.

Frisk clutched at the front of her baggy sweater. She looked so small in those old clothes that they had found for her. At least it kept her shielded from the cold, but it didn’t suit her. Her lips were moving like she was speaking to Papyrus and the taller skeleton seemed to nod back at her.

They both looked… content.

Sans stood in the snow. He was miles away from the house, from the two of them, but he was never truly far. Not with his magic. He watched them both interact through his surveillance psyche. He could see them, but he could not hear them. All he could hear was the sound of the putrid forest trees swaying overhead in the blizzard, and the rushing gales.

He leaned back against a tree trunk lazily. God, he was tired. Each night his sleep had been plagued by nightmares of memories long past. Memories of the fall… memories of Frisk’s rampage… memories of Chara.

His reminiscence would not let him rest. The voice… it came to him at night, in his sleep. It was growing stronger. His rage and bloodlust had started to swell in his soul. He could feel it there, building in strength, just waiting… just waiting for the right time to surface.

Sans watched Papyrus close the door and he cut off the observation.

*they are fine…*

He opened his socket and red flares reflected against the snow that fell all around him, turning the flurry into a heliotrope of fuchsia.
The days were ticking by and he knew time was running out. He had to meet Undyne soon, at Asgore’s castle. They had decided to meet there in preparation for the migration. And he still had not gone to the library to research the candles.

But he could do all that tomorrow…

Because today he had come out here for a reason.

Napstablook…

That ghost had mentioned Temmies.

Of course, what did that spector know? But Sans had to double check. The Temmies had died out ages ago, so he did not expect much. However the thought weighed in the back of his mind. And it was a useful distraction from the candles, and the voices, and the memories… and his desires.

frisk…

He pushed himself to a stand and stepped through knee-high snow. The alabaster was stained black from falling mold. Sans crept through the dense trees, deep into the forest. This section of Snowdin Forest was hexed. The rot was particularly vicarious. Nothing could live here for long, hence the Temmie’s extinction.

He pulled his hoodie’s cowl up over his skull and squinted through the flurry. He stared down at every tree trunk he past. Small burrowed holes eroded each base. But the holes were weathered with time. They were old, ancient, and overflowing with snow and soot. Nothing had lived in those holes for decades.

Napstablook had no idea what the fuck he was talking about. The Temmies were long gone.

They had started to die out before the rise of Chara, but when that demon took over was when they completely vanished. They disappeared from the Underground, and along with it the livelihood of many monsters.

Sans let out a sigh, watching his breath stir the snow before him.

He leisurely stared out into the woods at the dready sheets of chilled canker.

What a forsaken wasteland…

He was about to teleport back to the house when… something dark caught his eye.

…
There was something.

An empty space embedded within the furthest tree he could see.

*what…*

Sans felt his soul skip a beat. His sockets widened and he darted forward, practically teleporting, to the significant tree. It was different than the others. It possessed a *fresh* burrow. The tiny little den was not filled up with snow. The edges of the hovel looked recent, like they had just been carved some days ago.

Sans crouched down and peered inside the shelter, but it was empty. No Temmie, but perhaps it was nearby. He had not seen a fresh burrow since the beginning of their eradication. The Temmies had fallen prey to the rot and were the ultimate cause of starvation and death and parasitic lunacy in the Underground.

Before the fall even happened, ultimately it was the rise of the Temmie shortage that caused this world to fall into such disrepair. The false Manumitter’s reign simply sped up the process.

And he could barely believe what he was seeing. This was a fresh hole. A newly formed burrow that only a Temmie could create. *were they truly back?* What did that mean, then? One thing was quite clear, there was currently no Temmie here. He would have to set up some traps. He couldn’t stand around here all day, waiting to catch it. Those little critters were highly elusive.

Sans idly scratched at the back of his skull and chuckled to himself. And for a moment, it felt like old times, back when he would hunt these things for sport. He had some snares back home, they were ancient but they would probably still do the trick. Setting them all up would be a pain in the ass though…

He pushed himself back up to his feet with a sneer. Sans stepped past the tree and strolled through the forest, looking for more burrows. It took him a while, but he finally came across another one. *holy shit, there are more!* He was stunned, although the second was also empty.

And after another hour of searching he found a third.

Three fresh Temmie burrows. He promised to return and set the traps beneath the snow inside the dens. Obviously three Temmies wouldn’t provide much meat, but it was the nostalgia of the flavor he craved. Perhaps he could breed them and replenish the whole species!

*don’t get ahead of yourself here… you got more important things to worry about right now.*

*like migrating to the above, and destroying the candles, and frisk.*

*…*
Finally, Sans grew tired of searching for more hideaways. He leaned back against an idle tree and pulled his hood up over his head. Falling snow and soot had been collecting inside the jagged open crater at the side of his skull and it made him feel chilled from the inside out.

He glanced up at the treetops with a languid gaze. His eye flashed steadily, softly, creating a halo of rouge that cut through the constant blizzard. He closed his maroon socket and opened the empty one, wide. And he honed in on Frisk in impatient compulsion.

He saw her.

He could see her so clearly within his mind, her little figure shivering among the shadows that bordered the optics.

She was no longer downstairs with Papyrus, watching him shovel the outside walkway. She was not downstairs at all. She was upstairs in the hall, tiptoeing down the corridor, glancing over her shoulder.

She was being sneaky. And she stepped right past her own bedroom door.

... what are you up to?...

hmm? little dove?

She stopped suddenly in front of Sans’ door.

Sans narrowed his lone socket, every scrap of his magic used to watch the girl. He clenched his think incisors in a succession of cleavers. He watched her hand wrap around the door’s knob. Frisk pushed open his door and took a swift step inside, and she closed the door behind her.

where the fuck is papyrus?

Sans did a frantic quick scan of his brother, only to see him standing in the kitchen chewing away at a grotesque raw leg of meat from some unknown animal, and he returned his sights back on Frisk.

She had stepped into the middle of his room. Her little pallid hands clutched at the front of the thick cable-knit sweater she wore over her hoodie.

She glanced from side to side, studying over his room. She looked... nervous.

She quickly stepped over to Sans’ bed and sunk down to her knees and rapidly poked her head underneath the bedframe. ... she’s looking for something... Frisk patted her hands around in the shadows, searching, but there was nothing. Sans knew there was nothing under there except dust.

She quickly scrambled back up to her feet like she was racing against a clock, and Frisk scampered over to the lone desk in the corner of his room. She searched through each small drawer and nook, disregarding various wooden trinkets and old Temmie skeletons and furs.
She was on the hunt for something.

Sans could see it in her isolated uncovered eye. It burned with… with… *determination.*

*heh…*

*so ‘yer lookin’ for it, huh?*

Frisk shut each drawer and re-organized the desk until it looked like it had never been touched by foreign hands. She quickly stepped back to the middle of the room and her gaze landed on the only other area she had not searched - the closet door.

Sans breath caught in his ribcage.

A low rumbling growl began to rupture from the depths of his chest. He watched her so carefully, entirely fixated, as Frisk took a slow step forward… followed by another… and another… and another as she creeped up to the closet door and carefully opened it.

*Her soul.*

*Her soul was in there.*

*It was buried deep in the back of the closet on the highest shelf in a box.*

*It was calling to her.*

*She was so desperate for it.*

*Her actions were inane and senseless but oh so courageous.*

Frisk stepped within the closet and patted at the walls. She pushed aside some old tattered coats and searched each corner. She lifted some stacked crates and boxes and examined the depths of each one. Then she tilted her head back and her sights set upon the high shelf overhead.

She stood up on her tiptoes and reached for the shelf.

*Her little finger tips clawed at its edge.*

*will you try it?*
will you step out of line?

Sans’ soul was thrashing with anger. He was watching her, right there, in his mind’s eye, misbehave in such a way. After everything he had done for her, she was searching for her soul. She was searching for her weapon.

Sans could only assume what she was planning. What she had been planning, since the beginning perhaps? The moment his back was turned her true colors shone through.

His cobalt soul constricted into tight knots, congealed with sepsis hatred. His hands shivered with deadly rancor. He watched her grab a crate and attempt to stand on it to reach the shelf. She was balancing upon the box, her hands patting upon the wood, inching further back… further… finger tips only inches away from the box that housed her prize.

And Sans was a millisecond away from teleporting and kicking her in the spine, when suddenly Frisk jumped down from the box.

... hm?

Sans’ ravaging soul stilled.

She quickly pushed the crate back in place. She stumbled out of the closet, shut the door, and ran out his room instantly.

Something must have spooked her? What happened?…

She ran downstairs to Papyrus, who had no longer succumb to gluttony but was now standing in the open doorway. He had called out for her to join him. He was coaxing her outside into the snowy front yard.

papyrus…

Frisk smiled up at the larger skeleton. little liar. And she trotted after him in the ankle-high snow. The towering monster appeared to be speaking to her, bellowing most likely, in his usual manner. Unfortunately Sans could not hear what they were saying, but it seemed harmless because Frisk responded in turn.

Papyrus clasped his hands together. Frisk pushed her messy hair back and chuckled. Papyrus took a generous step away from her and scooped up a handful of snow. Frisk… did the same. She rolled the snow in her palms into a small ball… and she threw it at Papyrus. He threw his back towards her…

are they seriously having a snowball fight right now?
They were certainly friendly… Sans had not realized how close they had become in his absence. He was often out of the house, but he surely had not expected this.

Papyrus had just unintentionally stopped her snooping. She had been moments away from attaining her soul, *her power*. That could have been quite a messy situation… He would have to keep her soul somewhere else now. Somewhere safer.

Paps and Frisk continued to play in the snow. And as Sans watched them, his anger began to diminish.

*can you really blame her?*

*i mean, look at everything you have put her through.*

*can you fault her for wanting freedom?*

…

*for desiring her life back?*

…

…

…

*She hates you.*

*She hates what you are.*

*A freak. A villian. An abscessed tooth.*
She wants you *dead*.

And she’s still got some fight left in her.

Can’t you see that?

...

*Heh heh…*

...

*shut. up.*

...

Sans clutched at his throbbing skull. God, it hurt. The voice burrowed in deep and splintered his thoughts into mangled musings. He could not think with that *voice* constantly stoking his rage and hate and *bloodlust*.

But Sans did not blink away his spying gaze. His lone hollow socket remained wide and still as he watched his brother and the True Manumitter horse around in the snow. They continued to roughhouse, throwing snowballs and kicking flurry mounds at each other.

It was almost amusing.

*heh…*

Suddenly Frisk fell.

She stumbled over her boots in the snow and tumbled forward hard into a patch of icy sleet in the door’s pathway. Sans felt his bones tense into each other at the sight. Papyrus ran other towards her, clearly with a look of concern plastered on his skull - he was not playing anymore.

He helped her up to her feet, holding both her shoulders in his massive grasp.
She lifted a hand over her nose. She… she was bleeding. Crimson dripped from one nostril and oozed down her lips and chin. The droplets struck the ivory below, decorating the snow in ruby speckles. Sans clearly recognized that pain in her eye. She tilted her head back to stop the blood flow and she was speaking, talking to Papyrus who was now pushing her back inside the house.

shit…

He should probably get back there.

But… something was shivering within his gut. A hunger. And a desire to simply get a waft of that fresh blood. That delicious claret. He could practically taste it from here.

He watched Papyrus lead Frisk into the living room and sit her down on the couch. Papyrus said a few dramatic words, his hands flailing in the air, and he vanished upstairs somewhere. Frisk held a sleeve to her nose to keep the blood from flowing. Her shoulders were trembling. She looked… so… delectable.

…

Looks good, huh?

…

Heh.

Blue saliva oozed from the narrow crevices between his interwoven teeth. He couldn't fight it. He couldn’t push down the fervor in that moment. He was so weak for a taste of her.

Sans opened his red eye. He cut off his voyeur’s link.

He vanished instantly.
And re-appeared in a burst of bright blue directly before the front door.

Sans wrapped his skeletal claw around the knob and pushed it open. A frosty gust pushed into the house from behind him, ruffling his jacket’s risen cowl. His pulsing red eye settled upon Frisk.

She let out a small gasp at the abrupt sudden sight of him, like she had not expected to see him today. She quickly averted her eye, hand still over her blood-stained nose and mouth.

“Err… S-Sans…” She spoke to him in acknowledgement, which was quite unlike her. Her voice trembled just barely.

“ONE MOMENT HUMAN! I AM WARMING THIS CLOTH! DO NOT WORRY! I WILL BE DOWN SHORTLY!”

… Papyrus’ voice blustered down from the second-story floor. Sans could hear the sound of running water, Paps was in the bathroom preparing first-aid for the girl.

Sans’ socket quickly settled upon Frisk. His smirk widened. “kid… “

He took languid steps to the side of the couch and behind her. F-fuck… that scent. The closer he got, the stronger it became. The smell of her fresh seeping plasma sent his soul searing with debased greed.

Frisk watched him out of the corner of her eye. He was pacing behind her like a stalking wolf. She immediately recognized that look in his gaze, a look of hunger. She knew him so well, too well. She shifted in her seat.

“W-we were just, playing outside, and-” She was trying to defuse him. heh… nice try, kiddo. She inched to the edge of the couch and began to stand.

But Sans leaned over the back of the sofa. He lurched an arm around her shoulder and grasped at her jawline and wrist. He pulled her back into the cushions and yanked her hand away from the bloodied nose, caressing her cheek and upper lip with the opposite hand. Frisk almost cried out from the swift seize, but Sans hissed in her ear so harsh that it sent a wave of goosebumps down her arms.

“shut up. don’t you dare say a word.” He couldn’t control himself. The scent and the sight was driving him wild. His sockets narrowed in on the thick trail of blood that continued to drain from her nostril down her lips, coating his fingers. It was hot and sticky and… fuck… he needed a taste.

But instead he growled out again with a bit more resentment.

“i see you sneakin’ around, kiddo. i know what yer up to.”

Frisk’s face went pale. She jolted her head in his grasp and stared back at him in horror. He could feel her pulse pick up in speed.

“you ain’t allowed in my room when i’m not there. do it again and there’ll be hell to pay. understood?” His voice was a balanced whisper, but it brewed in threatening ire. Sans’ claws shivered as they clutched tight at her jawline and wrist.

Frisk looked like she was about to cry, but instead she grit her teeth together in a pained and unvered
scowl. “I-i’m not afraid of you, Sans…”

Sans lifted a browbone. His depraved smirk shivered at each intersection.

“is that so?”

“I AM ALMOST DONE HUMAN! I WILL BE RIGHT DOWN!” Papyrus cut the tension in two. He was still howling out from the bathroom.

Sans knew he did not have much time until his brother returned.

“have i been too gentle? do I need to make you fear me again, little dove?” Part of him knew it was wrong to threaten her into submission in such a way, but another part of him, the stronger side, was hungry and raging and wanted her begging at his feet. sick fuck…

Sans couldn’t stop his hands as they squeezed her even tighter. She began to struggle, fighting in his grasp, and he pulled her roughly back into the couch cushions again. He leaned forward until his skull was centimeters away from her secured head.

“S-sans… Sans, stop! I-” Her scowl faded in seconds. It had been replaced by pure fright at the sight of him. “I’m sorry! I didn’t mean t-to!”

She let out a cry from his swift, painful grasp. But Sans stifled her noises. He parted his massive jaws, his tongue lolling out past the thick barrier of corkscrew-sharp fangs. His tongue, azure and glowing faintly, rolled along the side of her cheek, moving inward towards her blood-smeared lips, licking up the trickle of crimson.

fuck… she tasted good…

It has been way too long, huh?

Her luscious ambrosia clotted all sense of reason. Her clowing bitter-sweet nectar was like heaven on his tongue. Its warmth, its texture, the copper-honeyed aftertaste. His claw grasped at the back of her head, holding her thrashing movements still as she tried so desperately to push away from him.

His wide tongue pressed against her lips until he forced them to part and slipped between them, inside. She choked against it. He just couldn’t get enough. He tasted her mouth from the inside out. His tongue wrapped around hers, blue saliva spilling down her chin and collecting at the back of her throat until she was forced to swallow it down between a gagging fit. She was struggling for a gasp of air through her nose, but it was stuffed with coagulating blood.

“S-san-gghh!” She coughed against his thick saliva, using her single free hand to push at his forehead in a bold attempt to push him off.

He grasped tight at her hair and tilted her head to the side, pulling his tongue from her mouth, licking up every morsel, every hot drop dulcet vermilion that spilled from her nostril and stained her lips.

just a taste… i just need a taste of you… my sweetheart…
The sound of harsh, heavy footsteps upstairs shook him from the blood trance.

Sans broke contact and swiftly lifted his head. He licked at the stray drops of blood from his chops with a smirk. His maroon eye flashing like wildfire, fixed upon her in a death stare.

“… don’t you step out of line now, little pup.” He sneered, voice shivering with depraved excitement.

She would find no comfort in that pet name. He could see it in her eye… rebounding fear. She was shuddering, gasping for a breath. He wiped trails of azure saliva from her lips and chin to hide the evidence just as Papyrus clambered down the stairs.

“HUMAN! I HAVE RETURNED! AND I BROUGHT WARM CLOTHS AND BANDAGES!” Papyrus barked, holding the warm compresses in his hands high overhead. “OH- SANS! THERE YOU ARE!”

“heh… hey, bro.”

Papyrus was oblivious. sweet, innocent papyrus.

The lanky skeleton stepped over to the both of them with that typical ghoulish grin.

“Oh. The blood has stopped!” He exclaimed and leaned in close to Frisk, who had become paralyzed by Sans’ prior actions. She just sat there, staring up at Sans in horror, both hands clutching at her mouth in disgust.

“The kid’s fine. let’s make some dinner, pap.” Sans cast a languid jeering smirk at his prey. He quickly swapped it with a sprightly grin back at Papyrus. And Sans took a step away from the couch and followed his brother into the kitchen.

Dinner consisted of the usual: Raw meat for the monsters, cooked meat for Frisk. The three of them sat at the dining room table in their typical spots. Papyrus sat at the head of the table, gnashing away at his slab, spraying bits of meat and blood everywhere as he chewed. He was completely oblivious to the tension.

Frisk stared down at her piece, but she had not touched it. She barely even moved at all. And she avoided Sans’ eye at all cost. Her cheeks flushed red each time she caught Sans staring out of the corner of her eye. She was humiliated by his previous attack. She kept her sight averted to her plate, hands in her lap, chewing at her lower lip.

The nosebleed had stopped, thanks to Sans’ foul salivation, but she still clutched at the wet washcloth Papyrus had given her and wrung it nervously.

Sans sat across from her. He tapped his fingers upon the table with one hand in slow succession, one
after the other. The opposite hand picked apart his meal. He ripped off tiny bite-sized pieces and chewed each bit thoroughly, although he could barely taste the meat. Its flavor was absolutely inadequate compared to the taste that lingered on his tongue. The sweetness of her blood and saliva and fear. He had to have more.

He had to.

His soul was fluttering in his chest like an imprisoned mockingbird. It began to burn so bright that he could see the blue through the white of his shirt. Papyrus had no regard, but Frisk saw it. Her gaze caught at the center of his chest and lingered for a moment before she noticed Sans staring and she quickly glanced down at her intact meal once more.

After a few long minutes, Sans finally broke the silence and mentioned the fresh Temmie burrows to Papyrus.

“TEMMIES?!” He was shocked. Papyrus had finished his meat and stared down at Sans, overwhelmed by the news.

“we should set out some traps pretty soon. I know you’ve missed their flanks.” Sans grinned and took another bite. His gaze darted towards Frisk, who seemed to be confused by their conversation. She remained silent and finally took small bites of her dinner.

After she had finished more than half of the slab, Papyrus lead Frisk upstairs and put her to bed. He enjoyed spending time with her. It made him feel like he was guarding and tending to the Manumitter. Perhaps it was some weird subconscious thing, something that added to his obsession to please Undyne.

Sans sat at the center of the couch, red eye closed and hollow socket wide, as he watched Papyrus sit upon the mattress next to Frisk, who had curled up under the blankets. Even with the door closed, he could still hear Papy’s bellowing exclamations.

“SLEEP WELL, HUMAN! I INSIST YOU REST ALL NIGHT!”

Frisk offered him a weary smile and Papyrus bounced up to his feet and set out into the hall, shutting the door behind him. He re-joined Sans downstairs and flipped through the TV channels, looking for anything that was not static.

Finally he found something. The broken antena seemed to pick up another old black and white movie. Some male human in a suit and a hat was walking down a street, singing in the rain and flamboyantly dancing around. His voice was distorted from the static. The melody that wafted from the TV’s speakers was a haunting lament.

Papyrus was transfixed by it.

“IS THAT WHAT THE ABOVE IS LIKE, SANS?” He blinked both gaping sockets. “IT LOOKS QUITE WET.”

But Sans was barely paying attention to the film. He was still spying on Frisk, who was no longer under the sheets. She had slipped out from bed and sat lazily on the floor, leaning back against the side of mattress. She used her cell phone’s flashlight to illuminate the room and had balanced a thick textbook in her lap. She was writing on the pages with a marker. Sans couldn’t make out what she
was writing, but he was much more interested in the delicate expressions she made and each gentle
breath she took and the movement of her wrist and fingers. He could care less about what she was
jotting down.

After a while Frisk shut the book. She rolled up her long sweater sleeves and began to draw on her
hand and inner arms. She must have been bored. Unable to sleep, perhaps. She doodled little stars on
the tops of her hands. She began to trace dozens of her old self-inflicted scars with a red marker,
making them look fresh and heinous. After a while she stood up and paced around for a bit. At one
moment she pressed her ear to the wall, as if trying to listen for the blizzard outside to gauge how bad
it was.

She snuck out from her bedroom in silence, which made Sans’ bones tense. Although he relaxed
back against the couch when he saw that she was simply tiptoeing to the lavatory at the end of the
hall. She used the toilet briefly. Sans continued to watch her, he did not break contact. *pervert.*

After she finished, she lingered among the shadows in the washroom for a bit. Frisk stared back at
her reflection in the tall, dusty full-length mirror that leaned against the wall. She ran her fingers
through her hair and attempted to pull apart a variety of tangled knots. She flashed her teeth as if
checking them over for damage. She rolled her sleeves back up and glanced at the red marker stains
on her scars.

She stood there… and stared back at her arms for a long time. Well, it felt like a long time. Sans was
completely transfixed. He could hear Papyrus talking to him over the muffled dialogue of the movie,
but it was all background noise to the one-person show that was watching his obsession. *his frisk.*

…

Frisk took a step closer to the mirror.

She lifted a hand and placed it on the glass, touching her own reflection gingerly with her fingertips.
And… and her lone eye began to swell with tears. *huh?…*

Sans shifted in his seat.

… She began to cry. A stream of tears spilled from the corner and her shoulders shook as she held
pained mewls deep in her lungs. Silent, angelic, tragic. Wet, matted eyelashes blinked away the tears.
She bit down at her bright raw rosette lower lip, struggling to hold back each pained sob.

*sweetheart…*

*are you really that miserable?…*

…
i allowed you to keep your life.

so why?

…

She clenched her teeth hard and rubbed at her nose. Eventually her tears dried up and her shivers subsided.

Frisk returned to her room. She turned off her cell phone’s light, climbed back on her mattress and curled up under the thick quilts. She shut her eye… and tried to sleep.

Sans continued to watch even in her dormancy. He had subconsciously started to grit his massive fangs in a gridlock, and had only just noticed the grinding sound of bone against bone.

“SANS?”

Papyrus’ voice broke his concentration. Sans shut his dark socket, severing the surveillance optics and cutting off the link. He opened his maroon eye and glanced up at his brother, who was now standing over him with a look of concern.

“I THOUGHT YOU HAD FALLEN ASLEEP! NO MATTER. THE FILM ENDED, IT WAS REALLY QUITE MAGICAL, THOSE HUMANS!”

“heh… yeah, they sure are.” Sans held back a sneer and lazily tapped at the side of his skull. His pupil expanded in the dull, flickering light at the center of his eye.

“I AM OFF TO SLEEP NOW, BROTHER. SHALL WE HUNT THE TEMMIES TOMORROW?” Papyrus tilted his head to the side in question.

“yeah, we’ll deal with it tomorrow if i ain’t too busy.”

“SPLENDID!” Paps clasped his hands together loudly. “GOOD NIGHT, SANS.” And he clumsily turned on the heels of his black boots and headed upstairs.

Sans listened to the sound of each heavy footfall and his brother’s bedroom door opening and closing. And it was quiet once more, besides the sound of the rushing blizzard outside in pitch blackness… and the gentle buzzing of the television.

Sans glanced at the TV. It was static. Black and white pixel patterns violently ravaged the screen. It emitted a gentle hum that melded together with the wind. Shivering shadows bounced off Sans’ skull and reflected in his crimson gaze.

There was a sudden jarring noise.

It caused Sans to jolt back in his seat. It came from the television screen. A blaring alarm, loud and gnarled. A black bar began to run across the bottom of the display.
“what the…”

They had owned this television since forever, and Sans had never seen this before. It was some kind of… emergency alert system?… And soon bright bold red letters began to appear, scrolling slowly in unison.

EMERGENCY ALERT: PLEASE STANDBY. THIS IS NOT A TEST.

EMERGENCY ALERT: PLEASE STANDBY. THIS IS NOT A TEST.

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE IS TRANSMITTED AT THE REQUEST OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. CIVIL AUTHORITIES HAVE ISSUED A NATIONAL EMERGENCY. BIOLOGICAL ABNORMALITY WARNING - UNKNOWN CREATURES ATTACKING CIVILIANS IN THE GREATER BOSTON AREA. RESIDENTS ACROSS THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS ARE ADVISED TO RETURN TO YOUR HOMES IMMEDIATELY. LOCK ALL WINDOWS AND DOORS.

THIS IS A DEVELOPING SITUATION. THIS IS NOT A TEST. EMERGENCY ALERT: PLEASE STANDBY.

…

what the fuck?…

…

what the…

…hell?

The words began to scroll on repeat. Sans read the issued alert carefully, once, twice… three times… four times… as the emergency system rolled by.

unknown creatures… biological abnormalities?… attacking civilians??

Was this… related to the opened final gate? Had the monsters within Core City spilled out into the human world? They were attacking humans!? Eating them!? Sans did not doubt something like this could happen, but it was still hard to fathom. He could barely believe what he was reading. The red letters flashed in the static and the crises siren buzzed in a rapid, haunting sequence.
Sans forced himself to his feet. He stepped over to the TV and turned the volume all the way down until it was muted. He sunk down to his knees with his skull inches from the monitor, staring down at the words in dismay.

Horrific images of the Core City Canine Unit’s deranged monstrosities rampaging through human cities and ripping them to shreds pierced through his thoughts.

The alert system continued, playing the message on repeat.

*fuck... he could NOT let frisk see this.*

She was already unhinged enough as it was. Sans knew, deep down, that her sanity was hanging by a thread. She had already tried to kill herself twice... and she had attempted to *steal* from him, steal her soul! She was a dangerous mix of hopelessness and resolve. In that chaos, she was capable of anything and *everything*.

Sans clicked the dial knob at the side of the old machine and changed the channel. But the next channel displayed the same alert message. *shit*. He clicked through a few more, each one presented the EAS, until he finally came to a channel that did not have it. This channel had minimal static as well, it was mostly black.

God, he was going to have to be diligent to make sure Frisk did not see those messages. If she knew what was happening right now in the Above, in her world... due to her actions... due to the final gate’s perforation. She would lose it.

And Sans quickly turned off the television.

He did not want it on. He didn’t even want to risk it. Fuck, this was going to prove a challenge... And he felt an iota of remorse pry at the surface of his soul.

*n-no! i freed them all. i delivered the underground from evil! i saved every citizen! i am the hero, the warrior. the champion that completed asgore’s ultimate will.*

*it had to be this way.*

…

**Heh. That's right. You won, in the end.**

**Wasn't that all you wanted?**
If you lose your determination now, what else do you have?

… You’ll have nothing.

You are NOTHING.

“fuck off!” Sans growl was pure rancor.

He smashed the intact side of his skull against the television screen. It interrupted the harrowing conflicting voices that tormented his mind. His lone maroon eye shivered rapidly, the pinpoint pupil constricting and trembling in the pool of red. He clenched his teeth into a snarl and grasped at the front of his stained shirt.

f-fuck off…

The voice did not respond. It had vanished, for now.

And eventually his soul ceased shivering.

Slowly, Sans forced himself to his feet. He made his way up the stairs to the second floor and silently advanced down the hallway. He came to a stop, directly in front of Frisk’s closed door. He lifted a hand and his skeletal fingertips traced across the center of the wood.

…

And he pried his hand from the door.

He left it shut.

He made his way to his room, closing the door behind him.

Sans let out a heavy sigh. The dark, bleakness of his room cut into his steadfast will. He sat at the edge of his bed and stared forward in a daze. His head felt… numb. His clenched teeth turned downward at either apex. His stoic gaze settled upon the furthest wall from him… the closet door.

He was exhausted. God, it was draining… keeping up this facade, like everything was perfect. Like everything was going according to plan.

And in that moment he wanted so badly to touch her.

He wanted to find that comfort in her warmth and drown in it. A comfort he had felt from her back at Asgore’s castle… that fateful night.
Sans stood again and stepped to the closet. He opened the door and reached for the wooden box, high overhead on the top shelf. He pulled the small chest from the shadows and held it in his hands. It was here. He possessed it. It was entirely his. Her determination. Her power. *Her soul.*

Sans returned to his bed and carefully opened the box in his lap. A slit of ruby red shone through the crack as he inched open the lid. And slowly, he removed the top and stared down at the orb. Swirling stardust, a cherry red moonstone, the physical essence of his sweetheart’s purity and sorrow and strength. It was all there in one miniscule sphere, and it created lovely glitter patterns of red across his hands and skull and the wall behind him.

It was just as beautiful as he had remembered… the first time he saw it… so long ago.

So exquisite… so decadent…

Sans lifted the ruby orb in his palm. It was unbelievably light. He pressed the tips of his phalanges around all sides and held the soul up to his eye. It shivered gently, like it was only moments away from shattering at his fingertips. Although it seemed quite fragile, he knew exactly how much power it contained.

What it was capable of.

…

There was a hunger… and it fermented in his chest.

Sans parted his massive teeth and let his azure tongue slip past them. And he began to drag the expanse of his extensive tongue across the side of Frisk’s soul in an abrupt compulsion.

Fuck, it tasted good. Almost as good as her blood. A sickly sweetness bordering on astringent bitter copper, like over ripened spoiled cherries. The cloying flavor made his mouth water and globs of cobalt saliva stained the orb.

The sphere moved again. It shivered against his tongue as he continued to lap the same section over and over. The hard exterior became warm and gelatinous in his hand. It began to ooze with claret solvent… Honeyed plasma almost too sweet to ingest.

And as Sans succumb to the flavor, he heard a soft sound. It came from the other side of the wall right beside him. A soft, startled little whimper.

*oh, she could feel this, huh?*
she could feel everything.

Sans smirked to himself.

He leaned back into the wall. He shut his red socket and opened the emptiness. He saw her… writhing under the sheets, in the darkness, just one room over. She was right beside him except for the simple slab of concrete that divided them.

Sans licked her soul again and she jolted once more. He could see her face in his mind’s eye. Her eye was closed, she was still asleep, and the sensation stirred her slumber and caused her to groan and squirm. Sans immediately found himself wondering just how much it would take to wake her.

And he began to roll the underside of the orb against the flat front of his bottom teeth, inching it up to the row of sharpened pinnacles. He held it there against each edge, desperately fighting the urge to bite down. Sugary raspberry syrup oozed from her soul and spilled down his fangs and chin. It drizzled upon his tongue. Candy molasses flavor sent every shred of self-control into a fervent spiral. And with a sudden flick of his wrist, Sans popped her soul inside his mouth and wrapped his tongue around it. s-shit… He wanted to chew it, rip it apart, taste the dulcet center, but instead he held her soul against the inside of his cheek and sucked against it hard.

He heard a cry.

It was so much louder than before.

Sans watched her with a depraved and fevered grin.

She was awake now. Wide awake and she had crawled up onto her knees. She was clawing at the wall right beside her. Her entire body was trembling. Drops of sweat dripped down her forehead and the nape of her neck. She was fevered, flushed from head to toe, burning hot in swelling, forced arousal.

“S-sans!” Frisk let out a breathless whisper and patted a hand against the stone wall.

For a moment Sans was impressed by her instincts, by the fact that she knew it was him causing these sensations. But he had done this to her in the past, way back when, as a means to control her.

He sucked her soul hard against the inside of his mouth. Blue saliva congealed around the red shimmer. She cried out again but could not stop that subtle moan that slipped past her lips. heh… Despite it all, she was being extremely quiet. Perhaps she did not want to wake Papyrus. Perhaps she was too ashamed, or too proud.

“P-please… stop…”

She was pure putty in his hands.

“S-sans… Stop! S-stay away from me- nnhh!”

i never wanted to be closer.
He ignored her cries. Her little pleads and moans and whimpers stirred his magic. His perverse virtue began to swell in his soul and run down his bones, down his skeletal spine to his pelvis, to his loins. Azure conjury collected at his groin, building underneath thick tattered pants. He could see the blue glow seeping through the fabric around the producing outline. He could feel his desire take on physical form.

Sans parted his maw and grabbed her soul from his check. It was dripping wet, hot and pliable and it seemed to melt into his touch. He squeezed it hard until coral viscous trickled between his phalanges. Frisk gasped. She pressed her sweaty forehead against the concrete, leaning into the wall, one hand clawing at the stone while the other pulled at the front of her sweater.

The building pressure had been too much. She needed relief. And as Sans began to dig two fingers into her throbbing spirit, she lowered her hand down further, down to her navel, to her hips, underneath the front hem of her shorts…

Sans was simultaneously watching her in his mind and this action took him by complete surprise.

*She had… slipped a hand between her thighs, under her panties. She was touching herself… She was touching herself because of him.*

He stilled his probing fingers for a brief moment, in shock. He had never, ever seen her succumb to him like this before, not even back at Asgore’s castle. She was touching her velvety folds, pressing her fingers between them, rolling her index and pointer finger along her swollen pearl. Her rose red clt was so tender and the slightest touch sent her spine shivering.

Frisk gasped again and pressed her cheek flush against the stone, arching her back, chest pushed forward, twisting and squirming from the combination of forceful pleasure and begrudged satiation.

*f-fuck…*

Sans grasped tight upon her soul again. He began to thrust two fingers in and out of the gelatinous orb, fingerfucking her cherry essense. His opposite hand pushed down the front of his pants and his thick, sapphire cock sprung free from the fabric entrapment. Cerulean precum beaded at the head of his glans and trickled down the underside. He wrapped his fingers around the base and began to guide his hand up in firm, steady strokes.

He added a third finger inside her soul. Frisk cried out. Then a fourth. She was moaning and panting. She was begging for him to stop this, but soon her words slurred and she simply moaned his name. Her soul was so tight inside. It was difficult to move. A deep rose luster that dripped all over his hand like boysenberry icing. The orb squeezed around his thrusting fingers and fought against a fourth, barely able to contain his sharp bony punctures.

God, his head was swimming. His soul was on fire. Sans leaned into the side of the wall, listening to his precious dove begging for him and only him. He watched as her shorts slipped below her hips. He could see the outline of her fingers underneath her white sticky sweat-soaked panties that clung to her knuckles. Her fingers rolled against her mound, pressed between supple soft pussy lips like a velvet peach, rubbing and stroking her clt until her pleasure peaked. But she would not allow it. She would quickly still her fingers and force the pleasure to subside, only to be urged on again by Sans’
He would not stop abusing her soul. He would not give her a chance to rest or resist.

Her thighs trembled as he fingerfucked her soul raw. And it took every bit of strength he had to not teleport into her room in that moment. Sans stilled his fingers for a second, and with his crimson soaked hand he began to roll up the front of his shirt. Royal blue pierced through the shadows. The color of his pounding soul melded with hers and it turned his room a gentle, shivering lavender.

Sans slipped his hand underneath his rib cage, deep inside his cavity, to his soul. It hovered there. It shivered with excitement, suspended within the space. A pure blue opaque orb of resplendent light. He began to rub Frisk’s pneuma against his own, pressing both their fervent souls together. Electric currents ran up his spine. He clenched his teeth hard to hold back a groan. Frisk must have felt it too because she let out a sharp cry followed by a multitude of slow, quivering whimpers.

Their souls were so drastically different that when they became one, well, it was almost overwhelming. Raw, unabated pleasure swelled in his chest and collided into his loins over and over. His cock pulsed and dripped in his constant stroking hand. Sans squeezed and rolled and pressed their souls together in his chest until Frisk’s sphere phased through his own in a brief instant.

It was too much for the girl. Frisk gasped and cried out, panting hard with her little pink tongue hanging out past pouty lips. Her whole body went stringent and her knees buckled and quaked as Sans forced a limit upon her. Her panties clung to her thighs, completely exposed for him to see. She played with herself hard and fast and an orgasm came upon her in full force. “S-Saaa-ns!! A-ahh!! Ohhh, p-please!” Shiny honey leaked all over her fingers, making them slick, creating a layer of glossy lube that allowed her fingers to move even faster. Her translucent cum dripped from her tight, velvet insides and soaked both her inner thighs and velour petals. She was flushed and exhausted. Her climax came and went.

But Sans wasn’t finished.

He forcefully pried her soul from his - now the color of sugar-dipped purple - and slipped it back onto his tongue, inside his mouth, holding it against the back of his throat with the threat of swallowing. Instantly the pleasure built back within her nethers, already so tender from her first orgasm.

“Sans!! N-no more!”

She was pleading with him. She wasn’t holding her voice down anymore. She was being loud. Maybe she wanted to wake Papyrus up. Maybe she wanted his brother to catch them, to save her from this. Or maybe she was just too enamoured with pleasure to think straight.

Whatever the reason, Sans could also barely fight his own irrationality. Swelling pressure churned in his groin. His cock pulsed and palpitated in his fondling palm. He was so close to the edge, but he wanted Frisk to cum a second time, with him.

He wanted to touch her. He wanted to grip at her quivering hips and force her legs apart and grind all the way inside her clenched liquid silk recesses. But despite that burning desire, he did not teleport to her, he simply manipulated her tender soul instead. And he watched her clutch at her mound, both her thighs squeezing hard around her hand to try and soften her own passionate touches.

She reached a second climax so much faster than the first. She was no longer on her knees, instead she lay on her tummy at the center of the mattress. Her fingers rolled all over her enlarged clit, while
the opposite hand clutched at a fistful of blankets. She moaned into her pillow and her fingertips inched back and began to slip and prod at her tight exposed entrance, petal pink buttery flesh.

*fuck*… He couldn’t hold on anymore. The combination of watching her ashamed wanton motions, and the taste of her soul, and of course his own stroking hand, it all brought him to the brink. Sans gnawed at her orb essence at his back molars, still careful not to bite through. He let out a harsh growl and took a sharp inhale through his nasal cavities and a wave of pleasure swept him up and pulled him into its depths.

A thick influx of clear cobalt semen spilled from the head of his cock. It stained his pants and hand and even managed to smear against some of the furs underneath him. He continued to stroke his erection through the climax, listening to Frisk’s desperate moans as she struggled through her second orgasm, raw and raucous.

He forced her to cum a second time, with him. And he continued to lightly suck against her soul in his mouth, causing latent waves of pleasure to run up and down her entire body during her summit.

“P-please… no more…” Her voice was a muffled groan, face buried in pillows and blankets.

Finally, Sans granted her releaf.

He parted his maw and let her spent soul fall onto his palm. It looked just as depleted as she did - he had not taken his spying sights off her the entire time. She was a mess. Ravaged by sick perversion. She lay there on the blankets, panting hard, struggling to slow her breaths. Her fingers had stopped moving but she kept them pressed to her wet pussy, soothing it gently dripping with clear vanilla cream.

Sans dropped Frisk’s soul onto his bed. It nestled in the folds of fur blankets, sticky and glossy with his saliva and its own gelatinous extract. It was no longer a burning orb of crimson. It had absorbed some of Sans’ power and turned a gentle purple.

Finally Frisk moved. She reached her opposite hand down and weakly pulled some blankets over her exposed lower half. Sans could see her shoulders trembling, no longer with pleasure… but with heartache.

*frisk*…

His blue vitality vanished in a whisp of cobalt vapor. Sans pulled his pants up to his hip bones and adjusted them. He tugged his shirt back down and rolled off the edge of his mattress to a stand. He vanished.

And re-appeared in her room. The velvet black space hung humid with her carnal scent, fresh and unchaste.

She was still awake, but entirely drained of energy balancing on the fringe of sleep. She barely even moved as he stepped slowly towards her mattress upon the floor. Sans sunk down to sit right beside her at the edge of the bed. Her little body shivered as she felt his weight sink within the bedding.

She had to be *terrified.*
Her face was buried in blankets and turned away from him, towards the wall. Her lone eye was shut so tight that her sticky red eyelid quivered. Her hands were pale, so delicate, like jasmine petals, and they clutched at the pillow for dear life.

Sans lifted a claw. He brushed back her sweaty locks. She flinched but did not fight him or shy away.

*please don’t hate me...*

...

*i don’t want you to hate me...*

...

*i just want you.*

...

...

*i will quash the distance that has grown between us.*

...

*when our souls are one, there is no discrepancy.*

...
Sans rested his hand against her shoulder. And for a split second he felt remorse… but he could never allow those words, an apology, to leave him. He could not do it. To apologize would mean to admit defeat… He could not lose to her. He had already won, but why did it still feel like they were at odds?

frisk… my precious dove… my darling sweetheart… you have all my mania and all of its fire.

…and your mercy is a wound that just won't heal, forever charred upon my soul.

Frisk’s shoulder was no longer shivering. Her breathing had returned to that steady, slow tempo. Sleep had freed her from the fear and pain and heartache, and she slept soundly. She looked at peace.

Guilt racked his thoughts, but Sans pushed it down and locked it up in the basement of his conscious. He would not have it. And he bent forward and pressed his forehead to the top of her head - a ritual he had developed during their time journeying together.

It gave him comfort… and it felt like forgiveness.

Mercy.

Compassion.

Sans sat beside her for a long while. He kept his hand against her shoulder, soaking in her warmth, but eventually he pried it away and forced himself to stand. He teleported back into his room and collapsed on his bed. Her soul was still there. It lay idly in the blankets. He picked it up and held it gently, clasped in both palms.

Sans stared down at its gentle heliotrope essence between the spaces of his phalanges. His blue substance swirled around inside her soul like a pulse, contaminating the ruby starlight.

…

He closed his sockets.

Her soul felt so warm and soft in his hands.

It soothed the darkness inside him.

And allowed sleep to surface, at last.
Rays of dusty light spilled through grey skies.

The light descended upon a barren field in a multitude of holy beams, like light piercing through stained-glass church windows.

And a moist, black fog nestled low to the ground in the early evening, heavy with the thick scent of wood rot.

Sans stood in the field, among his brethren warriors. They trained in the shadow of Asgore’s castle. It loomed over them like the angel of death. Perhaps to the other monsters it was a symbol of their champion status, but to Sans the castle was the embodiment of captivity… Enslaved to a service he never wanted to join.

But it had been many months. Many months since his indoctrination. And much had happened in that time, since Asgore had told him of the prophecy.

All ten of the warriors had listened to his words. Most of them encouraged Asgore’s dream. The only others monsters that had become concerned were Toriel and Grillby, well besides Sans that is. King Asgore shortly announced his prophecy to the rest of the Underground through the means of messenger ghosts and scrolls. It was only a matter of time until each village and city knew of this ‘Manumitter’. This human from the Above, that would save them all. Destined to deliver them all from evil.

And in the wake of the prophecy, the ten warriors attempted everything they could to open the final gate. Each one honed their magic in on the meager door. Toriel shoot wave after wave of harsh, acidic conjury. Grillby used his fire abilities. Doggo and Greater Dog hacked at the door from the opposite side. And Sans… he charged the barrier with such strength that the impact of his ax itself had knocked him back.

Nothing worked.

The door was bewitched. A cruel gambit.

And its mundane simplicity taunted them to no end.
… But during the peak months of their struggle…

… she arrived.

…

_The Manumitter._

…

A human…

She appeared one day, through the fog.

She arose from the nightshade of desolate wastelands, among the outskirts that surrounded the castle.

The King found her, alone, naked, shivering.

Or perhaps it was she that sought out Asgore…

A human… with the eyes of a serpent. Piercing blue and rain-hued, cold, ethereal.

He escorted her to the castle. She clutched at the inside of Asgore’s royal fur-trimmed robe as each maid and servant and all ten warriors watched in awe. The prophecy had just been a fantasy up to that point, a delusion brought on by the mind of their desperate, weary sovereign.

But he had been right all along. It had not been a delusion. She descended upon their world so abruptly. Like it was too good to be true, like it was all just a dream.

And how Asgore doted on that child… He gave her everything. He told her of the prophecy, that it was her destiny to open the gate. She claimed she had no memory of her life before wandering the wastelands in a daze, before he found her.

Sans thought it sounded suspicious as fuck.

The girl clung to Asgore like a lost infant. She never left his side. She never spoke, and when she felt like talking she would simply tug at the Kings robe, who would then bend down and allow her to whisper cupped murmurs into his ear. Asgore adorned her in the finest wardrobe, she ate the most lavish of meals, played with hand-crafted toys from only the best craftsmen in the Underground. She would sit beside him during their conference meetings, idly listening to them discuss their plans for
the gate and the prophecy.

Her treated her like his own kin… but there was something off. Sans always knew there was something just not quite right about those eyes.

She appeared meak. So delicate. But her eyes… uncanny beryl blue, muddled yet clear, like a pool of stagnant putrid rainwater. And the way she stared, when no one else was looking, the way she caught Sans’ eyes made his soul grow deathly still.

She made him uneasy. He knew right from the beginning that something was not quite right, he just could not place a palangie on it, let alone confide in Asgore about his suspicions.

Hell, Asgore adored her. He was enamored with her charm.

This girl he named… Chara.

…

They trained outside, sparing among one another and using a variety of wooden dummies to practice combat skills. Sans preferred training. It was so much better than seething in front of the fucking gate all day… or even worse, figuring out ways to extract Chara’s memories and use her supposide ‘Manumitter’ skills to open it.

Sans had never seen her do anything remarkable. Asgore was jaded. And soon some of the warriors had begun to question among themselves if she truly even was this so-called ‘savior.’ But they could not let Asgore kow of their insurrection. Besides, only a handful of the warriors assumed as such. Sans, Grillby, Toriel, and Shyren. They believed their King to be spellbound by this strange creature. *Was she even human at all?* She certainly looked the part, but the eyes play tricks on heavy hearts.

Sans stood before a wooden dummy. He had both claws lifted and shivering bones entrapped in blue magic circled around his wrists in steady rings. He had been able to hone his ability and learned to control each bone dagger with ease. His indigo eyes flashed in their sockets, engulfing the misty atmosphere around him, and he propelled the bones forward at will.

They rushed ahead with a burst, like crackling musket fire, and stabbed through the wood in multiple droves. The bones skewed the wooden prop dummy like fork prongs piercing through fresh meringue. They cut through with ease and the dummy toppled over.

Someone was clapping in the distance.

Sans swiveled around and saw King Asgore, high overhead on one of the many balconies built into the side of the mansion. He was clapping his massive paws, applauding Sans’ discipline. He beamed down with pride, and continued to oversee all of his champions practice their abilities from the safety far above the landscape.

But he was not alone. Chara stood beside him. Her artic white fingers wrapped over the balcony’s stone edge. She stared down at the warriors with lidded eyes, a look of placid regard.
Toriel, who had been training right beside Sans, took notice of Asgore and the girl. She glance over her should at the pair and her eyes narrowed. Out of all the monsters, she liked the Manumitter the least. And Sans couldn’t help but conclude that her dislike stemmed from jealousy.

Toriel always held a soft place in her soul for the King. They were of a similar ancestry, afterall. Now she felt rejected. Asgore barely spoke to her anymore, all of his attention had become consumed by the black-haired, snake-eyed child.

“Tsk…” Toriel scoffed. She was annoyed by the visual and immediately turned back to focus on her own solitary training.

Sans eyed Asgore before his gaze settled on Chara. In a sudden instant of a show of force, he summoned his ax. The weapon materialized in a loud explosion of sapphire celestial light. It was huge, so much larger than normal, as he poured all of his soul’s strength into the manifestation.

Sans charged another nearby dummy, ax positioned over his shoulder, and growled out as the weapon came down in full force. The thick blade collided into the mannequin and cut it in two.

“Bravo, Sans!” Asgore called out to him from the ledge. He applauded the bombardment before turning around and heading back inside the manor. Chara turned to follow behind him, but she hesitated. She lingered on the balcony.

Chara stepped back towards the edge.

Her viper eyes locked onto him.

…

Sans immediately felt that familiar malicious energy permeate through her aura. Dusty silver rays descended from the highest peaks of the castle, obscuring the girl’s frame. But Sans could still see her… those eyes, the color of toxic salt water contaminated with flakes of tourmaline scattered among iris slits.

Sans felt his soul pulse.

A strange sensation… of alarm.

And… the girl… she smiled.

Her eyes narrowed and her pearly teeth glistened in the pale light. She rested both elbows on the stone railing with a grin. The smile of a wicked fiend brewing a scheme. He had never seen her smile in such a way before.

Sans’ sockets narrowed and shivered. His ax immediately vanished in his hand. He stood quietly and watched her expression morph from one of calculating cruelty back to phony innocence the moment Asgore called from her from inside the castle.

Chara broke eye contact.

She slowly turned and sauntered back inside the building.
She was a fraud.

A devil in sheeps clothing… leading them down a path of destruction.

...

And her gaze lingered in his mind.

...

The way she stared at him… entirely unafraid.

No one else had seen it. Not even Toriel. They were all still busy practicing. Sans had been the only one to see her for what she truly was in that moment…

...

He saw her.

...

He saw her corrupt soul. Her pneuma rot.

...

*He knew… what she was.*

Chara. The False Manumitter. The deceiver.

...
Slowly, the memory... the dream... the ancient vision turned to red.

Shivering deep cayenne luster blanketed his vision.

A broad and sudden pain burrowed deep into his hallowed eye socket.

And polluted filth spilled into his soul and turned it to muddled pearlescent sapphire.

Heh... You knew then, in that moment, that you would be mine.

You knew of my intentions, of my power, yet you did nothing to stop it.

i... i didn’t know...

Don’t lie. You knew what I was. And you allowed your soul to be taken regardless, in the end.

Because I was simply a reflector of your true intentions.

You never gave a shit about any of them.
You think you’ve won now, Sans?...

You think you’ve freed them all?

I live on, inside YOU.

Heh...

I will win, Sans. Not immediately, but definitely.

And my unforgiving epitome of memories will ignite your soul, burn your insides, and eventually tear you apart.

And you will destroy her, your precious sweetheart.

Because you are so, so broken.

Because I broke you, long ago.
A splintered soul.

From now until the end.

*****

Coming up: Pitfall.

Chapter End Notes

Well… there's that. (o‿3,o)

Sans has got a lot on his plate, man. He's gotta figure out how to demolish those candles, he's gotta go meet up with Undyne, he's gotta worry about suicidal Frisk and homicidal Chara voices and all that crap. I sorta feel bad for him. sorta. Stay tuned for more flashbacks, angst and sin!

Feel free to contact me on my Tumblr whenever.

ADVANCED WARNING: The next chapter will contain graphic and explicit non-con sexual content.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!