

Under Infusion Tale

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Under Infusion Tale

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Summary

Monsters may be free, but there is a high price to pay for the one that freed them. Deciding Frisk is better off being a mystery, the monsters leave it alone for 14 years. Until Frisk is discovered. Undyne and Sans try to reach her in time, but she is left with a fatal wound. With even boss monsters unable to heal her, Sans heals her the only way left.

However, that was part of Gaster's plan . . . but Flowey was not. The result is wedding bells ringing twice for Frisk. Once to Asriel . . . and once to Sans?

*Frisk and Sans eventually.

Camouflaged Frisk

This chapter now has a [text storied version](#) on Messagink.

NOTE: This work does very little mentioning of Chara, other dimensions, and is after the Pacifist Playthrough. There is a lot less subplot threads than Reckoning Tale or Conduit Tale. It was just something I always wanted to make. Enjoy.:)

Two Weeks After Frisk Freed the Underground . . .

“Oh, Majesty,” Papyrus said coming inside. “I present Lawyer.”

Toriel watched as Lawyer entered the castle. “Asgore is not present right now.”

“You are still the queen,” Lawyer said. “This is just a minor issue, but an issue nonetheless.” Lawyer took a seat in front of her. “Now, the human, this Frisk that disappeared?”

“We gave you recordings from Mettaton’s shows. Several people spoke of the child. It is even seen on security cameras,” Toriel said. “It exists and shouldn’t be here in order for us to gain our freedoms. The little dear went home.”

“Well, the little dear is how old?” Lawyer asked.

“Perhaps eight? One doesn’t quite know,” Toriel answered.

Lawyer scratched his head. “Look. According to these recordings you gave us, there is some questionable-“

“Monsters were scared of humans and defended themselves. He was okay, and so was everyone else.” Toriel nipped that in the bud before it could start. “We are ready to maintain a peaceful relationship with humans.”

“That’s not what we are addressing.” The lawyer pulled out some photos from his briefcase. “According to not only several eyewitnesses but even on security cameras it seems that you secured this child as your child.”

Well, that had changed. “Yes, but the child went back to its home,” Toriel assured him.

“But, for the same reasons *you* are still queen, once accepted, royalty can’t be rejected in the monster’s kingdom. Now, clear and just out there it’s nothing, but a simple courtcase later and she is knee deep in trouble.” Lawyer pulled out more documents. “Eventually, this child that you claimed as yours, with plenty of proof showing such will grow up. When she does, things could get messy.”

Toriel shrugged. “How?”

“If she’s a girl. Now, you say Frisk is a boy, others say it’s a girl. Let’s assume for a moment that we know a hundred percent that she is a girl and we will reference her as such for this conversation,” Lawyer addressed her. “Well, for one, as I said it wouldn’t be granted right away, but a simple court case highlighting this evidence and the man she takes as her husband could become a technical prince. In fact, according to the popular proof, and how many people there are compared to the number of monsters, it is fair to say whoever she marries could actually overthrow the monster kingdom.”

“Oh.” That wasn’t good. “There are no humans in our kingdom.”

“Technically, no, but human law will always. Well, I.” He wiggled his hand. “Off the record, humans have been known to make things happen. Like say the day of the wedding, a bill miraculously passed enforcing you to take 100,000 humans in the next state into your kingdom.”

Toriel leaned herself deeply back in her chair. “That’s madness.”

“No, it gets madder. Royalty is not something that should be played with. New players aren’t welcomed inside of it,” Lawyer said. “While many humans practice different governments, we still have several human monarchies. Those monarchies have different laws within each of them, with some not being so nice. Even if this Frisk belongs to the monster kingdom as your daughter, one of the other monarchies could claim her as their queen, and take over the monster kingdom as well.”

“Claiming as a queen?” Toriel asked. “They just. How would one do that?”

“Some have it through marriage, and some have it through consummation.”

Toriel blinked wide. Twice. “Consummation?”

“Yes, as long as the relationship is consummated with footage a marriage can follow within one year.”

“I-I don’t quite understand,” Toriel said. “Someone would woo her? Footage?”

“That’s cute,” the lawyer chuckled. “No. I’m afraid it probably wouldn’t be anything like that.”

Toriel started to tap her chair. “They could claim *my* monster kingdom, by simply doing something barbaric as taking someone?!”

“Yes, which puts everything into a bit of a position,” Lawyer said. “You see, having a human own a monster kingdom would give a kingdom twice as much leverage and that’s not good.”

“Not good? Size of the kingdom?” Toriel stood up. “Let’s go back to the fact that you humans are absolutely barbaric beings!”

“Only some, only individual monarchies. Some have but a piece of paper and a ceremony. Some have to include a marriage and consummation. Some, um. Well, some actually have to have the bride’s permission.”

“I think I am going to faint.” Toriel tried to steady herself.

“Yes, and because of all of that terrible trouble, many regular humans would probably just try to kill it to prevent any kingdom becoming bigger. You see, about four hundred fifty years ago, all the kingdoms were distributed to a certain size,” Lawyer tried to explain. “Massive ones have tried to take on little ones, and it didn’t do very well. Now we still have many different kinds. Oligarchies, monarchies, we even have places of democracy, and some that are anarchy with no rules inside their borders. It is a pick and choose type of world outside the barrier.”

“So. When the child grows . . . if it’s found and it’s a girl. . .” Toriel added quickly. “It could be killed, forced to marry, or be placed into a position against its will that I do not even want to think about?”

“Yes. That’s why I thought I should it bring it to your attention directly,” he said. “Even if it’s not a girl, the threat of being able to join with another kingdom is still high, and would probably put it in direct danger.”

“Yes,” Toriel said stiffly. “Thank you, Lawyer. I shall talk with Asgore about it.”

“Honestly though, I don’t see how you are going to get much freedom if you don’t produce your bona-fide proof. I mean, there is no recording or films or anything of this flower actually getting powerful. Yes, he is found and spotted through the film, but just a regular harmless flower. Not to mention, everyone’s details of the events are sketchy at best. They don’t match.” Lawyer picked his briefcase back up. “If you want to gain more than the slight bit of property you have, and want to establish a friendly relationship with humans again, I don’t see much choice. You have to risk it and find it.”

“Yes,” Toriel said softly. “Fine, yes, thank you. Now please leave.”

She needed to talk to all of Frisk’s friends. *Now.*

“Good morning.” Toriel looked at everyone in her presence. Many of them met face to face not much more than a couple of weeks ago, not knowing about her being Queen. Some of them were even new to each other.

The Royal Scientist Alphys was rubbing her paws together. Undyne the Leader of the Royal Guards was by her side, with her arm around her. The famous Mettaton was spinning in a circle in boredom. Asgore was trying to smile at her lovingly, but wasn’t getting that love in return. Then the two sentries, Sans and Papyrus. One of them had been her knock-knock buddy and had just not known about it.

“Hello everyone,” she said addressing them all. “How are you?”

Alphys didn't answer. Undyne gave a thumbs up.

"Do you truly care how I am?" Asgore asked her. Toriel's nose flared slightly. "Oh. Being polite. Okay."

"I am excellent!" Papyrus announced. "We are doing very well with our new job, aren't we, Sans?" Sans just nodded.

"Well. I gathered us all here because I believe in the Underground we were all the closest to Frisk," she said. "And I need to ask some questions about Frisk."

"Okay, I'm ready!" Mettaton said "What would the queen like to know?"

"What gender, and how old was Frisk?" Queen Toriel asked simply.

"Frisk was no doubt a girl, about 18," Mettaton answered.

"That's wrong," Undyne said. "Punk was a boy, around 12."

"Uh?" Alphys looked toward Undyne. "Frisk was about 13. I agree that the human was a boy though."

"None of those are correct," Papyrus disagreed. "Frisk was a girl, and she was at least, according to what I've learned so far, 15. Maybe 16?"

"I believed Frisk was an eight year old boy," Toriel said. "There was no doubt in my mind, I was talking to a little boy."

"Toriel." Asgore sighed. "I have to disagree. It made it even harder to fight, but it was definitely a young girl, about six or so."

"Hm." Toriel smiled at Sans. "What do you think the human had been?"

"Uh?" Sans shrugged. "You know? I don't . . . Ten? Twelve? How come we all see something differently?"

"How come indeed." This time, she looked toward Asgore. "Do you see what just happened? No one truly saw Frisk, or knows who or what it was."

"Frisk was camouflaged. The barrier magic granted camouflage? Safety?" Asgore's lovesick attitude nearly disappeared, now focused on Frisk. "Why did the human want safety *before* it was dropped in?"

"I don't know. It takes longer than the few seconds to fall for the barrier to grant something like that. However, I need you to look at this too, Asgore." Toriel led him over toward the table that Lawyer had just been at. "If someone out there finds Frisk, look what they can make him or her do!"

Asgore looked through the papers. "This is dangerous. Has she contacted you back?"

“No,” Toriel said softly. “He simply walked out. Or she.”

“If we find her, then the truth can come out. We can receive more freedom and more trust.” He looked toward the papers.

“Mmm.”

Toriel looked toward her sentry friend, Sans, who was making the slight noise. “Yes?”

“Don’t suppose you’d be willing to share what’s on those papers? Maybe?”

Toriel looked toward Asgore. Should they do that?

“Perhaps the more that’s known, the more helpful they can be?” Asgore added. “They are Frisk’s friends, and she isn’t a civilian of the kingdom. Our honor should lie more with them.”

Toriel took a deep breath. “Don’t lose the papers. None of this information leaves this room.”

After seeing the papers . . .

“We should leave Frisk be,” Alphys spoke up first. Quite rare. “The child is a mystery right now. We could dig and find him or her, but as long as we don’t know, no one else will.”

“Yeah, that punk’s going to have to live with us for us to keep an eye on it,” Undyne agreed. “What do you think, Papyrus?”

“Oh, I don’t know,” Papyrus said. “Sans is refusing to let me see the papers.”

“Sibling babying? Well, that could be an interesting show,” Mettaton noted.

Sans looked up briefly at Mettaton then back toward the papers.

“What if someone does find Frisk?” Toriel asked. “I mean, we have to find legitimate proof, without involving him or her.”

“The child was like a strange dream, coming through the Underground, saving it, and then leaving forever,” Asgore said. “I agree with the Royal Scientist. We should leave this be. If she is found, then the consequences will be dealt with at that time.”

“If he or she is found,” Toriel corrected Asgore. “Still, if we don’t at least pretend to look, everyone will be disheartened. We are to the surface but we have no property. We have to work with humans this time around, not just go stealing souls and busting through. It doesn’t work and we will not repeat that past, but it must be incredibly hard for everyone.” Toriel looked back toward Sans who was still flipping through the papers. “Sans? What do you think?”

What did he think? The worst thing that kid could have done for itself was free the monsters. While they were technically ‘free’, he or she now had a gigantic target on their back. “I think we should trap the kid *now* and make it stay so nothing happens later on.”

“Trap Frisk?” Toriel didn’t seem to agree. “We can’t just trap the child. It saved us.”

“If we don’t trap it now, we’ll just have to trap it later. If we’re lucky.” Sans didn’t want to take it away from its life any more than she did, but this was dangerous. Real dangerous. “We can work out contracts and stuff after its old enough to sign.”

“Noted,” Toriel said to him, yet he could tell it wasn’t even considered.

“Toriel,” Asgore said, “I agree with most here. No more sacrifice. We will find a way without bringing her into it.”

“Or him into it,” Toriel said. “We know nothing of it.”

“Except that it got us out of the mountain,” Sans said with no fuss. “Who cares whether it was boy, girl, 8 or 16? Frisk was a good human. Leaving it out there, I’m telling you, it’s a bad idea.”

“Well, we *have* to search for it,” Asgore said to Toriel. “True freedom comes with it.”

“I don’t know.” Toriel sighed. “We just need proof that the child lives.”

“Yes, proof,” Asgore agreed. “There must be pictures out there.”

“Umm . . .” Alphys looked toward Sans. “Sans is . . . well, this is . . .”

“Yes, pictures but leave it be!” Mettaton agreed. “You can’t be burning in the spotlight, if the spotlight can’t find you.”

“I believe it’s decided then,” Toriel agreed.

“I don’t know,” Papyrus said. He tried to glance at the papers, but Sans moved them away. “Sans is often a real ***bonehead***, but when he gets like *that*, all secret-secret, it’s best to follow my Brother.”

“We can’t trap the one who saved us,” Toriel said boldly. “It is not an option. It must be out there, it strived to get out there.”

“Put everything into finding Frisk *now*, and we got a better a chance.” Sans didn’t give up. “If it’s with family, kidnap that then. That’s what it wanted, right? Grab it. Look, none of those humans are going to enter our kingdom for the human yet, it’s too young. Disable the boards, the tables change. No fighting with souls but with bodies. The enemies would be goners.”

“Delusional,” Asgore said. “Disabling the boards? That’s not even possible.”

“Naw,” Sans said. “It could be done with two Skeletons.”

“It can be,” Papyrus agreed with Sans. “We know how to do it, Majesty. Someone showed us . . . a long time ago.”

“Frisk deserves to go out there and live its life, just as we all do,” Toriel insisted. “I’m sorry, Sans, I, Queen Toriel, will *not* accept it.”

“We should find proof of Frisk’s existence, without finding Frisk, if it comes to that,” Asgore agreed. “We can’t put the child through peril.”

“If they can’t find the child, then it is safer,” Papyrus said, “I suppose. But, if we *can’t* find the child, the humans will never trust us either. Would they?”

“Stalemate,” Sans agreed with Papyrus. “The Great Papyrus should be heard.”

“Everyone is being heard,” Toriel said.

“Somehow, I doubt that,” Sans said, a little more snippety than his usual self.

“Maybe . . .” Alphys tried again. “Okay, um! I agree with Sans and Papyrus now, what they say makes sense. Especially about the boards, if they have that ability. Give Frisk and her family asylum. Humans mature fast anyhow. Plus, our chances of finding Frisk now are much better than if we try to start later.”

“Secure Frisk. Trap Frisk in this mountain?” Toriel snorted. “I can’t believe I am hearing this. All Frisk wanted was to escape. The human didn’t want to be an ambassador and it had places to go. It didn’t *want* to stay. No, I can’t grant that.”

“We only need to find some proof Frisk exists. Not the human personally,” Asgore agreed with Toriel. “No, the decision stands. Unless it’s absolutely necessary, no one will attempt to find the actual human.”

Fourteen Years Later . . .

“Ooh. That was a falling star,” Mettaton said, pointing to the sky. “How pretty. It’s nice to see the meteor shower.”

“Yep, it’s awesome,” Undyne agreed. “What do you think, Alphys?”

Alphys tried to look up with Undyne, but her eyes always focused on below. Where there were always several hundred humans with shining red lights trained to fire upon any monster that dared to get past the line. They were all technically on the free area. Not Underground. Monsters could see freedom, but they couldn’t leave into society yet. “Yep. Pretty.” She wanted nothing more than to get out of there, but she didn’t want to drive Undyne crazy.

Frank Clipper held out his ID to all the military and police as he entered a pair of gates. He waited as they were unlocked for him. He walked for about half a mile before he moved into a second line of military and military tanks. He continued on his way up as he saw two monsters being watched, observed, and guns pointed at as they watched the meteor show from the cliff of the mountain. He climbed a ladder that he'd climbed several times already and moved past the lady monsters.

Things he did for his job.

As he reached the inside of the cliff, he saw the two sentries. One was tall, rigid. The other stood up straight as well, but he looked more humble.

"Lawyer," he said to each of them. He pulled out his ID once again to them. They should be expecting him. He was instructed to never give the monsters any personal information and to use the addressal as his own name. Each sentry moved out of the way as he headed down toward the castle.

"Sans, I will stand guard here," Papyrus said. "You go stand guard at the castle. Watch Lawyer."

"Right, Bro." Sans teleported his way to the castle, beating Lawyer. Not many humans came into their domain except for legal and regal reasons. His world had changed a *lot* in fourteen years. He went from surviving Underground day by day, staring at snow to *really* living.

And watching out for much more than snow. Papyrus and him guarded the cliff entrance that was their property. Technically, monsters even came out on the grass down below. However, night and day there was a militia of humans who always had their weapons aimed at them.

Having taken a lot of what the young Frisk stood for to heart, the monsters did not push and tried to exist side by side. While they could technically railroad their way and easily attain seven souls (and more), past experience showed that humans were wily creatures and their souls were strong.

A human child alone traversed the Underground. Human souls were STRONG.

Instead, the monsters stayed back and strived for peace. Being able to come out each night and see the stars was a relief that many monsters took advantage of. Being able to touch grass and feel sun. The feeling of being trapped wasn't as strong anymore.

However, that didn't change the fact that while some monsters enjoyed the night skies and the lovely twenty feet of grass beneath their feet of the cliff . . . humans always had their weapons trained on them. Most monsters wouldn't be able to move fast enough if something happened, like a human got trigger-happy.

So, both Sans and Papyrus now had a real important job. If a human weapon went off ‘accidentally’ (and it had on more than one occasion), they each needed to use their powers to quickly amend the problem before a monster got hurt.

Yeah. They weren’t watching snow anymore. While most monsters would probably say ‘ow’ or maybe even ‘that tickled’, it could very well kill a weak monster.

Frisk had already made a confident improvement in Sans when they first reached the outside almost fourteen years ago. That strength helped him keep going and staying strong. He still joked and got along with everyone, but he had a serious responsibility he understood now too.

Even Papyrus found himself now having to rely on Sans. Both of them had to trust in each other to stay alert. They weren’t ‘sentries watching snow’, nor was Papyrus training to be a royal guard. They found their place, and even though life wasn’t exactly fair, there was still a sense of freedom.

Especially since they also had their teleportation power other monsters didn’t have, as well as gifted intelligence. It gave them almost exclusive rights to the authorization permit badges that allowed a monster to leave the area. However, they only got to use them when royalty deemed it okay.

They used it a lot in the beginning to learn about the outside world, in order to know how to protect themselves. They learned how to drive cars, motorcycles, and even semi-trucks. They each learned at least three different types of human languages.

They taught themselves about humans and their weapons, their strange culture, and anything else they could. Fighting wasn’t all just magic, it was about intellect too, and contrary to belief, Sans and Papyrus had that more than anyone knew. But one of the best tools in the trade?

Being *underestimated* could show someone’s true colors to them real quick. Especially when said person didn’t know that cursory glance just judged everything about them.

“Well?” King Asgore asked, yet again. “Any progress at all?”

The lawyer brought out a document. “Freedom without authorization did not pass. Any extra temporary passes didn’t pass. Freedom from human’s attacking outside borders without justifiable cause did not pass. You have earned an extra five feet of legal land.”

“Only an extra five feet?” King Asgore looked toward Queen Toriel. “That brings us only twenty five feet in fourteen years.”

“Quite,” Queen Toriel agreed. “That is ridiculous. What about *any* of our proof?”

“While all monsters have been amiable and followed the rules correctly, the loss of six human children still has a lot of weight,” the lawyer said. “Also, the case of the missing child

who helped destroy the barrier?”

“He is a flower,” King Asgore said. “*Everything* he says is pure evil though. You can’t believe his words.”

“Uh huh. It’s just that a flower who turned into a powerful . . .” He waves his hands around. “. . . yada, yada, broke the barrier and went back to a flower? We’ve repeated this enough. He won’t give you anything good.” Lawyer checked his papers. “Instead, it’s just complaints of abuse about being used as an experiment. The only reason your scientist Alphys hasn’t faced any scrutiny is because he mysteriously disappeared months ago. Yes, while you may not want to hear it, people do believe him, and believe the disappearance could be foul play. Abuse is a large human thing.”

“It is also a large monster thing,” Queen Toriel said.

“While you say this, you do have boards for *fighting*,” the lawyer said.

“To help curb mistakes,” King Asgore said. “You must understand that. While monsters tend to fight, we *rarely* kill each other. Boards do not encourage fighting.”

“They encourage understanding,” Toriel backed him up. “Seeing inside each other, seeing the power level or what each other needs? It prevents the loss of life, it doesn’t contribute to it.”

“Uh. Yes.” Lawyer pulled out something else from his briefcase. “Then of course there is the case of the miracle child who somehow made it from the top of the imprisonment, fought the immensely powerful . . . flower,” he said with doubt, “and just disappeared.”

“He didn’t disappear,” Queen Toriel insisted.

“She didn’t disappear,” King Asgore said.

“It was a boy, Asgore.” Queen Toriel insisted again.

“I am certain still it was a girl,” King Asgore said back to his wife.

The lawyer held two fingers on the side of his face. “The fact you don’t even *know* something as simple as the gender continues to poke holes.” He scratched the side of his face gently.

“And with only a first name of ‘Frisk’, we can’t get much.”

“It’s not her fault,” King Asgore said. “All of you humans hide your full names. Why, you’ve yet to reveal your first name, Lawyer.”

“I am just following instructions,” the lawyer said. “I’m sorry, but until some real justification can be ascertained, most will not consider the pacifist child or flower theory.”

“You can see her on all the recordings,” King Asgore insisted, his voice rising but trying to stay calm.

“He is clearly on there,” Queen Toriel agreed with King Asgore. “We’ve presented this several times.”

“It may have existed down here, but there is no proof that the he or she that conquered the flower actually did anything. Look, fact is?” He closed his briefcase. “Most people believe you collected seven souls to get out, and you are lying about it.”

“We are not!” King Asgore stood up and slammed his fist down. “We are not lying. If we had taken seven souls, we would not have stopped and cooperated with you humans! We have even hired a private investigator of your kind.”

“He even said he found something,” Queen Toriel said. “A first accidental photographer. He will be here tonight to meet you and share the pictures of the child on the cliff with us.”

Lawyer didn’t look like he believed them. “Then where is he?”

“Perhaps running late?” The Queen insisted. “Please. The photographs, they should be authenticated. It should be enough.”

“If these photographs you claim he has found are real, then yes, but I’ve got to get going today. You’ve got ten minutes for him to show up,” the lawyer insisted, “before I am out of here again.”

“Ten minutes?!”

“Ten. Minutes.”

“Sans!” King Asgore roared. He turned around and faced his sentry. “You must go see PI Guy, right away.”

“Yes, Majesty.” Sans was expecting something like that. Whenever they had to do something outside of the Underground quickly, it was usually him or Papyrus, so he’d already met PI Guy more than once. Sans was actually the communique between him and the royal family when he had something.

PI Guy’s Office

“PI Guy?” He looked around. He didn’t seem to be in his office. Maybe he was at his house?

PI Guys’ House

Sans teleported to his house. He’d only been there once before, but he had the address and it was only a couple of blocks from his office. “PI Guy, yo, you here?” He looked at the walls. Photos of PI Guy and his family adorned it all around. He looked around the lower part of the house, but found nothing. When he teleported to the top of the stairs though, he saw traces of human blood on the floor.

Oh no. He looked into the room. It was a human blood bathed room, with the remains still visible. PI Guy had an open empty briefcase nearby him, and a woman from the family photos was dead lying in bed. Remembering more people in the photos, he checked the other rooms.

PI Guy. Wife. Two kids, one boy and one girl. They were all killed with human weapons. Definitely guns.

Underground: Castle

Sans teleported back. “I found PI Guy,” Sans said as he addressed King Asgore. “He’s dead in his house, and so’s his wife and kids.” He heard the queen gasp slightly, and saw that King Asgore and Lawyer were visibly shaken. It wasn’t a monster thing to get bent out of shape about death right away. If they did, then fighting would have been harder to survive for his kind.

King Asgore bowed his head. “Unfortunate.”

Sans didn’t say much. Although killing a human wasn’t a big deal, the fact that they needed him right then didn’t bode well for *why* he died. Not to mention the tragic loss of family. That was brutal and not needed. No matter whom they fought, who did that to family?

“That’s terrible news. I will summon law enforcement there right away,” the lawyer said. “Under the circumstances, I am very sorry about this news.”

“The death of innocents.” Tori closed her eyes. “He must have dug deeper than we warned him.”

“You want me to check his office?” Sans asked. He was good at digging up information. It would be a waste to go back to the house, most likely there was nothing there if the place was already ransacked, and getting himself involved in a human’s grisly ‘death scene’ could point fingers back toward the monsters. They had enough of that going on.

“Yes, Sans,” King Asgore gave him permission. “Please.”

PI Guy’s Office

Sans took off and went back to the office. He fumbled around it for a bit. Most likely, it would be a dead end too. He walked around the desk, opened drawers, but didn’t see much. However, he heard sounds from outside, and overheard one of them saying to work fast.

He simply transported himself to the side of a filing cabinet. All he needed to see was what the filthy humans were carrying.

“Check the desk and the drawers, we can’t afford to be sloppy.” The one speaking had a file with some blood on it.

Bingo. Liking the complete ease of it, yet hating the cleanup, Sans fired a single barrage of bones at them. Both of them were dead within seconds. Their souls floated above, but the goal was always to injure the body so bad, the soul couldn’t return to it. He strolled over and picked up the file. It had an interesting word on it he hadn’t seen in 14 years.

A word that caused an instant reaction to his soul. A memory trip into bad times, better times, promises, and regrets.

FRISK.

Do I have Permission to Say I Told You So?

Underground: Castle

The Lawyer refused to look through the folder Sans brought back. “This is evidence to a crime. I *have* to give this up. I can’t touch it. I can’t look at it.”

King Asgore took care of that for him. He opened the file. “Frisk Shades.” He smiled triumphantly at Queen Toriel. “The child has a last name. Shades.”

Toriel also looked over the bloody folder. “It’s pictures of the child when they first left the mountain with us. Absolute proof it existed! See?”

Sans leaned over too. After all, he got the dang things, he deserved a small peek. *Heh, the Kid*. The only human really worth saving. A young boy or girl that found its way through the Underground without killing any monsters in the process. In fact, even helping them all. Even him. He wouldn’t be the monster he’d been today without that kid.

He’d be nothing. Less than nothing. That kid helped everyone with one of their feats and became friends with many monsters.

“See?” King Asgore pointed toward the file. “Gender: Female. I knew it!”

“I always thought the child was a boy,” Queen Toriel confessed. “At least I had hoped so.”

“I can’t use anything out of there,” the lawyer insisted. “The name, the location, the pictures, I can’t use it legally now.”

“There’s an envelope clipped in here.” Queen Toriel got her hands messy in the human’s blood as she looked inside. It also didn’t matter if she was messing with ‘crime scene material’, because there was little doubt it could have helped them anyway now. “It must have contained pictures. That must mean that-“ She gasped. “Frisk!”

Oh no. Sans knew what that meant too. *No way, they found her*. Not that one.

Not. That. Human.

“Okay. Considering that, I can tell the law enforcement that they need to watch for safety over someone named Frisk Shades,” the lawyer succumbed. “They would know anyhow, once they get that crime evidence.”

“That’s not it.” Asgore held up one of the bloodiest pieces of paper that was a note. “There is also a note.” He handed it to the lawyer.

Lawyer didn’t want to touch it or read it. “None of this can be involved.”

Maybe not but Sans could already see what it said.

To Harvey:

Found the so-called Pacifist child. Not what I thought. Check out this crazy stuff! If the world only knew. They only asked for evidence of its existence so don't share this around, it could be dangerous.

"Asgore, keep digging for an address."

"I don't suggest doing that," the lawyer said. "If she does exist, then rejecting her identity would be your best shot at keeping your kingdom safe."

"It does matter." A throaty, guttural warning escaped Asgore's throat. "Rejection is a secondary action that may *not* be accepted. Nothing is more certain than the fact that you humans work everything into contracts, and try to wriggle out of anything you can too! Now. Frisk is very important to us. Not just Toriel and I, but a great deal of the Underground knew her."

"Her life could be in danger!" Toriel stood up and pointed at him. "Don't you tell us just to reject her!"

The lawyer screamed as Asgore's sword came close to his throat. "Okay, alright! Okay." He rubbed his neck as Asgore pulled the sword away. "You know, maybe the authorities can locate her number and you could call her and ask for some kind of affirmation on what she did and how she feels about it. That quote over the phone should be helpful enough if something-" He quit as he saw King Asgore's sword near his neck again. "She's an important person in the Underground and needs to be saved right now, I gotcha!"

Several addresses and names were uncovered in the folder. Sans couldn't see them, the royalty deemed it private and sent him to the other side of the room. Not making his nerves feel any better.

"Plus, being human, her testimony of how the barrier broke would undoubtedly help," the lawyer said, still trying to grasp onto legal meanings for actions being taken. "Even if she couldn't convince the world, she could get you enough property to live completely out of the mountain."

"I found something!" Queen Toriel found a small card with FRISK and an address on it. "This one, the way it stands out, it must be her address. Oh, that means . . ."

"Someone's going after the kid already." Sans shouldn't have spoken up at the meeting, but he couldn't help it. "Not *that* human."

“Not that human!” King Asgore yelled.

“Not that human!” Queen Toriel yelled too. “Oh no, Frisk. Oh my poor girl, no.”

“Someone just mercilessly killed PI Guy, and he had *that*.” Asgore said, pointing at the lawyer. “They will surely try and kill her. I need help for her, right away.” King Asgore held the address to the lawyer, but instead the address was lost in his grasp, and floated toward Sans.

Sans caught it. “On it.”

Sans didn’t wait for permission to check, and he wasn’t going to play with the lawyer. Humans dragged their feet. He teleported straight to the address and looked around. He was already stepping in human blood. *No, it better not be her blood.* Before her, he was on a downward slope, suffering from some severe depression he had hidden. She freed him.

Little boy. Little girl. It didn’t matter because he still owed it something anyhow.

Room one. The woman was much too old to be Frisk. The man on the other side of the blood soaked bed must have been the woman’s husband. *Frisks parents?* He quickly teleported within seconds to every single room in the house, to check for her. There were no other bodies.

She went down when she was eight, and it had been many years. *I have the same information they did.* They would be there, waiting to kill his little friend.

Looking around carefully around the corners, he spotted them. A pair of snipers, right in the bushes.

Were. There were a pair of snipers until Sans took them out. Knowing full well the mess of two dead humans wouldn’t help the kid out when they came home, he used his magic to set them on fire, cremating them in a matter of seconds, along with the bush and some of the grass.

Oh. Kid. He didn’t know if it would be better to set fire to the bodies upstairs or not. He didn’t know if it was her parents. Truth be told, he didn’t see a single picture of it anywhere in the house. What if they got the address wrong? He went through the house quickly, looking at anything he could.

Well, either way, those humans deserved to be hunted. Sans pulled out his phone and tried to do an internet search for Frisk Shades. *Come on, Buddy, where are you?* He got two more matches for homes, and they were not in a teleport vicinity at all. He could only reach so far.

He went back to the meeting area next to King Asgore. “Found two adult humans dead in beds,” he said, “and two more adults ready with guns outside. I hunted them.”

“Age of adults?” Tori asked him. They weren’t even going to bother with reprimanding him.

“Not her, Majesty.”

“Age!” She said again, harder.

That was weird. Did she think he was confused, like they all were about her Underground?

“At least in the human range of 40’s. There’s no confusion.”

“Oh.” Now she looked relieved. “Good because she would be in her twenties by now.”

“I don’t think it’s the human’s address,” Sans admitted. “Couldn’t find a single picture of anyone in that range. Internet searching shows two more possible addresses.”

“You can’t have that ability,” the lawyer said.

Sans ignored him. Putz probably took him for a simple guard.

“Oh, they are just going to kill everyone even *near* the name Frisk Shades?” Tori looked toward King Asgore. “What do we do, Asgore?”

“Can you reach any of the other homes?” King Asgore asked Sans.

Sans shook his head. “No Majesty, no can do. The other locations are halfway across the world.” He wished his power could go further too. Someone was tracking down Frisk, and he couldn’t do anything about it! A picture of the kid popped up in his mind. The only human worth something. Gave everyone *so much hope*. Maybe not complete freedom, but hope.

There was no fair battle for MERCY or ACT up there for it to have a chance to survive like in his world. There were no boards. Life was lost through bodies easier, not souls. Someone could just aim their dumb human weapon and end its life in one stroke! “Permission to Hunt.”

Queen Toriel glanced at him, almost straight on. “Sans the Skeleton? Are you taking Papyrus with you?”

“No.”

Queen Toriel looked toward Asgore.

“Any monster found out there doing anything against a human will look bad,” the lawyer disagreed. “Even with this proof we have, and I imagine the word ‘Hunt’ does not mean good things.”

“It does not mean good things at all. It means killing while stranding souls.” King Asgore said.

“Stranding souls?”

“We would not absorb them, it would just cause problems. So, we ‘hunt’. Your souls are strong, but your bodies are weak. Destroy the body enough and the soul cannot reenter into it.”

“They are going after Frisk, they must be stopped! If he wishes to do it, I give permission to Hunt,” Queen Toriel agreed.

“Permission to *Hunt*,” Sans said again. “With Undyne.”

“Hm.” King Asgore looked toward the bloody folder again. “How many addresses?”

“Two more, on the other side of the world,” Sans said as he gave him the phone. “Majesty.” He tried to stay proper, but the longer he took, the worse chance Frisk had. “They probably have multiple snipers being sent out at once to those addresses soon. We need to move on it, quickly, or the human that helped us is as good as dead.”

“Undyne will go,” King Asgore agreed. “Sans, you only have one hit point with no backup.”

“Down *here*,” Sans confessed. “It don’t matter up there. That’s not the way it works up there.” They had to get moving! “I will watch myself, King Asgore.”

King Asgore looked toward Queen Toriel and then back toward him. “Sans, I know you made friends with the little human the best, but we really need-“

“I can dodge, I can roll, I can use my magic to scoot it out of the way or keep things from hitting it and-“

“King Asgore is not denying that you are a good fighter,” Queen Toriel said, “but without backup, you are as fragile as a human.”

Sans might have only had one hit point, something akin to what a human on the surface could take, but he could dish out the damage before anyone got close to him. “No one is close to Undyne in power in the Royal guard, so if we can only send two, send me.” He was dead serious, couldn’t they see it? He had regrets he needed to fix.

“Well? Power does come greatest for those we care about,” King Asgore admitted to Sans. “We don’t have time to squabble about this. Get Undyne, give her the other authorization card and come back here.”

Sans quickly teleported to the cliff to tell Undyne, and he took a shortcut right back to the king.

“Listen,” King Asgore warned them. “I can only do this *once*. As far away as the addresses are, this is going to take a *lot* of power.” His body started to turn red. “These addresses are over oceans.”

“Oceans,” Undyne breathed. “That is far, Majesty.”

“We *gotta* do it,” Sans said. “That kid went through hell to save us, we owe it back.” He looked toward Undyne. “We’ve got to try.”

“Agreed. The Royal Guard will help guard with Papyrus while you are away, Sans.” King Asgore held out Sans’ phone. “Stay in touch.” Sans took his phone back. “Now, do not transport me with you, only Undyne. It will need to go to two separate places,” he whispered coming closer to them so that the Lawyer couldn’t hear. “You will automatically be brought back within one hour, so that I don’t lose you. Make sure you have her.”

Two places at once. This was going to be tough. Across oceans, two separate locations. Even someone as powerful as the king, that would take great power, and only for so long. He was going to boomerang it. “This is a one-shot deal.”

“Agreed,” King Asgore said. “Find her and bring her back safely.”

“Agreed!” Undyne said. She grabbed Sans’ hand along with King Asgore’s. “I know the address number, Majesty. If it’s not exact, I vow to find my way out there!”

Sans simply nodded. This wasn’t a time for cracking a joke, or any declarations. They needed to move. *Now.*

“On the count of three, I will release my power into you, and at the count of four, teleport,” the King commanded. “One. Two. Three!”

One second later, Sans and Undyne disappeared in a large purple explosion.

Frisk’s Hometown: The Plaza Mall

“Frisk, can I try that color?” Maxie asked as they walked on the outside of the plaza. Their town was too small for a real big mall. It was a gaggle of outlet stores built in one area, so it was kind of like an outdoor mall.

“Sure.” Frisk handed her cousin her new lipstick. “Where to next?” Frisk asked as she looked at her compact to try and check her new lipstick. “Is it too red?”

“No such thing as too red on you, Frisk,” Gloria said from her other side. “Just like orange always looks good on me.”

Frisk gave it to Gloria, nobody could wear the color orange like her friend. She tried wearing orange once and it clashed so bad. “Chinese?”

“No, no way on Chinese,” Gloria said. “Runs through me too quick. Hey, let’s stop at that new little place.”

“Oh no way,” Maxie said. “Gargles? No way. It’s dog puke. Trust me. What do you want, Frisk?”

“Is there a burger joint around here?” Frisk asked both of them. “I mean, let’s go to a good restaurant that serves burgers. Monarchs is good.” Maxie handed Frisk her lipstick back. She placed it back in her purse and smiled at the next window display.

It was so nice to be on break from college. That day she got to hang out with her cousin and her best friend, having a nice day out. They didn’t get to do that all the time so they were having all out fun. They ate meatball sandwiches for lunch, tried on dresses that were too expensive to buy, each bought a fun new outfit, and then got a couple of MAKEUPYOURSOU brand lipsticks from a small boutique they liked.

It was getting late though. Frisk reached into her purse and texted her aunt.

“Do you really have to text her everywhere you go?” Gloria complained. “As long as I write ‘I’m alive’, my mom buys it when she texts me,” she chuckled.

“They are just a little cautious with me,” Frisk admitted.

“Oh yeah, reasons,” Maxie said casually. “For me, they just want me to text when I spend money. So much fairer, right?”

“Yeah. Reasons.” Like Frisk’s family being killed in front of her. Like her mother lying naked and dead. The screaming. How she ever even got out was a mystery to her. Somehow she was on a log, and then free. Her extended family took care of her and said it was some kind of repression. She had even dreamed of strange monsters that seemed to emotionally help her get from the log, to the freedom off the mountain. Able to fight for herself. A voice . . .

Frisk texted ‘Going to Monarchs’. She never wanted to stop and think about it long. “After this, then what? Is anyone tired?” Frisk asked.

“Shoot no, end it on a movie, cuzz,” Maxie insisted. “It’s not every day we get to do this, and we haven’t seen a movie altogether in forever.”

That is true. Frisk texted her aunt again. ‘Maxie and I are seeing a movie after Monarchs.’

“Frisk, have you got a text back from my mom yet?” Maxie asked. “She’s usually real quick when I tell her how much I spent, and I did go over what I wanted to spend.” She groaned. “I really *loved* that outfit though.”

“Maxie, you’ve eyed that outfit the last ten times we went into that place,” Frisk said. “You earned your money and you wanted the outfit. You don’t have anything to feel guilty about. Tell your mom the truth. The truth is the best.”

“Then why isn’t mom texting back at all?” Maxie asked.

“Maybe she’s doing dishes. Maybe she’s in the bathroom.”

“I text from the bathroom all the time,” Gloria said, “and I also have it beside me while I’m doing dishes streaming music.”

“She hasn’t texted in over an hour,” Maxie noticed. “Damn. I think she’s mad at me for spending so much. I should probably get home soon.”

“What about Monarchs?” Frisk asked. “Oh, come on. Your mom can’t be that mad about it. She knows you’ve been eyeing that outfit too,” Frisk tried to reason with her little cousin.

“Well, truthfully?” Maxie squealed. “I may kind of sort of had a date planned already to come with us?”

“But you weren’t going to say?” Ooh. Frisk rolled her eyes. “Maxie. Is it with Brent?”

“Maybe.”

“You know your dad doesn’t like him.”

“Which is why . . . we had an all-girls day?” Maxie wiggled her fingers. “Please? My mom doesn’t mind him, you know that, Frisk.”

Gloria wiggled her fingers back. “I guess we could maybe lie?” She looked toward Frisk. “What do you think?”

“I think Brent is a bad influence on her.” Frisk looked toward her disapprovingly. “You took our fun day and turned me into a scapegoat to see a boy?”

“I know, Frisk, I know, but I really like him. I don’t care that him and dad don’t see eye to eye. Mom doesn’t mind too much, and she’s already covering for me,” Maxie reasoned. “Oh, please, please?”

Frisk felt betrayed. She looked away and then back to Maxie. “Tell your dad you like Brent. Discuss him. I mean it.”

“Fine. Okay, I’ll tell him next week. Saturday. I promise,” Maxie smiled. “Thanks, Frisk! I’ll meet you at Monarchs with Brent. I’ll go home and get dressed into something a little spicier, then I guess I’ll see if mom is mad at me or not.” Her sister ran off to her own car.

“She spent fifty dollars over her limit and she involved *us* in a lie.” Gloria sighed. “I wish I was that brave.”

Frisk stretched her arms upward. “It’s her life, but I’m only keeping silent if she keeps her end of the deal. Are we both driving to Monarchs, or my car or your car?”

“Monarchs is on the other side of town,” Gloria complained. “How about we just pick up some popcorn, pop, and candy at the movie instead? We could even see it sooner then. Besides, she’s going to be glomping on Brent anyway.”

“That’s not a good dinner you know,” Frisk chuckled.

“Oh come on.” Gloria wrapped her arm around Frisk and tugged her over. “Eating some junkfood at the movies for supper for one night isn’t going to kill us you know.”

At Frisk's home . . .

Damn. Not again. Human blood. Sans couldn't quickly teleport from room to room this time though, King Asgore had a boomerang effect on it he didn't want to set off. He followed the bloody trail into the kitchen. There was a body there in front of the sink. The sink was full of dishes. Actually, there wasn't just a body.

Sans trotted over to it. "You alive, human?" He waved in front of her face. Her chest was moving extra fast. She was covered in blood on the front, and in the process of dying. He doubted she could even speak. He went and called the human's aid number. If it could save her, it would help. He stepped over her and continued to look around the house as he was on the phone.

There was one room with two beds, and another room that had games, and another room that looked more like a woman's than a kid's. No toys. Male posters. Was this hers? "Where are ya, Pal?" Sans pulled out his cell and called up Undyne. "Any luck?"

"I'm here. It's a bloodbath in here. Two child humans, both boys, and a full grown human female. The female's ID says Frisk Shades and that she's 38. I am checking for anyone else here. You?"

"One almost body that was doing dishes," Sans said. "Empty rooms. This must be the one then."

"Fine. Keep me informed of what happens. I will see if I can't serve any kind of justice here."

"Got it." Sans hung up his phone and rubbed his mandible. "Kid. Kid, kid, kid." He went back toward the kitchen toward the body of the woman.

Still breathing heavy. Still alive. Good sign. "Are you Frisk's mom?" He doubted she could talk, but it would be good to know. "Do you know where she is?" No, she wasn't going to be able to help with that. He looked around her and spotted her phone. He opened it up and started scrolling through the messages. "Monarchs?"

"Mom?"

Another human? Was it Frisk?

"Mom, I just came to change real quick. Frisk, Gloria, and I are heading to Monarchs for dinner, then we're going to see a movie."

Sans watched the human go right past the kitchen. He followed her to her room. While she was looking in her closet he called to her. "Where's Frisk?" He even tried not to use the word human.

Didn't matter. When she turned around she started to scream. He moved over toward her, trying to close her mouth slightly with his magic. Not enough to hurt, just enough to make her get quieter. "Look, someone's going after my old pal, alright? And Sorry, but your mom's almost dead in the kitchen." She screamed again, against his magic. "Hey, it wasn't me, and I called for an ambulance." She ran out of the room. "You know, that's not a good idea."

Sans headed back to the kitchen. The human was crying over what was probably her mom. *Sorry, human. A time and place. It's not now.* "I need a ride to Monarchs. These people are after Frisk. They won't stop until they kill her." Not functioning. The human was too deep into her grieving. Useless. Once he memorized the way to Monarchs he put his phone back up.

He felt around the pockets of the dying lady for some keys. He'd have to drive himself.

"Don't touch her, you monster!"

Sans didn't have much time, and he really didn't have time to deal with scared humans right now. They were impractical and unpredictable. "Gimme your keys. Now." Frisk was about to die if he didn't get to her, and she was blaming him and mourning in a time she had no right to. The lady wasn't even dead, and there was still a possibility she could survive. Geez, humans.

That's when he heard a honking outside.

"Ready for the movies, babe?!"

"No, Brent, run!" Frisk's sister yelled with all her might.

Sans headed outside. The flashing red lights of an ambulance had already been coming. Those guys were quick. He needed to move out of there.

The human that yelled about the movies was on a motorcycle. Just like every other human out there, he freaked out when he saw him. He got off his motorcycle, stumbled and took off down the road. *Who says chivalry's dead?*

Screw looking for keys or messing with paramedics, he had an engine already purring. He didn't even worry about the height, just kept it stable with his magic and took off. First he'd go to Monarchs since that's what the mom's phone and her sister said. If there was no luck there, he'd try the movies. That was the second place she should go.

Before he even reached Monarchs, he could see all the cops and human ambulances lined up around it. "Ah naw, pal." He changed directions and went to the movies. Frisk might already be dead. As much effort as they put in, the humans who wanted her, shot up an entire restaurant full of humans.

He couldn't think about it. Think about the past or get caught up in emotion. *Not yet.* One more place to check. Not very long and he'd be boomeranged back to the king. No time.

No time.

Movie Theatre

“That movie was sucking,” Gloria said to Frisk. “I can’t believe it even made it to theatres. We should have gone to see that romantic comedy instead.”

Frisk shrugged. They couldn’t take it anymore and walked out of the movie. “It’s fine. Let’s just go home and stream something.” She looked back toward Gloria with a wink as she bent backward a bit and held up her candy bar and popcorn. “Still got supper.”

But then. Gloria wasn’t smiling at the joke as a red mark on her dress appeared and she fell straight down. Frisk’s popcorn and candy bar dropped as she moved her body down to the ground and started to crawl for cover. If the shooter was close enough, she was dead. If he was far, she had a chance if she could hide from the one shooting at her.

It wasn’t the best cover, a mailbox, and she knew that as she felt the sparks around her. Glancing to her left, she saw Gloria on the ground. Wounded, yelling, but alive. She was lucky. She saw people jiggling in air as they were getting riddled with bullets.

Frisk couldn’t process why right now. She needed to process survival. Also, why she was covered in blood on her side, and why she was dizzy. Before she could think of a plan though, she heard a metallic domino effect. What was that? She also heard a strange sound, almost like a voice.

Sans had heard the sounds at the movie theatre and saw the explosion of fire power. In Frisk fashion, he could tell she found safety for her body and soul behind a mailbox as the bullets ricocheted off of it. He held his bony hand up and started making the guns heavy and drop like dominoes out of their hands.

He went as close as he could to the mailbox. Stopping wouldn’t be bright, there were still several firing, time was running out and there was blood behind the mailbox. He saw the top of her familiar head and using his magic power, snagged her and brought her to the bike.

With her now safe, Sans was sending any bullets shot straight back in the other direction, firing at the same humans who were shooting at her. Served them right! He moved out of there as quickly as he could, but felt the boomerang effect happening.

One minute he was running from the fire power, and the next he was in the safety of the castle, about to crash into the back wall. He turned the bike on its side and used the breaks with his own magic to stop the bike in time.

He looked back and saw Toriel and Asgore, stunned. “So, Majesties?” He turned off the bike. “Do I have permission to say I told you so?”

Toriel and Asgore both gave him a light nod, but the jest didn't last.

Frisk was bleeding. Badly.

Invisible Chain

Underground: Castle

Toriel kept her hand on the wound. “Just so fragile, they are just so fragile.” She tried to pour healing magic through it.

“Come on,” Undyne urged her. “You can do it. You fought me, you can do this.”

“There is a lot of blood loss,” Alphys had to say. “They hurt her body not her soul.”

“Come on, Frisk,” Toriel tried harder. “It must have hit one of the human’s sensitive organs.”

“Oh.” Papyrus shared a look with Sans. “Is the human going to die?”

“I hope not, Pap,” Sans said, patting his backbone. “Just a few minutes earlier.”

“We tried,” Undyne insisted to Sans. “We moved as fast as we could.”

Toriel’s hands were absolutely soaked. “She is going to die.” Asgore tried to touch her shoulder, but she rejected it. “She did the one thing no one else could. Fourteen years ago, she freed us. She allowed us all to see the skies and stars again.”

Undyne saluted Frisk, while Alphys got out a handkerchief. Papyrus also saluted but with manifested tears in his eyes.

“Goodbye, poor human,” Papyrus said. Then afterward. “Goodbye, Frisk.”

“That kid really knew how to drive ratings!” Mettaton cried out as he span around.

“Goodbyyyyye, human!”

Sans stayed silent. He didn’t salute or cry, or even give a goodbye.

“We will give her the finest funeral, worthy of her spirit.” Asgore closed her eyes. “Her soul will be leaving this body soon. Let it wander in its freedom until it finds it's own way.”

Everyone in the room tried not to cry too hard. It wasn’t right to get overzealous until at least the body was dead. However, everyone felt so close to the human, even fourteen years later. She changed each of them for the better.

Everyone wept. Said some small goodbyes. Except Sans.

“Brother?” Papyrus sniffled. “You liked the little human too. You even went out hunting underneath my nose for her!” he complained. “You should say goodbye too.”

Sans scratched his skull. He walked toward her. "Her soul's leaving soon." He tapped his slippered foot.

"Yes," Papyrus whispered to him. "Say goodbye, Sans."

Kid. I owe you. I ignored you toward the end, I didn't want to deal with it. I didn't like dealing with things. But, I've changed a lot since the last time I saw you. For the better. Sans looked at her closed eyes. She was a lot different than before. No visual deceiving, this was her. He glanced toward Toriel who refused to take any comfort by the king.

Frisk started to glow red. *I could let it go. Say goodbye, and let it go. Then wonder how I'll sleep at night, just like with Princess Chara.* "Can't." Sans looked at Papyrus. "Can't."

"You have to, Sans," Papyrus said gently. "There is nothing left."

Yeah. There was.

Everyone shouted at first when Sans shoved his bony hand into Frisk's wound.

"No, Brother!" Papyrus tried to move him as Sans magic poured into the human's wound. Deep signals of blue shined through her body, mixed with red deep in her veins.

He removed his hand and took several steps backward, holding his bony hand. It appeared to be cracked and bleeding.

"Sans!" Papyrus grabbed his bony hand. "What did you do?!"

"I'm okay." Sans looked at his bony hand briefly, then looked back at her. The wound was closing. He looked back at his hand. The tingles were gone. "I'm fine. She is going to totally see to-marrow."

"What was that?" Toriel, Undyne, Alphys, and Asgore all rushed to his aid.

Sans gestured to Frisk, hoping that would work. "Frisk isn't dying. Round of applause?" he looked toward his bony hand again, and seeing the crack had sealed up, tried clapping with it. Good. "See? Okay? Go see her?"

Undyne approached Frisk first, along with Alphys, and then Toriel and Asgore.

"The human lives? But, even I couldn't do anything." Toriel focused on Sans. "What did you do?"

"Something risky." Papyrus looked disapprovingly at Sans. "What was that? What did you do?"

“Everything was fine,” Sans assured him. But, he knew it was coming. The looks. They knew. “It’s not what you think.”

“What. What was that?” Asgore asked steadily.

“She’s gonna live,” Sans said again. “Be fine.” He shook his hand, completely recovered. “Me too. Yay?”

Nope. No yay.

Sans covered his skull with his hand. *Oh no. Here it comes.*

“Sans? Why . . .” Toriel could barely speak. “Why didn’t you do that for the princess?”

“Could that have ended your life?” Asgore asked, bringing the other question around in the way Sans didn’t want to deal with it. “Was it risky?”

They already knew of his ability to judge, so it was time to come out with it. “Princess Chara . . .” *Their little girl, dying, leading to Asriel’s . . .* Nah, screw the truth. He did enough for them. “Yeah, it does risk my life.” He tapped his slippered foot lightly.

“Oh.” Toriel still seemed . . . disturbed by what he did, but at least the lie of ‘risking his life’ kind of helped. “You risked your life for Frisk?”

“Hey, we wouldn’t be here today without her,” Sans said.

“But if it was risky, you shouldn’t have done it!” Papyrus yelled. “What if it had hurt you? Permanently! What if you had your bone marrow dripping out permanently!”

“Oh, well then I would have died.” No, no time for that grisly joke. “I knew enough now so the risk was lower.” Sans gestured to Frisk. “Come on, Papyrus, I hunted for her, I couldn’t just let her go.”

“Thank you, Sans, for your courage,” Asgore said, commending him. The sting of Chara was apparently fading. “Frisk made a large difference in the entire Underground.”

Frisk started to moan.

Frisk groaned, hanging on as tight as possible to whoever saved her. Her vision was strange. It was like looking through frozen ice. Colors could be seen, but nothing definite. The sound was almost animalish. Others sounded a bit . . . slimyish. Then, she felt herself being moved, but she could have sworn it was a furry feeling. Fur. And, eeh, a little slimy on the other side of her? *What’s going on? What am I touching?* What was wrong with her sight? What were the strange sounds she kept hearing? Why was she wet and sticky? Over and over. What was that? Then she finally heard something she recognized.

“Understand this one?”

That voice. It was almost . . . familiar. Deep. More relaxed in its manner. Frisk looked through the icy vision to see who it had been. She heard the same sound again, but with a strange language she didn't understand.

"Found the language."

There it was again. What was that? Frisk put her hands out, trying to feel around. *Who's there?* The voice she recognized was heard again, but it spoke in the other language once again.

"Nobody. Touch her," Sans insisted. She wasn't dying anymore. She was wide awake and feeling around and alive. Very alive. Her emotions were strangling. She couldn't see very well at all, but Sans and Papyrus could clearly judge her, and see into her. In fact, Sans made his brother move back some, not liking the wallop he was feeling.

"Sans?" Toriel asked as she finished sealing up the wound. "What's wrong with her?"

Sans could only graze the top of the strangling feelings, but it was enough to feel, and at least get some sense of what was going on. "She doesn't remember us. She can't speak monster. She can't even see down here. She's . . ." He closed his eye sockets. "I don't know. There's a lot of hurt on top of her soul. I can't get through, so just nobody touch her."

"How can she not speak Monster?" Toriel asked. "She spoke it perfectly fine last time. Oh no, wait. She never talked. But she communicated."

"Telepathically, which isn't a big human thing." Sans moved slowly around her. Oh, he knew they should have got her back when she was still a kid! "Looks like a human soul must have clawed onto hers."

"But they were all with Asgore, completely far away," Toriel insisted as she watched Frisk move her arms around.

"Souls can be mobile, if the body is," Asgore said, looking back toward Toriel. He swallowed.

Toriel's eyes widened. "Her?" She stepped more away from Frisk. "But. But even so, a fallen soul with no body? They can't do anything, they never can. They fade away."

"There is a barrier around us," Asgore said softly. "The others were contained but perhaps . . ."

Toriel sniffled lightly as she wiped her eyes. "Humans. Such. Odd creatures." She took a deep breath. "For an outer soul to even interact with another, let alone speak and-and . . ."

"Yup." Sans approached Frisk again. He spoke in her language again. "You okay, Frisk? You remember me?"

Frisk grabbed at her head. “Who are you? Where are you?”

“Sans,” he continued speaking to her, but purposefully forgot his last name. He had a deep feeling he was getting closer to knowing what was going on. “You didn’t forget me, did you?”

Frisk turned her head, and closed her eyes before reopening them. “No, that’s . . . no. Impossible.”

“Very possible,” he said to her again.

“No. No, you’re just in my head,” Frisk touched her forehead. “No. That’s not . . . what’s happening?”

“Hey, Kid? You know, you never told us *why* you fell down in the mountain in the first place?” Sans asked, waiting for her response.

“Huh?!” She stopped standing and moved toward the ground, feeling around on it. “I-I don’t want to talk . . . where am I, am I in a session? I am *not* in a session again, I don’t have sessions anymore! Where am I?”

Sans moved back to speaking monster to the others. “Yeah, it’s bad. She repressed us.” Sans closed his eyes and shook his head. “Something happened up on that surface to make her fall in the first place. Then, what with another soul inside of her sharing her body, fighting to keep her soul against so many . . .”

“She doesn’t remember us.” Toriel held her eyes over the human that was touching around the floor, trying to find safety. “You were right, Sans, we should have brought her back much sooner.”

“At least she’s safe,” Asgore said to Toriel, trying to hold her hand in comfort. “The human is safe now.”

“Physically, but-“

Frisk got up off the ground and started to run out of the castle.

“Somebody got their eyesight back,” Sans remarked. “Papyrus, you take left. I’ll take right.”

This is impossible, it’s in my head, it’s in my head, its in my head! Frisk tried to run away toward the only light source she could see.

“Stop right there, Human!”

Frisk froze as she saw a skeleton about her size just ahead of her.

“It’s alright!” He tried to say. “I am using your language to tell you that there is nothing to fear, human.”

It. Talked. She took several steps backward. *There is some kind of skeleton talking to me . . .* How was that happening? *I was leaving the theatre with Gloria. We were attacked. Someone grabbed me on a bike.* She looked down at her side, it felt wet and sticky. *Blood?!*

“Blood stopped, don’t worry. Come on, Punk, you have to remember us.”

Frisk couldn’t help a small squeal. A fish, it was a fish?! Talking to her, seafood. Seafood was talking to her. *Did somebody drug me? Is someone trying to steal my kidney or something?*

“That’s Undyne,” the skeleton said. “I’m Papyrus. Don’t you remember?”

Undyne. Papyrus. Those names. The names from her dreams? *That was all in my head. The whole journey, it was in my head.* “You’re not real!” Frisk pointed at them. “I won’t regress. I know this isn’t real. I dreamed you up to get out of the situation as a child! No, I refuse to believe that you are real!”

“It’s definitely the same human. Rebelling spirit is the same,” Undyne joked to Papyrus. She looked back at Frisk. “We are very real, human! Don’t you remember our grand battle?”

Frisk stumbled back. She touched the blood all over her. It felt real. It felt so real.

“You aren’t regressing, human,” Papyrus also added. “You were in deep trouble, and as your friends, Undyne and my brother went after you.”

“After me?” *After me.* “The bike. Who was on that bike?”

“You know, deep down in your bones, Frisk.”

That voice. The first one that spoke. Frisk turned around and saw him.

Sans the Skeleton. He didn’t look like how she used to picture him in her head. How . . . how her unconscious voice described it. He didn’t wear a thick blue coat with a white shirt and black shorts. He was wearing a jean jacket, a black shirt with a skull that said something like ‘joke time’. It was hard to tell since the jean jacket hid it. He wasn’t wearing shorts either, he was wearing black pants. The slippers though, the odd placed slippers. That was still the same. And they weren’t close to the same size as last time, he was much shorter. Of course, she’d been 8. Still?

Why would her conscious ‘update’ that look? She looked back toward Papyrus. He was wearing a simple shirt and jeans. Undyne was wearing shirt and jeans. Frisk turned to look back toward Sans again.

“Coming back to you now, Pal?” Sans asked.

Frisk held her finger up, trembling. She pointed toward him. “Bike.”

“There ya go, that’s a start,” Sans said to her. “That there’s a **bone-ified** start.”

Bone-ified. Bad punning. That’s. It’s. “Aw Damn.”

She fainted.

“Frisk? Frisk, are you waking up?”

A gentler voice. Frisk looked beside her and saw the world’s biggest most massive goat. Wearing a purple shirt and jeans. Okay? “Ummm . . .”

“Do you remember me now?” she asked.

“ . . . Toriel?”

“Yes, yes that’s my name.” She sat closer next to her. “Do you remember the Underground now?”

“It was symbolism. A way to . . . you, you were supposed to . . .” Frisk swallowed. “What’s going on?”

“Well, you were under attack I’m afraid,” Toriel revealed to her. She took her hand in her big large paw in a gesture of comfort. Surprisingly, Frisk found she didn’t flinch. “There are things I need to discuss with you, but for now as troubled as you have been, you simply need to know this. Underground is your home now.”

“But. I don’t belong here,” Frisk said, trying to stand up. “I can’t stay here. I have to get back to my Aunt and my cousin.”

“Oh. No,” Toriel said. “That can’t happen this time. You have to stay, it’s for your own good.”

“Déjà vu. Somehow. Look, I don’t remember everything,” Frisk said as she stood up, looking around the room. “I was supposed to forget all this. It was in my mind, this, I shouldn’t remember anything. It’s dreams. It’s . . . spotty.”

“It happened.” Toriel tried to follow her. “What do you remember?”

“I don’t know, I don’t even know. I remember . . . a voice,” Frisk said. “A comforting voice. She did so much for me. And.” Tears were welling up in her eyes. “And she’s gone. I’m alone this time. I can’t be here, not here. I have to go.”

“Your life is in danger out there,” Toriel warned her. “I can’t just let you leave.”

“I have to.” Frisk darted to the door, swinging it open and down the stairs. Familiar. Familiar. Familiar. Run. Run. Run. Move. Move. Move.

She had ran as fast as she could, not even caring if Toriel chased her. Not the mountain, she had to get off the mountain.

“No can do.”

Frisk stopped as she saw Sans the Skeleton appear in front of her. She took a few steps back, trying to figure out how to pass him. What did he want? What did he like? Who was he again? “Puzzle guy.”

“Normally known as Sans,” he corrected her, “but good to see your memory returning a bit. Now, turn back around. You can’t leave.”

What was it about that one? Hmm. I have to get out, what was it? How did he fight? All of the monsters, they all fought. Fought and fought. Nothing but fighting until the tide turned. How did . . . strengths. Weaknesses. Undyne was a spear. Alphys, her lab. Toriel, fireball like, I . . .

He just stood there, staring right back at her. *What is he doing?*

“Still not quite there yet with me, huh?” Sans asked her. “Eh, it’ll come. When it does, we can finally talk. Until then, doesn’t matter. You can’t go any farther.”

No way. She was getting through. There was light just on the other side of him. *A distraction, I need a distraction.* She looked on the ground, remembering something else. “Flowey. Asriel.” Yellow flowers. Golden flowers.

Frisk just realized she was outside the Castle, right next to the throne. There was a long gap behind Sans and then light. “Barrier.”

“Fell,” Sans said. “Remembering everything but me. Kind of hurtful so far, Kid.”

Kid. Kid. Kid. Kid. You’d be dead where you stand. Frisk took a step backward from him, and then another, and then ran in a different direction. Only to find him appearing in front of her again.

“Okay, clearly wrong memories,” Sans said. “I sense a lot of fear in you, Frisk. I’m betting I know what you remembered.” Frisk watched him take a step forward with his slippered foot, but she took back off in the other direction. *Light, light, light, light, light!*

When she reached the light, she gasped as she saw several hundred humans with their weapons aimed at her!

Sans appeared in front of her, and she felt herself being scooted back. Somehow. She tried to grasp the ground, but she kept moving. “Looks like I forgot something too. Your DETERMINATION always was through the roof.”

Frisk felt herself on the ground, then back on the castle floor.

“Oh, Frisk. Let’s get you cleaned up now that you’re feeling better.” Toriel didn’t even seem surprised she ran. “Come on.”

“I can’t stay. I won’t stay.” Frisk tried to run again, but this time, she couldn’t. Instead, she heard a chuckle.

“I really forgot the whole DETERMINATION thing. You were a real skull ache, Frisk.” Sans appeared in front of her. She looked her enemy in the eye, knowing she shouldn’t back down. “Now, why don’t you be a good girl and . . .”

The eye sockets. For some reason, he had strange lights in them. He twitched them ever so slightly at her. She couldn’t turn away from them, they were almost hypnotic. They moved slightly up, then down, then slowly back up. Then, behind solid teeth she heard something in a strange language again.

“Sans!”

Sans broke his gaze at Frisk, hearing Toriel. He rescued her, she ran, and ran again. She was always moving, always twitching. He couldn’t help it. He had a chance to really study her. Her eyes were a beautiful blue color, almost a turquoise. They stared at him with a sense of wonder. She was staring back at his eye sockets as much as he was staring at her.

Seeing what he was missing now that he slowed Frisk down, he stole a quick glance downward. Her clothes were ripped and covered with blood, but he stared at the strange skin of the human above the bloody parts. She was breathing heavily, causing her chest to move up and down. Besides her clothes being ripped on that shot, the simple buttons didn’t all survive that shootout. Decently covered, but from so close he could see the top shape of her cleavage and trailed upward to the throat, then the funny lips, right back to the eyes that refused to back down.

“Sans, for the last time, will you *leave* so I can take care of the human?” Toriel insisted. “The blood and ripped dress should be repaired, and perhaps if I explain why she must stay, she’ll quit running? Just, stand outside the door and I will holler if I need you? Please?”

“Oh. Sure.” Sans disappeared before he aggravated the queen anymore.

Sans took his position back outside, his Royal Guard dog replacements now free. Papyrus was on the other side.

“The human is quick,” Papyrus noted. “Much quicker than before. We will have to start watching behind us for her fast footsteps too. Last thing we need is her coming out and surprising these humans again.” Yet, he smiled at Sans. “Good job, Brother. I know it had some risk, but you really saved a life today.”

“Tweren’t nothing,” Sans played it off. Although, it was something. Not to be boasting about, but he felt like a debt had finally been repaid correctly. “I just had a **heart** of gold today.” His playful little joke made Papyrus groan, but it didn’t bother him too much. Sans didn’t overdo it. It just felt like a good time for a good pun.

He didn’t have to strive to make puns as much as he used to. When his humor broke loose, it was free flowing and natural. In the past, being sealed up in a mountain, laughter and jokes

helped carry him through it heavier. It helped carry others through it too, especially at Grillby's.

Yep. Technically, he saved her twice today. Debt definitely repaid. He still wanted to talk to her, to clear the air, but he couldn't do that until she really remembered more about him. "What do you want for supper? Make or Take?"

Even though Monsters couldn't roam too far from home, there were exceptions. There was a gateway authorization card that Sans and Undyne used that day. It allowed them to go anywhere in the world, for as long as they needed to. (Well, okay, humans would get mad after like a whole week.) Then there were the temporary pass cards. Pass cards could bring out twenty monsters a day, but only at an already arranged location.

Since there were a ton of potential 'customers' stuck in one area, there was definitely always something in their favor. Everybody wanted a profit, and take out of just about any kind could be had around there. From food to clothing. Usually boxes were collected on the outskirts at the bottom a few times a day.

With all the added advancements, Papyrus quickly understood what he was doing wrong with spaghetti, and he hadn't cooked inedible spaghetti in years. He was actually a decent cook now who fixed an assortment of food. "It has been a stressful day," Papyrus noted. "I suppose we can order out. What should we go for?"

"Traditional?" Sans suggested.

"You mean from inside the Underground?" Papyrus asked. "G and M? Reservations are at least two hours long."

Grillby's and Mettaton's, thanks to being able to purchase on the outside of the Underground, also changed. Since they were always inside the Underground, in fact the only establishments that could be inside, they were both a rival to be reckoned with. However, monsters being monsters, they joined forces instead and set up three establishments. They were each built more like the old Mettaton's including hotel space, but they also had hot tubs, swimming pools, and of course access to streaming programs, with anything by Mettaton being free and the rest had a 'luxury charge' to it.

Thank goodness though they still had their classic menu. There was nothing else out there that would ever compare to the goodness of an old fashioned Grillby burger and fry. "Yeah, let's do it. I'm a little nostalgic tonight."

"Hm. From the human?" Papyrus asked.

"Think so." San's pulled up the sleeve on his jacket and looked at his watch. "I saved the human twice. Think we can get off early on good behavior?"

Papyrus grinned. "I bet that can be arranged. Which location?"

"G and M 3. Mettaton's old place."

Toriel looked toward Frisk. She was staring down at her lap, no longer running. "I am sorry. I had no idea what treachery could come about for a simple proclamation. I only wanted--"

"--to protect me," Frisk answered her. "Protecting a young child from the outside world. How strange. Over fourteen years of running, I end up right back here."

"Fourteen years of running?" Toriel asked. "From the mountain. Frisk? How did you fall in?"

Frisk closed her eyes. *No. I can't do that anymore.* She opened her eyes back up. "What about my aunt and cousin, the people I used to live with?"

"Oh. Sans said your 'mom', I suppose that would be your Aunt, wasn't in good condition," Toriel confessed.

"Did she die?" Frisk asked. "My cousin?"

"Your cousin wasn't hurt," Toriel said. "Not when Sans was there. Whether something happened afterward is a question."

"No, it's not." Frisk stood up. "I can't leave them out there like that, they are targets. I need to get back to them."

"The human authorities are already watching over them," Toriel assured her. "You see, Frisk, even though we are only permitted so far, we are in a way integrated. As you just witnessed, Sans legally came after you. There are also passes for others. There are a lot of rules, but even things being brought in? There is so much that has changed since you were a child."

They continued to speak when Alphys came in the room.

Lab. Frisk looked at Alphys. "You were responsible for Mettaton?"

"Uh. Yes. Uh." Alphys looked toward the queen. "This is all sudden for you, so if you want, you could come stay with me at the lab tonight?"

"Tempting as it is, the castle is not the brightest place for you to be," Toriel said to Frisk. "If you promise to stop running, I think Alphys would be a good place for the night?"

"Are you sure someone is watching over them?" Frisk asked the queen. "Who saved me? Who shot me?"

"Human. You have been through a great deal." Toriel patted her shoulder. "Tomorrow, a better explanation will be given. Please go with Alphys?"

Frisk looked toward the yellow monster. *I want to get out of here, but there is trouble waiting for me. Humans with weapons. My family is at risk because of me.* A resolution tomorrow from Toriel. Right now, she'd go with Alphys. She needed food and rest.

Then she could dig up more.

Alphys Lab: Bedroom

“I know it’s not the greatest living place,” Alphys said to Frisk. “It’s nicer than it used to be though. And, it’s closer to G and M 3, so it feels less lonely when you look out the window. So? Do you want to eat anything for supper? We can order out. We can order just about anything.”

“Is my aunt all right?” Frisk asked her. “Has anyone been able to find out anything?”

“Not yet. Humans don’t generously extend information,” Alphys said.

“Do you know who shot me?” Frisk asked, trying to see if at least she would cave tonight.

“No, um, I assume bad guys?” Alphys gestured to her side. “It’ll get better. Toriel is already putting in an order for new . . .”

Frisk tried to hold onto a bed as she felt herself moving backwards. The bed scooted with her, and almost bumped into the next bed if Frisk didn’t let go. She tried grabbing onto the ground, but it was no better. “Alphys, what’s happening? Alphys?!”

“I-I don’t know,” Alphys confessed. “I don’t know, Frisk.”

Frisk kept moving backwards, until she reached the wall. Then, it all stopped. She couldn’t move forward though. What was going on?

Compliment Soul

Chapter Notes

This isn't the cool Gaster from Reckoning Tale. He's dark and evil.

Near G and M 3.

“Ooh, I think a steak and lobster would be perfect for the night,” Papyrus said. “I mean, if we are going to the G and M, we might as well live it up. Oh, and a lovely pop with ice. Then for desert, ooh, a Mississippi mud pie! What about you, Sans?”

“Classic Grillby burger,” Sans said, “and a classic fry with a regular chocolate shake.”

“The classic menu is even more expensive than the steak and lobster,” Papyrus complained.

Sans shrugged. “Hey, if we are going to the fancy schmancy, then why not-?” He stopped. More like he was stopped. “Hey. Papyrus, hang on.” Sans looked around him. What the heck? He tried to take another step forward. “Kaaaaay?”

Papyrus stopped. “What’s wrong?”

“It’s like I’m stuck, like I’m chained to something.” Sans moved backwards and felt fine. He moved back forward again, and once again, felt chained. “I can’t move forward.”

Papyrus tried to help him with his magic, tugging on him. “Why can’t you move?”

Sans felt his phone ring. He stopped trying to break free long enough to answer. “Sup?”

“Sans? I called Toriel and Asgore, and they said if anyone. Well, I mean. Not that I’m blaming you. But. Are you doing something to Frisk? She keeps . . . well, her body can’t move from the wall?”

“Ohh.” Uh oh. Sans knew there was a reason no skeletons liked to do what he did. Human and monster. Risky. “What happens when I do this?” Sans moved backwards more and lifted his foot.

“She gained some freedom, but her foot is still pulled backwards,” Alphys said on the phone. “What’s going on?”

Sans looked ahead of him. G and M was the location of the old Mettaton’s place years ago. “I’m not quite sure, Alphys, give me a sec.” Sans looked toward Papyrus. “Hey. How far

does our magic extend?”

“Ours? I don’t know,” Papyrus said. He conjured a bone and threw it in a clear path, holding onto it as far as he could. “About the new part of Alphys laboratory?”

“Uh.” Oops. Sans moved back toward the phone. “Where are you right now, Alphys?”

“In my bedroom.”

“Lab-wise, where is it? You got a big lab, Alphys, throw me a bone on this one.” Because Sans was beginning to think he couldn’t.

“Um. It’s closer to G and M 3? I can see it out my window.”

“Were you walking with Frisk for awhile?”

“Yes.”

“Okay, yeah.” Yeah. He got it. “If it wasn’t for me, she’d be dead. Let’s all just remember that?”

“Sans?” Alphys sounded concerned. “What’s wrong?”

“Uh. I’ll be right over to the lab soon, leave the door close to G and M open for me.” Sans hung up and looked at Papyrus. “The human is attached to me magically.”

“What?” Papyrus blinked. “We don’t tie to other things, Sans.”

“Kind of did.” Sans scratched his skull. “My magic’s flowing through her veins.”

“Oh. Well, that shouldn’t be a problem,” Papyrus said. “Once you distance yourself far enough, the magic leaves what it was doing and comes back.” He tried to tug on Sans again. “Usually. What’s different?”

“Cause it was my own marrow,” Sans reminded him. “That’s, um . . .”

“Wait.”

“Yeah . . .”

“Wait, what?”

“Yeah.” Sans tried to conjure a bone with his magic. No luck. “Marrow in Frisk makes her my bone.”

“Is this as bad as I think it is, Sans?” Papyrus asked.

“I don’t know. Look, I hardly knew about it. I had to do something.” Sans groaned. “Pap, go home and get the book on skeleton magic in the bookcase.” Sans waited for him to come back. He read the part he needed briefly. “Yikesarooney.”

“What did you do?” Papyrus read the section. “Sharing marrow ties a monster’s life force into another’s and is not recommended for this reason. In the rare case of human and monster crossover, the human will behave . . . like the monster’s magic.”

Sans was rubbing his eye sockets over and over. “My magic considers Frisk conjured.”

“Oh. My. She is attached to your magic?!” Papyrus tried to pull San’s body again. No go.

“Okay, stop, that’s pulling her into a wall,” Sans warned him. “Let me see that book again.” He read deeper into all the precautions. “Human veins will hold it for six months. Kay. As long as I don’t do it again, it sounds like it’ll end in six months.”

“You are tied. To a human. For six months?” Papyrus looked at the back of Sans and backward, then at the book again. “Warning: It is not recommended to turn humans into your weapons, as the gravitational pull will shorten little by little, until touching before the release. Will be touching . . .” Papyrus smiled as he got it. “Oh, I get it. You’ll become like a.” He stopped smiling. “You’re in a Chinese finger trap, Sans.”

Sans looked through the book, reading the entire section completely over. “Yeah, I knew there was a bad idea in this somewhere.” He looked back toward the light of the lab that was on up high in the new area. There was a great amount of distance still, but little by little? “We gotta go see Frisk. I can’t lay my **finger** on it, but maybe if I skip to the touching part it’ll loosen this **trap** and let go like a real one.”

Frisk was soon able to pull away from the wall. “Okay. That was weird.” What was she saying? The whole day was weird. “Alphys? How many monsters will know my language?”

“Well, Toriel. Sans. Papyrus. Me. Undyne. Uh. Mettaton might, he exposed himself a lot to the outside world,” Alphys said counting on her digits. “I don’t know if anyone else would. Maybe. We’re quick studiers, and you speak a major language, which made it easier.” Alphys came closer. “Do you . . . do you remember more now?”

Frisk stared at her. “I’ve dreamed of it over and over. Dreamland is invading my reality.” She saw Alphys expression. “Yes. I remember a good portion of what I think happened. I was eight though, and under severe . . . stress,” she settled on. “There’s no telling if it’s all accurate, or if I was told accurately in my head about what was going on.”

“That’s some good news, Frisk.”

Frisk didn’t move as she heard Sans voice. The friend that was never a friend. The one that was there only because of a promise made to Toriel. That’s what she remembered. But was it true?

Sans and Papyrus came in the room.

“We are here to try something,” Papyrus said, apologizing to Alphys. “After this, we should be out of your way. Sans?”

Sans approached her steadily. “So? I saved your life today. Twice, actually,” he said. “First? What do you remember of me now?”

Frisk wasn’t falling for anything from him. “Papyrus was in charge of the puzzles and you hung around him. You were lazy, addicted to puns, but somehow a keeper of promises, even though you hated them.”

His little light guiders in his eyes stared at her. “Yeah, you remember. Great. So? I’ve had something on my chest I wanted to say for fourteen years.” He looked toward Alphys and Papyrus. “Could you give me a sec alone with her?”

Frisk watched Papyrus and Alphys leave. She watched the skeleton in front of her. He felt different. Something felt very different. His bony hand gestured between them. “After you rescued us, I didn’t really ever say what I should have. Which was Thanks, Frisk,” he said. “Thanks for giving us a chance.”

Fourteen years for just that? “Your welcome then.”

“Nah, nah. You don’t get it,” Sans said again. “We were trapped in a hell. No sunlight. No skies. A deep, dark, abyss that everyone felt miserable in. We made enough progress to survive, but that’s it. Day in and day out, I couldn’t do anything except keep out ‘humans’ who never came. There was never a threat. There wasn’t even a real meaning behind anything we all did. We went through motions.”

He stepped closer. “Alphys got much better. Not the bravest around, but she speaks up now. Speaks her mind when she’s gotta say something. Gets out of that lab better too. Undyne learned how to express herself a little easier without a spear all the time.” He took another step closer. “My bro? You letting him lead you out, talking to him through the phone, it really gave him a sense of accomplishment that he needed. Mettaton realized there was more to life than just ratings, and he stays loyal to the programming of Underground.”

Another step closer. “Toriel, she came back out to the castle. She isn’t with King Asgore, but she doesn’t run away from her responsibility anymore. Asgore’s learned how to work with her too, giving her some say.”

He took one more step closer. “It’s true. We don’t have the exact same freedom we all wish we had, but look around? Everything was able to change. And whenever we crave the outside, we can go outside. Before, none of it was possible without you. So, you know? I’m sorry I never explained that right.”

Oh. Frisk understood now. There was no reason to fear him, or wonder about his allegiance anymore. When she first met him, he was a little kooky. Punny. He felt . . . safer. Then the Grillby burger he treated her too. The black eye telescope joke. The fried snow. The hotdog stacking. It was fine, and it felt like she had someone watching her back. Then, came Mettaton’s. When he admitted to letting her live simply because someone loved her and he was keeping a promise to them. That someone was Toriel.

Everything he had done before then, and after, was casted with a shadow of doubt. He wasn’t a friend, he was a monster that let her keep living because of a promise. The jokey, funny,

easy going friend she thought she had only left her alive, and kept watch, because of a promise. Not because he cared about a poor child who fell at all.

Saving me twice and this apology. The only thing that held Sans back now was the regret of that simple action of thanks. “I didn’t mean to come down and be a hero,” Frisk answered. “I simply did what I felt was right. The only thing I really wanted was to just get out.” She felt his eye sockets on her again. “Thanks for saving my life. Twice, I guess.”

He stuck his bony hands in his pockets. “Great. Cause now I gotta tell you, you’ve just become my bone.”

What? Frisk watched him continued to approach her.

“Wanted to get that out of the way so you didn’t think I was trying to kill ya.” His hand grabbed hers. “That blood on your dress was from a fatal wound. I had to use my own bone marrow to fix it, but now we are linked,” he said as he grabbed her other hand. “The reason you were being pulled against the wall was because I was walking away further. The wall stopped me though too. We are in an unbeatable game of Tug of War.”

Tug of War? “I can’t break free of you because of marrow?”

“It flows through your veins for six months,” Sans said. “Only hope is pressing close together. See, according to my book.” He pulled his slipper right next to her human shoe. “Over time, we are going to get pulled closer and closer, and then released. Like a fingertrap. So, if we try this now, maybe it will bust.” He pulled his other slipper next to her other human shoe.

Frisk started to glow blue. “Okay, that’s not normal.”

“That’s a good sign.” Sans flattened his arms against hers. “Come on, Frisk, I saved you twice and bore my soul in words, how about a little help here? Bend down some.”

Frisk bent her head down and pressed it next to his skull. He tried pressing his bony legs along hers. The blue glow sped up and Frisk felt herself starting to shake involuntarily.

“Okay, that’s not good!” Sans tried to let go, but it was like he was stuck now. Frisk’s veins were glowing . . . and he could see blood coming out of her skin from them. At least fifty spots were cut. “Shit!”

Too early. Untested. Damn it! As her wound started to bleed again as well, he reup his bony hand on it. They would just have to deal with the six month chain. This time though, she wasn’t silent, she was screaming.

It was hurting her. “Sorry, human, but you want to live, dontcha?!” He watched as Papyrus and Alphys came into the room. This time the whole room was pulsing in a blue light.

“Sans, I don’t know about this!” Papyrus yelled. “What happens if you do this twice? This is already different!” He was holding the book and going through the pages, looking for the answer with Alphys. It was tough though, the blue magic was spinning rushing wind around

the room. “Sans, Brother! If you succeed this time . . .” The wind picked up so much, Papyrus’ voice became unintelligible over it.

Sans continued to hold on, not knowing what to do. She was pulsing so much, even his eye sockets couldn’t handle the intense blue. Warmth was beating off her like a heartbeat, then a cool beat, then a warm beat. “Just hang on!” It had to be nearly over.

Then, an intense burst of blue later, Sans felt her fall on him. Except, she was about as big as him, with turquoise blue hair that matched her eyes. “Yikes. Pap?” Sans looked toward his brother as he held the smaller than usual human down. “What did it say about a second time?”

Papyrus came over and handed him the book. “It says Warning. Don’t do it a second time.”

“Anything else?” Sans took the book from him and looked at it. He placed Frisk down on the ground and moved back away toward Papyrus.

“Well. She lived?” Papyrus said, not knowing what to say. “Guess we should figure out what this did. Let’s go see if we can eat now, and then we can find some old monster tomes that explain this tomorrow. They must exist out there somewhere.”

“Yeah, good idea. Human’s had a hell of a day.” Sans looked toward Alphys. “Got shot at. Trapped Underground. Hair turned colors. Better let her just rest. We’ll talk more tomorrow.”

“Or, if we can’t make it to G and M 3 again,” Papyrus added.

“Or yeah, that.”

Alphys went toward the side of the bed and picked Frisk up. “You are easier to handle now, aren’t you?” She moved her toward the bed. “What an awful day for you, Frisk. It’ll get better. I promise.” She looked out the window and watched Sans and Papyrus head to G and M 3. They were reaching further this time. “Everything will be okay. We’ll get contracts sorted out, somehow, now that you’re here? Maybe signing certain things will help. Until then, you are more than welcome to the Underground.” She went over to the light switch and shut off the light before crawling in her separate bed.

G and M 3 . . .

What a day. A little more exciting than the usual, but that was okay. The human was safe, sound, and he finally got his regrets lifted about how that day ended a long time ago. She would need a lot of sleep after that second rendition of taking his marrow. And, it definitely did something different to her body, but at least she wasn’t attached anymore.

I mean, he didn’t hate the human, but he only saved it because he owed it. The whole Underground owed it’s future to her. He didn’t mind the kid back then, and he didn’t mind

the human now. Well, except for its escapes using all its DETERMINATION. Seriously annoying.

“Maybe the book was overreacting?” Papyrus said as he started to eat his steak. “Or maybe what happened was what was supposed to happen right before the hold broke? Clearly the hold is broken now.”

“Yep, I’m eating and away,” Sans replied as he placed a fry in his mouth. “I don’t know. She survived. I’m sure it’ll be alright. We’ll look in on it tomorrow. You going to need your catsup?” He reached over for Papyrus’ catsup.

They moved onto different subjects of interest while they ate.

Frisk woke up in the middle of the night, feel extremely funky. She got up and headed toward the window, looking out of it. *Why do I keep ending up in here when tragedy strikes?* She wiped a tear away. She was doing just fine in her life until somebody had to find her and drag her down. It wasn’t fair. *I’m just an ordinary girl. Why does this kind of thing have to happen with me? Going to college. My life was on track. Now, I don’t even know if my Uncle, Aunt, or Cousin is alive.* In fact, not one soul even mentioned her Uncle Gaster. *Aunt Ida. Cousin Maxie. Uncle Gaster.*

She watched as blue sugar seemed to drop from her fingernails. What was happening now? *It’s not fair! I just want to know if they are okay. Why can’t I know if they are okay? I just wish-*

Frisk’s Aunt’s Home . . .

“-I could know.” Frisk finished her thought out loud as the lab disappeared. What? She was in her Aunt and Uncle’s home?

“Frisk?”

“Uncle Gaster?” Frisk turned around and launched herself straight into his waiting arms. “Uncle Gaster! Where’s Aunt Ida? Where’s Maxie?”

Her Uncle Gaster bent down toward her. “Ida is in the hospital, but she’s going to be okay. Maxie is just fine. Come this way.”

Frisk followed her Uncle Gaster into his basement. “What are we doing? Uncle Gaster?”

“Everything will be fine. Fine, just fine,” her Uncle Gaster said. “Go ahead and sit up in this chair. Go on now.”

Frisk did what she was told. “Where’s Maxie? Can I see her?”

“Not yet, not yet. I knew Sans would end up doing this if things got bad,” her Uncle Gaster said. “I just need to correct this mistake, and then you can go back to the Underground.”

“How do you know Sans?” Frisk tried to get up, but a presence made her continue to sit. She struggled. “What’s going on?”

“Don’t worry. Don’t worry,” Her Uncle Gaster assured her. “I appreciate all the help you gave the monsters. Now, only one more thing is needed.” Her Uncle Gaster’s appearance changed from a human to a skeleton. A cracked skeleton.

Frisk started to yell as she felt something sucking at her. *My soul? Something is sucking at my soul?!* “Let me go!”

“I’m sorry, Frisk, but this must be.”

“Gaster?!”

Sans’ voice? Frisk tried to struggle harder. Help wasn’t far away.

“Not this time, Sans.” Gaster held his hand out toward Frisk. “You don’t understand the importance of this.”

“Importance of what?!” Sans pushed his power back on Frisk. Gaster was trying to take her soul. “What are you even doing alive? What are you doing out here? Why are you bothering this human?”

“Why do you have to question?” Gaster growled. “Go back. It’s one human, just leave her to me.”

“Can’t do that.” Sans didn’t let go of his force on Frisk, but held his other bony hand out to Gaster.

“Do you have any idea what it’s like? What it’s *like*?” He snarled at Sans. “I exist in so many timelines at once. I couldn’t stay anywhere, nowhere! Constantly moving, small flashes, it was hell! Never ending, no way to die, and no way to live. Until her.”

“I don’t know what happened,” Sans confessed to him. “You’re a brilliant dude though, and you know that you shouldn’t be trying to absorb a human’s soul. What good is that supposed to do ya?”

“I’m not just absorbing a simple soul, Sans. Honestly. Stop. Turn around, and forget you saw me.” Gaster pointed at Frisk. “I am solving the problem. Go.”

“Uncle Gaster!” Frisk yelled. “Please let me go! Please!”

“No. I really don’t have much concern to help you. You were good, and that is good,” Gaster said to her. “But not good enough.”

“So, your wife didn’t die, right?” Sans asked him.

“A whole battalion lit both her and her daughter up,” Gaster said. “Thanks for your concern. Please, Sans. *Go*. Live that beautiful future you’ve attained.”

“A part of me wants to,” Sans confessed. “I mean I saved a human twice today, not counting the second bone marrow incident. If that counts, three. That’s way over a tolerable limit.”

“She’s not worth it. Let it go. Get out of here.”

“Ya see? Maybe I could have. Except that you are trying to suck out her soul, which is a big no-no, and oh yeah? If *you* are involved in something, it’s never that good.” Sans stood his ground as he came closer. “I’m sorry for what happened. I’m sorry no one remembers you but Papyrus and I. Taking a human soul though, especially that human, it’s not something I can just let happen.”

“Well, you’re going to have to!” Gaster held up his hand and started to blow Sans backward. Sans tried hard to stand his ground against his power.

“Gaster, stop!” Sans yelled at him as his jean jacket rippled through the rushing of power. “I’m only here by Asgore’s power you know! You do this, there won’t be a rock to hide under from him!”

“If you don’t let this go, your entire life will change,” Gaster warned him. “Everything. You see.”

Frisk yelled as her soul was getting sucked out more. It shined brightly in front of her, beating red and . . . blue?

“Blue.” Sans didn’t understand. “She doesn’t know anything about monsters, how is she like that?” Sans watched Gaster try to keep tearing it out, but he held his magic against him. “Gaster! She’s infused with who?!”

“The only one who could stop all the torture.” Gaster started to lessen his hold on her. “You.”

“I just did marrow,” Sans said. “Just marrow. Just marrow!” He yelled. He looked toward the human. The smaller human that he couldn’t figure out.

“Marrow was the last thing I needed,” Gaster said calmly to him. “I was able to gain samples of your soul and Magic DNA. We ran a lab together, it wasn’t that hard. Or don’t you remember?”

Sans breathed softly. “No right, you had no right.”

“Exactly. So just let me have her infused soul,” Gaster begged. “I need back out. I want a place again!”

“How are you here right now?” Sans asked. “Why can’t you be happy with what you have?”

“Short-term!” Gaster yelled. “After Princess Chara left Frisk’s soul, a tiny piece of my soul that was left in that dimension found a way to attach to it. Her soul is too powerful to take though, so I couldn’t have her body. As she went home, I learned about the outside world, and I attached to a new body. A weaker body. It’s still only a weak human body.” He gestured back to Frisk. “Her strong soul is what I need, but I needed something else to it.”

“Skeleton DNA,” Sans said knowingly. “You’re the one who squealed the information. You’re the reason she got shot, and I had to give her marrow.” He tapped his slippers. “You always were on the creepy side.”

“Unhand her!” Undyne yelled as she came charging in.

“He’s too powerful, he’ll have to stop himself,” Sans said to Undyne. “This is Gaster.”

“The . . . mythical one?” Undyne asked.

“Mythical. Mythical!” Gaster laughed insanely. “See?! I don’t even exist.” He looked at the hole in his hand, which was cracking more. “Even with a body, I never exist.”

“Who married Frisk?” Undyne pointed toward her soul. She growled at Gaster. “Was it you? Did you hurt our human?”

“It wasn’t like that.” Sans knew he was getting closer. Gaster was already starting to split. “Why me?”

“The human,” Gaster admitted. “A hundred timelines. Fusion between her and the Princess Chara. She was too scared from what happened above, and in every other timeline, she gave into that fear. I watched, over and over, in 99 different ways for her fear to make itself known by fighting and killing. Only in the hundredth did she make it through as a pacifist.” He gestured to Sans. “Her body is weak, a hit point of 1 but her soul is so STRONG with Determination. But, you? Your soul is a hit point of 1 but your magic body is so STRONG. She’s a perfect compliment now.”

“Almost perfect, but not quiiii-iiiiite!”

Sans watched as flowery vines started to wrap around the exposed soul.

Flowey revealed his flower petals right above her chair. “You can’t have that.” His petaly face turned evil looking. “Do you know what a perfect compliment soul is equal too?” He growled at Gaster with his darkest face yet. “Eight Human *Souls*. It’s the strongest thing in the universe!”

Undyne held her spear and Sans watched. This was bad news.

Bad news.

“Back off you little flower,” Gaster warned him as he started to break more. He tried to reach for the soul, but Flowey was keeping it more back.

“Ah, ah, ah!” Flowey cackled. “So, Sans! What do you think of your wife? Are you going to honor and obey this little human who killed and hunted the monster race in 99 other timelines?”

“You’re knowledgeable too?” Gaster asked him.

“More knowledgeable than you can imagine,” Flowey said darkly. “It ends now. Smiley Idiot, I’m waiting for an aaaaanswer?!”

Ninety nine others? Wife? *I shouldn’t run from responsibility, but this isn’t my responsibility!* He didn’t even know that human that well. He saved her because of what she did, and because she wasn’t too bad. But? *I haven’t laid eyes on this human for fourteen years. Back then, she was eight!*

“Think I got my answer,” Flowey said to him. “So, Frisk is open for more than one.”

Frisk winced and scrunched her fingers together as thorns started to pierce around her soul.

“No you fool, what are you doing?!” Gaster shrieked. “She’ll be incompatible to me!”

“But perfect for *me*,” Flowey said. “A strong SOUL, a strong BODY MAGIC, and now an even more incredible amount of DETERMINATION infused with her! Do some of that extraneous math, boys! What do you have?”

Light started to flood the room and Sans, Undyne, and Gaster all watched as Flowey changed his shape.

Into Asriel. Frisk’s soul was no longer seen. “Sorry, Gaster.”

“Prince Asriel.” He was all grown up, no longer a little kid. Sans looked toward Undyne. What could they do?

“Ah, don’t fret. He’s just gonna break-see, there ya go.” Asriel gestured toward Gaster who started to disintegrate. “He’ll be fine. Well, I mean he’s dead, but he’ll be happier than busted up through time. In the meantime?” Asriel smiled at Frisk. “More than enough soul power to share with her loving husband. Wakey, wakey, honey?”

“That’s illegal ingestion!” Sans yelled at him, barely stopping himself from charging.

“You didn’t want her,” Asriel reminded him. “I gave myself to her soul too, so it was legal.” His paw brushed her face as she groaned. “Howdy, Frisk? Merry Sunshine?” He lifted her up into his arms.

“If you think you can wreak havoc upon the world this time, you’re mistaken!” Undyne yelled as she held out her spear. “I will take you down with my life!”

“Havoc?” Asriel shook his head. “No. No Havoc.”

Sans felt a strange anger fester inside of him. *No, calm down. It’s like someone taking your weapon and using it against you. It’s nothing more than that.* “Pretty sure you caused havoc

last time?”

“Pretty sure I broke the barrier for everyone last time,” Asriel corrected him. “Then, I was transformed again. I still held the memories though, and I still held enough DETERMINATION to do what I needed too. Don’t worry! I’m not going to wreak havoc or you’d already be dead.” He held Frisk closer. “I just needed my body back, and with the sweetest human across a hundred timelines, I got it back. Thanks, dear.” He nuzzled her nose with his.

“Don’t do that!” Sans grabbed his skull. *Weapon. Someone is just touching your weapon. Let it go.*

“Curb it.” Asriel gave him a deep warning. “Let’s go home, shall we?”

My Son and Sans! Lucky Girl?

Royal Castle . . .

Toriel and Asgore just stared.

Asriel simply smiled.

No one else knew how to react. At first cries of joy and excitement and tear shedding were all over the place. Then Asriel explained how he was back. And now, the excitement wasn't so exciting.

"Come on, really?" Asriel continued to hold the unconscious Frisk. "I haven't done anything. I even broke the barrier. I'm not a flower anymore."

"You . . . married a human?" Toriel said slowly.

"The sweetest human I could, mom." Asriel increased his grip delicately. "Even after everything I did to her, she still wanted to give me a hug all those years ago. I fell for her that day on. Even as an evil flower, I had to track her. I knew she was my destiny. In more ways than one."

"But . . ." Undyne looked toward Sans. She leaned over and downward. "She's *your* wife, Sans. Asriel shouldn't count."

"But Sans is married to her too?" Asgore said this time. "The human is married to a skeleton and my son."

"No." Asriel snorted as he looked toward Sans. "He didn't remark when I asked, so he didn't *care*."

"It doesn't change that status," Asgore informed his son. "Sans need to legally and formally revoke her before the status is changed."

"It won't be enough forever. Enough wooing and no amount of matter exchange will be enough to be considered."

Sans was continually tapping his slippered foot. Papyrus was starting to stare at him. So was Undyne. *Mine was 1-1, equal, that soul was bursting with my energy, he just sort of slipped in there with hardly anything, piercing her forcefully, legally she's . . .* Papyrus was still looking at him. "What? What?!"

"Legally, according to the information." Asgore looked toward Toriel. "She is Sans the Skeleton's."

“She fused with Sans, completely, and you secondarily laid claim to her soul power to restore yourself,” Toriel finished. “Asriel. I love you, but . . .” She gestured toward Frisk. “Look at her. The hair and the size. She is teeming with his magic properties.”

“Sans?” Undyne whispered. “You have a wife. Speak it.”

“Nuh uh.” Sans shook his head. “His.”

“She has more of your power,” Papyrus pointed out. “Much, much more. We should bring her home. She’s yours.”

“But.” Sans fidgeted. “I don’t even know her.” His voice was grinding. “This wasn’t my choice.”

“Well? At least we don’t have to worry about outside influence as much?” Asgore tried to smile to his wife. “Dear? What do you think? She has proved herself highly worthy of taking care of the Underground when she freed it.”

“This hasn’t happened in thousands of years. Having more than one husband.” Toriel looked toward Sans and back toward Asriel. “Back then, things were different.” She moved toward her son and placed a hand on her shoulder. “There are several different kingdoms out there of the humans. To protect your wife, you must find out each and every way they could get their hands on her, and close it down.”

“I’ll keep my wife extra close and safe, I promise.” Asriel nuzzled her nose again.

You’re not supposed to do that while she’s just lying unconscious you stupid former . . .
Papyrus was eyeing him again.

“Sans, you need to speak up for yourself,” Papyrus warned her. “If you don’t. There’s a young monster out there ready to spread his seeds. At *least* offer a counter. The human doesn’t deserve that.”

“Don’t do that, Asriel.” Asgore approached his son. “I know that you were young when we lost you. You need to learn many things, like nuzzling is a two way thing. You shouldn’t nuzzle when your wife is unconscious. Understood?”

“Oh.” Asriel nodded. “Understood.” He smiled. “She’s just fun to nuzzle.”

“We can’t do it by the exact book.” Asgore shared a look with Toriel. “We aren’t going to keep separate husbands. We do not share wives or children anymore like the old days. Not without free will.”

“Free will is a very good thing,” Undyne spoke up for Frisk. “Choice is much freer. As tempting as it may be highnesses.” Undyne held up her spear and bowed. “Frisk will feel better with choice, instead of having it chosen for her.”

“Well, of course. Everyone here is free, including Frisk.” Toriel touched her delicate hand.

“Choice of door number one or door number one isn’t tapping on freedom’s door,” Sans said to them. He was starting to get the hint of what Papyrus said. If he didn’t do something, Frisk was gonna be gifted to the Prince. If he had no other husband to worry about, she would be deemed an actual Princess, and nothing in the world could remove her from that position.

Meanwhile, if she just had him as a husband . . . once they figured out a solution for the outside, he could let her go. Asriel, would never grant that for her.

“There you go,” Papyrus said softly. “Just a little bolder, Sans.”

“As wonderful as my son is, it wouldn’t be right to simply choose him.” Toriel smiled at the human. “As long as she is safe, that is all that should matter. Oh but my, she would make a fine queen one day.” She looked at Asriel. “And my son, my son who came back to me! You will be a fine king one day.” Tears welled up in her eyes again as she gave him another hug.

“It’s okay, mom. I’m sure with my wife and I, we can really get some property out there. Oh, and we should hold some kind of ceremony for her Aunt Ida and her Cousin Maxie. She loved them very much, and they were her only family now. Gaster married into it only about five years ago.” Asriel didn’t nuzzle her on the nose, instead laying his head next to hers. “Her father was killed and her mother and sister were savagely beaten, abused, and brutally murdered right above the mountain fourteen years ago. She was seeking death to escape, that’s why she plunged down the hole. She kept her eyes closed but heard the whole thing, went through many years of therapy.”

Damn. Poor girl. And yet? *Graceful much? I’m sure she’s happy to have everyone knowing that.* Tactful? Gone. *Papyrus is right. I’m really the only one that can bust Frisk out of. . . whatever the hell Asriel is planning.* Was he a monster that was trying to find his way and only blinded by instinct? Or did the wiley flower still inhabit him, and he was making double sure her soul was his to keep?

“She will make a fine queen.” Asriel looked toward Sans. “Just have him denounce her. It’s that simple.”

“Don’t do it, Sans,” Papyrus warned him.

“Papyrus is right, that human is in real trouble. I mean, not like death trouble? But marriage?” Undyne shivered. “I would never stop running.”

“Now. You can’t force anything upon anyone.” Toriel looked toward Sans. “Including marriage. So, it’s up to you, Sans. No pressure.”

Sure, no pressure. Outwardly asking him if he’d denounce her right then and there?

“Come on, Smiley Idiot.” Asriel looked back toward his mom as she gave him a stern look. “Sans the Skeleton, you don’t want her. Just denounce her so we don’t have to go through this whole charade.”

“What day’s the formal ceremony of announcement?” Sans asked.

“Probably a couple months. Maybe a month, it depends on how fast we can seem to work it in, while yet giving an air of dignity.”

Bingo.

“You can’t have that. A celebration of love is only announced after one husband is here,” Toriel corrected her son. “Plus, Frisk is not even awake yet. She would need to grant permission.”

“Yes. But, she will be. She’ll be part of everything. I will help her,” Asriel nodded toward his mother. “We’ll help each other heal. We were practically made for each other.” He nuzzled the top of her head. “My poor little wife.”

“An affectionate husband. Ooh, I always knew you would be someone so wonderful when you were growing up.” Toriel kissed the side of his furry cheek. “My sweet Asriel.”

“Hey, sweet Asriel?” Sans called him out. He was getting tired of the bullshit. “How long did you know that Gaster was interacting and changing Frisk again? You know, to be my wife, she needed more than marrow. She needed soul energy. She needed magic energy.” Sans didn’t lift his eye sockets from the goat. “Marrow though, it could only be had two ways. The first wasn’t ever gonna happen, and the second was a life-saving move.”

“I didn’t know what he was up to,” Asriel told Sans. “Are you trying to implement your prince into something?”

“It does seem rather strange,” Papyrus backed him up. “The mythical Gaster, knowing exactly where Frisk had been, and yet not a peep from you?”

“I was an evil flower. I couldn’t do certain things, think certain ways. I was filled with DETERMINATION,” Asriel reminded him.

“Yeah, probably to destroy the universe stealing Frisk’s soul, ‘til you remembered yourself,” Sans said. “Then, that ‘affection’ started. It’s called instinct Kid, not love, learn the difference.”

“Don’t call me Kid, Smiley Trashbag!” Asriel shouted at him.

“Ooh?” Sans tapped his slipper once. “So affectionate this one.”

“Draw the line, Gentlemonsters,” Asgore spoke between them. “Instinct is very strong, in *both* of you right now. It is the reason that the woman decides. She is not influenced by instinct. Any foul play to get her to choose you over the other will automatically make the other the winner. Now. I believe until Frisk makes a choice, twenty four hours to each?” Asgore looked toward Toriel. “Is that agreeable?”

“Yes, twenty four hours,” Toriel agreed. “You can then exchange right here at the castle, in the traditional fashion of lifting your wife from one to the other *honorably*.”

“Every day until Frisk is ready to consummate willingly, without any foul play, with one of them,” Asgore said. “After that, then there will be only one husband.”

“True. Consummation will certainly overpower most of the other’s claim on her soul.” Toriel looked toward Asriel. “Agreed?”

Asriel sighed but muttered his agreeance.

“Sans the Skeleton?” Toriel asked. “Agreed? Or, do you want to formally denounce her and skip this?”

Sans rubbed his skull. “Fine.”

“Is that fine for skipping on your part, or are you agreeing?” Toriel asked confused. “I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have joined those two together in one sentence.”

“In agreeance to the twenty four hours.” Sans watched as Asgore left the room and came back with shackles. *Oh yeah, not even playing around this time.* Toriel approached him. “What?”

“Don’t worry, those are just a precaution only if she tries to escape. Being Frisk, no doubt she will at some point. And please don’t worry about how it ends.” Toriel whispered to him. “Once one power conquers the power of the other inside her soul, those instinctive feelings of possessiveness you now have will all but stop. I promise.”

Sans didn’t say anything. Not like he wanted to win anyway. For one, the prize was a human. For two, who wanted a wife mucking life up? For three? He was up against a powerful, rich, smooth-talking, gentle and charismatic prince. He was just a sentry. Regardless of everything though, the monster instinct in him still spoke up before he could turn it off. “Unless I’m the one who wins her.”

Toriel didn’t know how to take that. “Well, of course. I wasn’t insinuating anything.”

“Yeah? How come you keep using wife and husband with your dear old son, but with me it’s just been ‘Sans’ and ‘Frisk’?”

“He has a point,” Papyrus said, “especially considering Asriel joined power on the outside, *forcefully* on her soul, not the inside like Sans.” He scoffed. “If it wasn’t for royalty, Sans would be taking her home.”

Toriel looked shocked at Papyrus and Sans. “Truly? We have grown as a society, and we cannot play the same rules that we did thousands of years ago. This is a fairly odd occurrence, and we are all trying to handle it equally.”

“Didn’t see you asking Asriel to denounce her,” Sans came back again.

“Well, I.” Toriel moaned. “Please, Sans, you didn’t seem like the type to . . . well, want to deal with a wife. Meanwhile, Asriel is learning about life, and he’s trying to cling onto something.”

“Yeah, something he shouldn’t be clinging too tight. This was an accident, Tori, and what you’re doing is already . . .” Nah, nah, he couldn’t say that outwardly.

“Bullshit,” Undyne muttered for him. She acted like she cleared her throat.

Frisk moaned slightly, opening her eyes slowly. She was in someone’s arms. *Uncle Gaster. Sans. Uhh?* The person holding her was a goat monster?

“Good to see you awake.” Toriel came into view next to the other goat monster. “You remember Asriel?”

Oooh, did she. Her eyes went extremely wide and she curled in on herself.

“It’s okay, I’m not here to hurt you,” Asriel said. “You remember me, right? You hugged me?”

Oh. The good Asriel? Frisk untightened herself and looked around. Was she injured again? “Am I okay?”

“Absolutely, no harm done,” Asriel answered.

“That means she probably wants down then.”

Sans’ voice. He didn’t sound too happy. *Oh come on, I’ve been out, now what did I do?* “If I’m not hurt, could you put me down?” Frisk felt herself being moved down, but Asriel was holding hands with her now. *Okay. Friend ‘til the end guy.* That wasn’t the only thing wrong. Her dress was dragging on the floor, and everything seemed higher. *Wait, did I shrink?*

“Does anyone know what just happened? I was at Alphys, and then I was with my Uncle Gaster.” She automatically looked toward Toriel and Asgore. As she did that, she noticed a tendril of hair in her face. *Blue? Blue hair?*

“I infused with you,” Asriel answered instead. “I gave you my power so you could fight your Uncle, who was trying to take your soul.”

“Infused?” Frisk had no idea what that meant. “My Uncle’s dead? He attacked me?”

“Yes, he said toodles to life,” Asriel answered. “You’re safe with me now, Frisk.”

“Oh? Thanks.” Frisk looked back toward Toriel. “Your son is back? That’s good news.”

“It is,” Toriel said with joy as she went back over to kiss her son. “It truly is.”

“Yeah. Just came with a heavy price we had to pay.”

Frisk looked toward Sans’ again who was speaking out in a corner. *He is not happy with me right now, I can see that clearly. What happened again?* “Where’s Alphys? I don’t want her to think I ran off. Is she still at the lab?”

“Yes. Hectic night,” Asgore said coming toward Frisk. “Before you go to bed, you need to know a few things.”

“Humans want to kill me,” Frisk said. “Humans want to use me to gain the Monster Kingdom. It’s probably going to take a ton of contracts before I can leave safely. What do we need to add to it? Why my Uncle was trying to steal my soul maybe? Or how Asriel came back? Or why I’m shorter?” She groaned. “I need food and rest before I can continue.”

“Plenty of food awaits you, and we will make room for you too.” Asriel’s smile. It was so lovingly.

Too lovingly. “I was with Alphys.” Frisk tried not to look at Sans. He didn’t look real friendly right now. Well, technically, no one could tell how he really was feeling. He was a skeleton, always smiling. But there was something very unsettling in his presence.

“Well, you are with me now, Frisk.” That same lovey smile.

“Can I please go back to Alphys?” Frisk looked toward Toriel, hoping she would agree. Somehow, it seemed Asriel was crushing on her. Weird. “Toriel?”

“Is nobody *really* going to explain anything to her?” Papyrus asked finally with an incredible sigh.

“Think they are hoping she just trips and falls for the charming prince in a few seconds so they don’t have to,” Sans voice came.

Huh?! *Fall for the Prince?*

“Sans, we were getting there,” Toriel said, almost in a scolding manner. “Uh, Frisk? You see, infusion is when a monster pours their power into another’s soul. When that happens, well, it’s considered marriage in the Monster Kingdom.” She gestured toward Asriel. “To save you, Asriel added his strength, so you are technically Asriel’s wife.”

Kaaaaay. Nooooo.

“However,” King Asgore said, “Your Uncle’s true purpose was to make you the perfect complimented soul, so that he could take over your body. In order to do that, he has been feeding you another monster’s Soul and Magic Body energy.”

Frisk stood still, but she was starting to dart her eyes to locate all the exits.

“its okay, Frisk, it wasn’t enough to count,” Toriel assured her. “However, he was probably the one who gave you the wound on your side, so that the last component could be used.”

“Last component?” Frisk asked.

“Uh? Yes, marrow. So you have two husbands.” Toriel tried to chuckle. “My son and Sans. Lucky girl?”

Noooooooo. Marrow. Saaaans? The strange little skeleton guy? She looked at herself again. Is that why I've got wild galaxy blue hair?

“Don’t worry, that’s temporary,” Asgore assured her. “Once you consummate with one of them, the other will be overshadowed and you will simply have one husband. Until then, you will be switched to each of them every 24 hours.”

Frisk was starting to hike up her dress. “So it’s my choice?” *Straight is too easy, they’d see that coming. I could choose the back door and go round, I just have to go through Asriel’s legs unexpectedly. Gah, I wish I wasn’t here! Anywhere but here! Why is this happening to me?* “Neither.”

“Neither isn’t going to be a choice,” Asgore said to her, clamping his paw on her shoulder. “That isn’t the way it works here.”

Which is why I’m not going to be here. Who were they fooling? They wanted her settled so no other kingdom could claim her and claim their kingdom! I am not marriage material. Oh, I shouldn’t be here! Maybe I’m still dreaming at Alphys? Please let me still be dreaming at Alphys!

Alphys Lab . . .

Frisk looked around her. “Alphys?” She was in the dark. She looked to the other bed. Alphys was still asleep. “Was it a dream?” Then why was she out of bed?

“That’s why you aren’t supposed to do that a second time.” Sans appeared beside her. “No longer a part of my power, you *got* my power. Heh. Well, this makes it a little interesting.”

“I’m dreaming this whole thing up,” Frisk said. “I have to be. I’m still at Alphys.”

“You wanted to be at Alphys,” Sans informed him. “Can’t blame ya there. Don’t take off yet, Frisk. You’ve got DETERMINATION and my power, so I don’t know how far you can go. So, let’s chat a second.”

Okay. He didn’t look as mad. He didn’t look like he was trying to glomp her. He looked fine. “Can I get out of this marriage thing?”

“Yes and no. Yeah, if you just agree to me as your hubby, then I can release ya. Probably after it’s safe again for you. But it’s a giant no, as long as you’ve got yourself two husbands, and Asriel? He’s not planning to release ya.” Sans walked around her, his slippers dragging on the floor. “Only thing is, you don’t get to choose. I mean, you do, in a way? But, really not.”

Frisk looked around the room.

“Locating exits to run won’t help. As pathetic as this is, you’re better in here than the bloodbath out there.” He stopped moving his slippers. “Sorry, Frisk. Your aunt and cousin didn’t make it. Gaster’s dead too. No idea how close you were to him, but he’s gone.”

Frisk took a small step backwards. “. . . going after me, everyone was going after me.”

“And they’ll continue, if you leave.” Sans put his bony hand on her shoulder. She could tell it was a move of empathy. “Right now, your hand has got a lot of power in it. And I’m not talking about my power.”

“Political.” Frisk closed her eyes and bit her lip.

“Out there, a lot of people have unfortunately paid that price. Genuinely. Sorry,” he said. “They shoot first and they don’t care about innocents. And those are just the ones who want to kill you so far? Things are going to get worse before they get better. So. You still remember how to fight?”

Frisk looked back toward him. “Underground?”

“Yeah.” Sans sauntered around on his slippers again. “Underground’s a good start, but there’s a good chance you might have to fight. You ready for that?”

“I don’t fight,” Frisk reminded him. “I don’t like to fight.”

“No, you ACT and SPARE. Which is great, Frisk,” Sans admitted. “Not many humans would use those. Not many that sneak in here will. But, even though they aren’t monsters, all you have to do is hold them off until a fighter gets there.”

Hold them off. Frisk nodded. She could play delay.

“Good. So, everyone’s probably freaking out about you disappearing like that. Well, not Papyrus anyhow,” Sans chuckled. “Good for them, a little freakout could chill the place out.” He lifted his bony hand from her shoulder. “Anyhow, I’m sure ol’ Tori will try and explain it, but I’m going to tell you how it really is, okay?”

Frisk nodded. Honesty is something she wanted a lot of right now.

“Gaster was once a big name Underground,” Sans said. “He’s a skeleton monster. Now, he fell into a prototype of his and he broke across timelines. He existed in 100 timelines at once. For some reason, when Princess Chara let go of her connection to you and finally left? A part of him snuck into your soul.”

“My Uncle snuck into my soul?” That was hard to believe.

“Yeah, but he couldn’t have your body. So, he took over another weaker body that didn’t have the DETERMINATION you have. He had to fix your soul to become a gateway to take over your body. Now.” Sans tapped his foot lightly as he shoved his hands into his pockets. “Don’t let this get around, but my soul is one point. I’m the weakest monster alive.”

Oh. “I won’t tell anyone,” Frisk promised him. She knew about vulnerability and how that felt. If it wasn’t for the voice, she never would have made it out of the Underground.

“Okay. Well, you are human, so it’s opposite for your body. You humans are super fragile. Basically your BODY is worth one point too. So, Gaster’s been giving you my soul energy and my body energy,” Sans said. “Somehow over the years. He just needed one more thing, and I had to physically do it. So, he set you up.”

He was the reason everyone found out about her? “He revealed my location?”

“Easy. Once royalty started looking for you again.” Sans held his hands out like in defense. “They said they didn’t want a location, just rumored pictures from a photographer. No doubt Gaster had found that photographer ages ago. Perfect excuse.”

“He knew they would go after me.” He was putting her life on the line?

“More than that. Most likely he was the one who opened fire square on your side.” Sans gave her a second to process that. “So that I’d have no choice. It was risky though, he knew that, but his time was running out fast.”

“Risky?”

“Yeah, ‘cause um, I could have done it before, and I didn’t,” he said truthfully. “You had a good soul, and I owed you. He’s lucky.” That’s as far as he went with that. “Anyhow, once that happened, you became my wife.” He shrugged. “Dems the brakes, huh?”

“When he joined it all together, he created a gateway to my body.” That sounded horrifying. Her Uncle. He was always a bit on the strange side, but he was trying to take over her body?

“Yeah. That’s when a little flower came out.” Sans strolled over by the window. “As much as he acts like he cares, Frisk, I doubt it’s the case. He wanted the power to run the world. Only, his good side kicked in faster ‘cause of Monster Instinct. All this lovey dovey stuff you see in him, it’s either instinct, or he’s trying to hold your soul close to him. Don’t know. Either way.” He shrugged. “If I denounce you, he wins. Ceremony, royalty, everything. So, I can’t quite let you go yet human.”

Oh. “I have two husbands. This is freaky,” Frisk admitted. “You’re going to let me go?”

“With no problem, when it’s just me, and you’re safe on the outside again,” Sans said. “But there’s some problemo there. For one, Toriel and Asgore kind of like the idea of you ruling the Underground in the future. You saved it once, broke the barrier, did a lot of good. Plus, they see their long lost son happy.”

Oh no. “I don’t want to be royalty. I mean, the Underground is . . . look, I just don’t want to-“

“-I know that psychological need to run too. Don’t got to worry about that,” he said a little quickly. “Flowey watched you for some time. He knows a lot of things, like why you fell down. Won’t get into it. Just, sorry.”

He did that? That . . . he shared that? *That's my business, my personal business! How dare he! That stupid flower goat boy thing!* Frisk jerked away, looking toward Alphys. Still silently sleeping.

“Asriel’s mind is between who he was and that flower I think. He’s got growing to do,” Sans warned her. “He’d still be a relatively young monster anyway, so just be careful.”

“Can’t I just choose you?” Frisk asked.

“Nah, for two reasons. Number one, this marriage is keeping you safe. It’s going down in the rules, the lawyer will know about it soon, it gets recorded and there’s a little less need to go out and hunt you down for some kingdoms,” Sans reminded her. “Also, nah, ‘cause acceptance isn’t going to be a vocal thing.”

Not vocal? Oh great. “Tell me the only difficulty is planning a wedding?” Frisk asked.

“Heh. You wish, and unless you’ve been looking to try anything freaky with a skeleton, human, you’re stuck. At least for now.” Sans turned away from the window. “That’s about all I got for you. Oh yeah.” He gestured toward her hand. “You be careful. That’s a lot of magic you’re wielding. More than you know. I have a feeling you were just wanting to go home when Gaster got you. I don’t have nearly the DETERMINATION you got, and I needed Asgore’s help to reach you. So don’t think *too* far away.”

“That’s how I got here?” Frisk looked at her hand. “Why is this blue sugar on my hand again?” She tried to shake it off. She felt Sans gently grab her hand.

“Don’t shake it off,” he said gently. He looked at her eyes straight onward with his little light guiders. “Do that, it’ll be harder to return.” Throughout the whole explanation, neither of them looked at each other’s eyes. Now, they finally were. “Sorry about this human. Your Uncle deceived you, and then that flower did.” He looked down at her hands, and let go. “You can’t bolt from the Underground. It’s still way safer. You’re gonna be switched every twenty four hours at the castle between us.” He shrugged lightly. “Expect to get carried from one husband to the next each day for a long time. Now. Hold out your hand. Wishing to be somewhere is usually how it happens. You’ll learn it over time. I’ll teach ya to get control of it later.”

Frisk looked at her hand.

“For now, just uh? Gaze at the blue sugar on your hand. It’ll take you right back where you belong.” He looked back into her eyes. “No worries if you lose yourself though. Promise, me and Papyrus can follow this magic trail no matter where you go. Just, the further you go, the more help we’ll need.”

Frisk nodded. *If I leave, people will get hurt. Aunt Ida and Cousin Maxie is dead.* “What about Gloria?”

“Who?” Sans asked.

“The um, other girl,” Frisk said, barely looking toward his eyes. “At the movie theatre?”

“I don’t know, Frisk,” Sans said honestly, “but I’ll find out for you. Okay? Now, go ahead and try it. I’m sure the royalty is starting to go a little nuts,” he chuckled. “Their beloved ‘future queen’ is missing. Sound the alarms.”

Frisk smirked at him. She was beginning to remember why she didn’t mind the funny skeleton in the first place as a child. Nah, this wouldn’t be so bad. As long as there was competition for her hand, everything would work out fine.

ACTing right, acting wrong

The Castle . . .

“Here you go, wife,” Asriel insisted as he gave her another burger. “Anything else?”

“No, this is fine,” Frisk said. Asriel was annoying. It was obvious everything he was doing was part of an ACT. “Don’t have to have your arm wrapped around me for me to eat. Where am I sleeping?”

“Oh. Mother and father have been arranging room,” he said as he took his arms off from around her. “The castle has changed quite a bit. It’s amazing. It’s because of you real advancement and cultural exchange could happen.”

“Okay, yeah.” Frisk tried to be polite, but at the same time, she didn’t just want to lay back and pretend everything was going fine and she’d be a perfect wife. She took another bite of her hamburger. He ordered it from the outside. Apparently imported food was cheap because everyone bought imported food. Getting food from Underground was supposed to be ritzier, and he would do that for her another night.

Uh huh. She almost finished her burger. Her soul and hunger feeling somewhat better with food, she desperately needed rest. Her soul needed rest, it went through too much. But, the food was good.

“Frisk?” Asriel placed his paw on hers. Then, moved it away slightly as he discovered all the ketchup on it. “Napkin?”

“At the end,” Frisk said as she sucked on her fingers. “One more.” She reached for one more burger. “No use cleaning up until it’s all done.” She took a big bite of her burger, spilling some catsup on her dress. “Oops.” She shrugged and took another bite. It was drenched in blood anyhow from her used to be fatal wound.

“Don’t worry, we are getting more clothes for you tomorrow,” Asriel insisted. He tried to hold her hand again. “Anyhow, I wanted to see how you were? You lost precious people tonight. Death is very hard. Are you okay?”

Frisk stopped eating a moment. “I loved my Aunt Ida and my cousin Maxie. I even had some feelings for my Uncle Gaster. He made Aunt Ida happy. It’s hard to believe he did that. It’s hard to believe they are all gone.” She got a little choked up and her eyes became watery. “I’ve lost many people over the years. I just keep moving. I cry, but I keep moving.” She took another bite of her burger and felt his arms wrap around her again. “You’re gonna get catsup all over your wardrobe.”

“I don’t care about that,” Asriel insisted. “I’m sorry for all your pain.”

“Yeah, well, just don’t share it,” she said a little sharper than she meant. “What happened above the surface fourteen years ago is my business. Nobody else should know it, Asriel.”

“Of course. Sorry. I’m just very bonded with you.” He laid his head on top of hers. “We share the same soul you know.”

More like he stole half the power of her soul. She looked upwards at his head resting on hers. Goats were big. “I thought monsters took forever to grow up. We were kids at the same time.”

“Oh? Yes,” Asriel said, rocking her back and forth. “I was, but after so many years a change happens, just like with humans. I grew up, even as a flower.” He patted her hair. “I’m glad we grew up at the same time. We’ll be so happy.”

Patting her hair? “You sure about that?” She took her messy hand with catsup, and pulled his hand away from her hair. She’d rather have catsup in her hair than his hand. “Humans don’t live long.”

“Oh? Oh, don’t worry about that,” Asriel said, letting go of her again. “You’ve been infused, wife. You’ll live as long as me, and I will live thousands of years.”

“Thousands of years?” Frisk looked at her fingers, sucked on them, and changed her mind. *Thousands of years.* “Looks like one more burger.” She reached for it, but Asriel stopped her.

“You’ve had four burgers tonight, Frisk,” Asriel said.

“My soul took a lot of damage tonight,” Frisk reminded him.

“I’ve got a better idea? Momma made butterscotch pie, just for you,” he smiled. “After that, we can go to bed.”

“Butterscotch pie sounds good.” Real good. Frisk would save room for that. Normally, she could eat one burger, but with a damaged soul, food was more than a source of nourishment for the body, it became nourishment for the soul. And damn, was her soul ever damaged tonight.

She got up and headed away, looking for Toriel and the fabled Butterscotch pie. She couldn’t taste it that well as a child, many things to the actual touch being numbed. But butterscotch pie was definitely soul food. It would heal her at least three times faster than a burger.

“Toriel?”

“Frisk, hello.” Toriel was absolutely beaming to see her. “How are you doing with Asriel?”

“I heard about pie,” Frisk said not wanting to dwell on that. Just pie.

“Yes, I have made pie for you. Follow me.” Toriel led Frisk into the new kitchen area. “Was your burgers good?”

“I need about eight,” Frisk said honestly. “Hopefully the pie will help the rest, and then I can get some rest for a full restore.”

“Sounds good.” Toriel cut her a piece of pie. “Nothing like dessert for the soul. Here you go.” She turned around and gestured to a large table. “Go ahead and sit there.”

“Thanks,” Frisk said. “Thank you for the pie too.” She had a feeling she was being a little ungrateful. Her soul needs were getting put above her respecting needs. “Do you want to sit with me?”

“Of course,” Toriel said. “What about Asriel?”

What about him? “He can take a break and go to bed if he’s tired,” Frisk said as she sat down. Oooh, hopefully this helped. She took her first bite. *Perfect*. She looked toward Toriel. “So. The Underground has really changed.”

“Yes. It’s good to see you remember so much more,” Toriel said. “It has. You wouldn’t think considering we aren’t exactly free-free that we could be free. But? We have anything we want imported into us. Monsters get together and share the twenty passes we have every day at the convenient locations on the outside, and there are even authorization passes for an undisclosed amount of time for anywhere in the world. Only two, but still so important. We’ve learned so much from even those amenities. Including the politics of humans too.” Toriel sighed. “You have a very . . . creative race.”

“Mischievous and tricky,” Frisk said as she finished off her pie. Oh wow, that helped a lot. “I better get some sleep.”

“Okay. Come, I will show you to your room.” Toriel led her down a new hallway. She opened the door to a nice double bed. With Asriel standing beside it. “Good night.”

Good what? Frisk looked at the double bed, then back at Toriel. “Huh?”

“Oh. You know, you are human. Things might be a little different for you with this marriage,” Toriel said.

“Yah,” Frisk agreed.

“Okay. Well, you’re married. So, you should sleep beside each other. However, you don’t have to feel any need to do anything else until you’re ready. Whether it’s two days, two months, or twenty years.” Toriel shrugged. “Think of Asriel as your cuddle buddy ‘til then.”

Cuddle buddy. *The hell they trying to pull against me?* “So, I am supposed to be Sans’ cuddle buddy too?” Frisk asked. Everything was supposed to be even. “Do I get a say so about any of this?”

“Well. Rules are rules, dear,” Toriel said. “Don’t worry, Asriel would never hurt you.”

Uh huh. “Can Alphys sleep with us too?” Frisk asked. “Or can we all sleep in the lab?”

“Frisk.” Asriel approached her. “It’s okay, wife, I would never hurt you.”

“Is there some kind of law that says you have to keep calling me that too?” Frisk looked toward Toriel. Any help at all? *This ACT from him is getting annoying.*

No. Just smiling away.

“No, Frisk,” Asriel answered her. “That’s just affection a husband gives to his wife. Just like you could be calling me husband. Either that, or a nickname.”

Nickname huh? “Okay. Fine.” Sleeping in the same bed. Wife over and over. Yeah, she had a nickname for him. She crawled into bed, changing her ACT again to see if it improved results. So far, she went from polite, to mildly polite, and now she was moving into annoying. “Just be good, Goat boy.”

Asriel looked toward his mother. “I think my wife is cranky? We better get to bed. I will see you in the morning, momma.”

“Yes. Yes you will,” Toriel said hugging him deeply. “Yes you will, Asriel, and so many hundreds of years after that.”

“You don’t have to-“ *Oh great, he closed the door.* Frisk sighed. Okay. She just had to go to sleep.

“Wife?” Asriel said as he came to bed. “Come here, dear.” She felt him putting his arms around her and dragging her over. “We cuddle, remember?”

“Not really my thing, Goat boy,” Frisk answered.

“Does that . . . really have to be my nickname?” Asriel asked. “I can be dear, darling, honey, husband.”

“I prefer Goat boy,” Frisk said, her whole body uncomfortable with the situation.

“Rules are just rules. It’s okay.” Asriel tried to hold her tenderly. “I know this is all sudden for you. It’s a blessing in disguise though. I’ll make sure no one ever hurts you again, Frisk. I promise.”

“Is Gloria alive?” Frisk still wondered about that. “Does anyone know anything about her?”

“Um? I don’t know who she is,” Asriel confessed. “We’ll find out later. Let’s just try and get some sleep. Before we sleep, do you want to nuzzle?”

Heck no. “I’m tired,” Frisk settled on. “No nuzzle, thanks, Goat boy.” She closed her eyes, trying to drop a very big hint to him nothing was happening with her.

“Can you *please* change that?” Asriel asked. “It’s kind of awkward. My sister used to call me that.”

Well, it was confirmed. *The voice that guided me was Chara.* “I’ll think about it. Let’s just go to sleep and don’t squeeze too tight.” She felt him adjust her like clothing over the top of him while his head laid on top of hers.

“For now, I really don’t mind your size,” Asriel chuckled. “It makes you easy to curl up with wife. By the way? You don’t have to be so fussy with me. I know humans take longer to

warm up to each other than monsters, and fussiness is a trait of rebellion to it. But, I told you a long time ago. Do you remember? Right after you told me your real name?” He gave her a little squeeze. “I said ‘I wish I could tell you how everyone feels about you. Papyrus, Sans, Undyne, Alphys, Toriel. Monsters are weird. Even though they barely know you-“

“It feels like they all really love you,” Frisk finished for him. She remembered that.

“You’ll come around. I know you will.” Asriel said. “Until then, I’ll hold my heart open only for you. After all.” He took a small sigh. “We have thousands of years together, my darling Princess.” He gave her one more small squeeze.

And she farted. “Sorry but I told you not to do that. I had like four burgers and a butterscotch pie. I’m explosive.”

“ . . . um?” Asriel looked at her strangely. “Humans are odd creatures. Okay. I can get used to that. No problem, but you kind of stink.”

Frisk shrugged. “Even darling Princesses aren’t perfect.” She watched him back off a little. “No more cuddle?”

“Legally, yes, but let’s give it a five minute break?” Asriel asked. “Maybe ten minutes?”

7:49 AM

“I don’t believe this,” Sans muttered to Papyrus as he stared ahead. “They aren’t taking me serious at all.” Damn. They were *really* going to try that way with him? “Good thing I showed up early. Undyne?”

Undyne was over by the corner. At least she was being loyal. She marched over to the queen in his defense.

Sans cracked his knuckles. While Frisk had been gone that night, he wasn’t kicking back and being lazy. He studied throughout the night, went to bed for only a few hours, and got up at 5:00 to study some more.

“I believe it’s a good thing we studied,” Papyrus said as he watched Undyne continue speaking to royalty. “They are trying to use our lack of knowledge against us.”

Well, that wasn’t happening. There’s no way that human was going to be stuck like that. He could tell from her expression, she was already feeling less like herself. She lost two important people yesterday, got taken from her home, gained two monster husbands, and

went through who knows what kind of awkwardness with Asriel. Sans watched Undyne come back over. “Well?”

“They said you were blowing things out of proportion,” Undyne answered him while she rolled her eyes. “I say take it and burn it as a statement.”

“Welp? Didn’t want it to come down to this.” Sans looked Papyrus. “You called it, Pap, they are going to try it.” Fine.

He would perform his own ACT.

7:53 AM

“This is absolutely ridiculous,” Asriel protested to his mother. “That was nowhere near twenty-four hours.”

He was protesting? Frisk had to be carried. Carried bridal style, in a white dress, to a meeting between Asriel and Sans. If anyone should get to protest, it should be her.

“I know, but an exchange at nine o’ clock every night at the Castle won’t work as well as a fresh business start,” Toriel told him. “You know that business conducts at nine, including Sans and Papyrus’ guarding.”

“But she’s human, she needs to be nowhere near that surface area. Someone might come after her,” Asriel protested.

“Sans and Papyrus are very good sentries,” his father reminded him. “They will know how to handle it. Now at eight o’ clock, hand her over and this will be the designated time to do this each day.”

“It’s ridiculous.” Asriel tapped his foot. “We should be working on establishing our profiles to the human lawyer.” He held Frisk up higher against him. “You better be careful with her, Smiley Idiot,” he yelled to Sans.

“Asriel,” his mother scolded.

“Watch out for her, Sans, I mean it,” Asriel said, giving a mean glare with a warning.

So far, neither Sans nor Papyrus said a word.

Time just ticked by.

“I will see you at this time tomorrow,” Asriel said lovingly to Frisk. “I cherished all the time we spent together.”

“Not all of it,” she reminded him.

“Most of it,” Asriel corrected himself. “Don’t worry. Before you become Princess, we will get you all worked out.”

“I am worked out,” Frisk insisted. “What you see is what you get, Goat boy.”

“You’re fussy again.” Asriel laid his head next to hers.

Of course she was fussy. Normally Frisk wasn’t half as bad, but geez. Her life changed dramatically in two days and he kept expecting her to fall in love with him with his constant ACT.

“Can I have a nuzzle before you go?” Asriel asked, his ACTing still in full swing.

“No.” That was obvious.

“Mm. Okay.”

The heeeeeelllll? Frisk’s eyes lit up as she felt Asriel kissing her.

“No, Asriel!” Toriel scolded him. “That’s not proper either, you don’t nuzzle or kiss without permission.”

“Oh?” Asriel looked back down at Frisk. “I’m sorry. Can I kiss you goodbye?”

“Hell no!” Frisk yelled at him, choosing a whole new ACT she knew had to get results! Mad. She grabbed the new prince’s crown off his head and plummeted it over his head further, past his ears, down over the front of his eyes. Gaw, she just wanted to get out and run! She was trying not to kick her legs.

“Kissing is an even bigger deal than nuzzling,” King Asgore said to his son as he helped him fix his crown again.

“Oh.” Asriel shrugged, with an extremely mad Frisk still in his arms. “I didn’t know that. Why? It’s just pressing lips together. Not like I got in the mouth.”

“It’s still a thing like nuzzling,” Toriel reminded him.

“Sorry. I still have a lot to learn.” He looked down at Frisk. “I won’t do that without permission again, wife.”

“You better not,” she warned him.

Both Sans and Papyrus loyally stayed still. And quiet.

As it turned 7:59 Sans moved forward, as well as Asriel. There was a red line down the center that had been repainted. The exchange line hadn’t been used in a thousand years. Asriel looked down toward Sans. “You sure you can grip her?”

Sans still didn’t say anything.

Asriel bent down slightly and pushed his arms more outward. Sans accepted Frisk in his arms. Strange. She went from Asriel's furry body to feeling Sans' bare bone. Surprisingly, it was smoother than she thought it'd be. Most of her body was pressed against his jean jacket and odd shirt. He wore a different one that day, but once again the jacket covered it. Not a word more was spoken until Sans reached Papyrus. "Here, Bro, you know the drill."

A second lifting? Why was Papyrus now holding her in his arms?

Then, she heard a loud sound in front of her, and saw . . . Asriel lied out on the ground?

Sans watched as Toriel came to check on her son, but she couldn't blame him. Neither could King Asgore. They could offer glares but not much else.

"He's new to everything, Sans," Toriel said in Asriel's defense. "This is new to everyone!"

"You don't show affection or touch in any inappropriate way a shared wife, in front of her other husband, during an exchange," Sans yelled at her. "You stay silent and immobile for five minutes. Not to mention no clothes, jewelry, or food from the other husband during the exchange. Undyne even came over and warned you about the dress. Shoulda taught him that, Tori!"

"You do not speak to the queen in that manner!" King Asgore warned him. "This is new to everyone, no one knows what to expect."

"Expect me to follow *all* the rules," Sans said firmly. "If I'd a just let any of that slip by, it could have been confirmation that I didn't care to keep *my* wife. Right?"

"We would not have taken Frisk away from you," King Asgore said. "She is your wife."

"That's right. Don't forget it," Sans warned him.

"We didn't," Toriel said sharply to him. "It's just your instinct. You would never take a wife and you know it."

"Don't put words in my mouth, please." Sans turned and went back to his brother. Honestly, that couldn't have gone more pleasant? How hard was it to say 'make sure you don't do anything with the wife in the exchange, dear?' or how hard was it to listen about the dress? He had every right, even above royalty, to knock out Asriel. If he didn't, they could have countered his affection status to Frisk. He knew Toriel and Asgore already wanted Frisk for Asriel.

Sans moved back over to Papyrus, scooping up Frisk again, and walking her over to Toriel and Asgore. Boy, their power was practically glowing in anger. *Didn't think I'd pull that, did you? Think I'd just let you take the human for your boy, huh?* Frisk deserved her freedom too. "Now. Like Undyne asked nicely before? Get my wife ready correctly, Majesty?" He handed Frisk to Asgore.

He could see it in Frisk's expression. She was getting tired of being luggage.

“Asriel will be fine. Come Toriel,” Asgore said as he took Frisk inside with her.

Sans walked back toward Papyrus and Undyne, in the corner. He saw a thumbs up from her, and a wink from his brother. He wasn’t often that bold. Didn’t have to be. Heck, Toriel probably didn’t think he could be bold against anything but humans considering his soul level.

Asriel was starting to stir. It was time to find out if his hypothesis was right about the prince. “What the heck?” He marched over to Sans. “Who do you think you are, hitting me? Do you have any idea how much power I have?!”

“Enough to get your old form back?” Sans shrugged. “Not much else. Hey, you did *ask* me to do the math when you changed.”

Asriel pointed at him. “You hit royalty.”

“Relation of any kind, including royalty, within a husband competition must be neglected for the sake of being bias,” Papyrus recited from memory of the book.

Frisk was soon returned in her old blood-stained dress being carried from Toriel, handed to Asriel, and finally handed with much less grace to Sans.

Sans brought her all the way to his side of the line, and they kept walking this time passed Papyrus. Frisk watched from the corner as Undyne and Alphys emerged walking with Papyrus and Sans.

“Whoah, that got heavy.” Alphys looked back. “I think they are gone, Sans.”

“Good.” Sans stood Frisk up. No doubt she wanted to be able to walk on her own. “Sorry about that, Frisk. Certain rules they were bending.”

“Bend the wrong rules, Asriel could claim complete husbandry,” Undyne said in a warning tone.

“Yeah. And now?” Sans winced and grabbed his hand, he didn’t have to act cool anymore. “Asriel’s got one hard head!” He moved his hand around. “I’m not used to actual physical fighting.”

“You shouldn’t be,” Papyrus said. “You’re a nice monster.”

Sans continued to wave his bony hand. “Anyhow, Frisk, sorry about that. Really not that possessive or bad. Gotta ACT. You know how it goes.”

“Been doing that a long time myself. No problem,” Frisk said. “As long as you don’t-“

“Nuh-uh!” Undyne immediately clapped her hand over Frisk’s mouth. “You *really* need to learn the rules. I bet no one taught you them from that display. Heck, Sans and Papyrus had to study them themselves ever since you’ve been gone.”

“I just know being handed over every twenty four hours,” Frisk said when her mouth was released. “There’s more to it than that?”

“Well, yes. You see, you are going to have two different lives, but they *aren’t* supposed to mingle together,” Alphys said. “You can’t tell Sans what you do with Asriel, nor the other way around.”

“You also can’t take anything from one to the other. No clothes, no food, no gifts, nothing,” Undyne added. “That’s why you’re in that blood-stained dress again.” She gave Frisk her brightest fish smile, bordering on creepy for the poor human. “If Sans had accepted you in that, he could have lost due to negligence.”

“No one really knows exactly if it was on purpose, or if Toriel and Asgore were just wanting to keep it loose and informal,” Alphys said. “But, um? Really shouldn’t take chances there.”

“Got it.” Frisk nodded her head.

“Yeah, well? Marriage takes like . . . a lot,” Sans said, getting the most of his ‘owies’ out. “And I don’t really got everything perfectly perfect for it. But, you’re gonna have to make do with the minimum requirement.”

“Yeah and any complaining will gift you Prince Asriel,” Papyrus noted. “Or kiss and tell for Mettaton. As wonderful as he is, ummm . . . he could reach them and get you gifted. Not personally trying, just media attention.”

“Oh, man.” Frisk sighed. “Okay. Anything else? What if he’s brought to the castle or something? Completely refuse, right?” She heard a funny chuckle from Sans. Familiar chuckle.

“Isn’t that what your best at?” Sans asked her. “Now, that’s far enough. Okay, Frisk. So, your first twenty four hours Underground haven’t smacked of a good time, but it’s still better than last time, right?”

Ha ha. “Some?” Frisk had no idea on that.

“Hey?” Undyne helped her. “You can’t really judge fighting and running through the mountain compared to being married with two monsters. They are both hella scary, and I’d rather do the first.”

“Eh, like I said, some,” Frisk repeated. “Did you find out about Gloria?”

“Hospital,” Sans said. “She’s not in primo condition, I’ll admit it, but she’s still doing decently according to her med records.”

“Really?” Frisk asked. “How did you find out about her med records?”

Heh. Silly human. “Sans is just a little bit better than you think, that’s all.”

“Oh, I almost forgot,” Alphys said toward Frisk. “You can’t tell Sans what you do with Asriel, or the other way around, but you can tell Undyne and I,” Alphys said.

“Yep, complete girl talk,” Undyne said. “From there, we’ll be able to nail anything they could be doing that’s not right, and we can tell between them.”

The human looked really relieved about that one. “Good. It sounds like it shouldn’t be too hard to break away from this marriage.”

“Uh? Not exactly?” Sans said. “Royalty are gonna be the final say. So if their son messed up, it’s not so big, but if I mess up? Goodbye poor human.”

“Ah. Normal ‘life’s not fair’ in the Underground standard fare,” Frisk said. “Yip.”

“Yep. So, I got to feed you.” Sans brought out his bony fingers. “Not a real problem there. I got to dress you in your chosen colors. And everything else we can save for later. I can also be away from you for like three hours, altogether, tops. That means you have to come to work with me and Papyrus.”

“But once we teach you how to use your magic,” Papyrus added, “you can earn your own paycheck. You won’t be able to use it in your other marriage, but you’ll be able to use it here.”

“Which would be dang helpful if you want a wardrobe bigger than two from me,” Sans added. “Or shoes.” Frisk looked at her feet. “Yeah. Take it all one **step** at a time. So, we should get ready for work,” Sans noted to Papyrus, then looked back at Frisk. “Uh? Our house is still where it was before in the Underground. Remember where it is?” Papyrus and him stopped.

Frisk stopped too, while Sans held his bony hand out. Him and Papyrus would have to teach her slow and steady, with something to focus on for her human brain to grab a hold of the concept better.

“Stick out your hand, Sister,” Papyrus said as he also stuck out his hand. “And imagine what the house looks like.”

“Imagine what it looks like.” Frisk was staring at her hand with minimal luck. Not even a drop of any magic fell from her hand, which was the highest conductor area.

“That’s right. It has been fourteen years,” Sans reminded Papyrus. “Here, human, take my hand. When we arrive, *remember* what it looks like.”

Sans and Papyrus Home . . .

Frisk arrived in front of a two story home. She looked around. The environment had certainly changed, but their house felt similar to what she used to imagine. She memorized the look and the colors, not wanting to let Sans down. He was already doing her a big favor staying married to her. Her freedom was in his bony hands.

Her freedom was in the geeky, used to be puzzle maker, all ‘Papyrus is cool’, charismatically attracting an audience skeleton’s bony hands. One that went from someone to trust, someone to fear, and now someone to trust again. *Don’t mess up. This is just as dangerous as fighting, if not more so Frisk. You’re in a world where you don’t know all the rules. Play it safe. I don’t have the same inner help this time. I need outer help.*

She had only been there since last night, but Alphys, Undyne, Sans, Toriel, and Papyrus? All of them. They warmed up to her quickly again. It was so long ago. She thought they were just memories, and yet they all remembered her so fondly. It was odd, but Asriel must have said it best. *Although they barely know you, it feels like they already really love you.* Was that still the same after all these years?

Oddly. It felt like it.

“You can hang out with Undyne and Alphys for a bit soon here,” Sans said as Frisk came in. “Up this way.” Sans walked her over to his room. She stood silently. “Yeah, so. This ain’t no girls room if you catch my drift. Don’t complain.” He looked over toward Papyrus.

Papyrus gestured toward him. “She’s your wife now, she’ll deal with it. Come on.” He looked toward Frisk. “Sans is not big on showing others his room. He’d feel more confident if he cleaned it once in awhile,” Papyrus added.

Frisk really didn’t care at this rate. She watched as Sans opened the door.

Okay. Not what she was expecting. She didn’t really know what to expect. There was a bed over in the corner, a double bed? Clearly just moved in or cleaned because it didn’t match the rest of the room. There was a self-sustaining tornado trash area. *Eh.* Felt like his style. She moved in, noticing he was watching her a little spookily with his light guiders. *Not that again.*

He turned away again. “Alphys lent the bed. All cred goes to her. Uh.” He moved toward his drawers. “You got two outfits. Blue’s your color ‘cause everything else is blue on you. No brainer.” He closed the drawer. “That’s about all I got. Humans aren’t a big thing. I’ll get the other human detail wearing things later. So, if you want out of your blood-stained dress ‘til the next exchange, now’s your shot.”

Sans strolled out the door and left the room. Frisk went to the drawer and looked at the fresh clothes. One dress. One shirt. One pants. Having enough of the whole darling and sweet Princess talk, she chose to wear the shirt and pants. She came back out afterward, already feeling a little better.

“Great. Now, hold out your hand,” Sans said looking at his. Papyrus did the same thing.

“This might seem ridiculous once you get your power under control,” Papyrus added. “But it’s truly a life saver. If you are drained from battle and cannot conjure enough magic for an escape, staring at your hand will always give a safe return.”

Frisk stared at her hand, and then realized she was back between the castle and where the barrier used to stand. Undyne and Alphys were still there.

“There you go. Go girl talk it up for a couple of hours,” Sans said. “See ya.”

Poor Frisk

While they walked to the lab . . .

Frisk thought they would want to investigate any wrongdoings Asriel had been doing. Instead?

It was definite girl talk.

“Ooh, that dress was sooo pretty,” Alphys said dreamily. “How did it feel? Do you know where the prince had ordered it from?”

“Does he seem anything like a flower still?”

“Is he a sweet cuddler?”

“Did you see the new parts of the castle?”

“Did he sing or do anything extra romantic?” Alphys asked her.

Yeah. It was all girl talk. Frisk shrugged. “He was sweet, to a degree?” Frisk answered. “Nothing I could see myself with though. I mean, he’s, clingy. My ACTing gradually got worse to try and make him back off.”

“Yeah, that clinginess, that’s not ACTing. That’s instinct,” Alphys admitted. “That’s why only you get to choose who you are with, because boy monsters really think they are in love with girls.”

“Yep,” Undyne agreed. “Even Sans is having lovey dovey instincts going on. He just ignores it.”

Frisk chuckled. “Sans always was good at ignoring stuff.”

“Oh, but we didn’t mean like real lazy!” Alphys almost yelled. “I mean? Sans has improved a whole lot. It wasn’t overnight, but he’s become more . . .”

“Tolerable,” Undyne finished. “He’s tolerable.”

“Ooh! Should we tell her?” Alphys whispered to Undyne.

“I don’t know.” Undyne looked toward Frisk, then back to Alphys. “Alright, okay.”

Alphys cleared her throat as they walked. “So, Frisk? *How* has Toriel been taking the whole thing?”

Huh. Those two were acting strange. “Like she’s ready to hang my picture up in the castle as her new daughter.”

“Yeah, ‘cause you make Asriel super happy?” Undyne questioned.

Frisk scratched her head.

“Did she talk about Sans at all?” Alphys asked.

“Oh.” Really? *Did those two . . . ?* Puzzle maker. Queen. King of Puns. Queen of good pie. But at the end? *Oh, that’s right.* “She said he’s not marriage material a lot. She’s kind of . . .” Uh oh. “Shoot, are you telling me she’s really jelly of me or something?”

“Jelly?” Alphys asked. “Uh? Language barrier there.”

“Jealous,” Frisk answered.

“Oh? Yes. She might be a little?” Alphys hazarded a guess.

“Super jelly,” Undyne insisted. She laughed. “I like that. Jelly.”

“Yeah. She has um . . . different taste I guess?” Alphys said. “She’s never actually been out with him or anything. She left lots of subtle hints though.”

“Yeah, and he left a lot of subtle hints back that he wasn’t really interested,” Undyne said.

“She came out and visited him daily at his door.”

“He started to actually leave work earlier so she couldn’t find him at his door.”

“She tried to invite him over to the ruins.”

“Never went. Always busy.” Undyne laughed. “Sans? Busy back then, am I right?”

“Oh. She made him pie.”

“He invited all of us. We didn’t find out until afterward that it was just supposed to be them.”

“Sans just hasn’t ever dated or really been interested in anyone,” Alphys said. “Not real uncommon. Some monsters just prefer it that way. I mean, I was like that.” Alphys blushed. “I mean for a long, long time. Anyhow. Until um. The right monster came along.” She held Undyne’s hand.

“Me too. Screw others,” Undyne agreed. “So what about you, Frisk? Before this whole marriage fiasco, did you have anyone?”

“I went on several dates with several guys,” Frisk admitted. “I just buckled down more when I went to college. My Aunt Ida used to say once college started ‘you either have good grades, or you spread your legs’.” She smiled. “She was kind of out there, but I took her advice. I had dreams and I didn’t want anyone in the way of them.”

“Oh? What were you wanting to be?” Alphys asked.

“I wanted to help people, the way they helped me,” Frisk admitted. “A therapist field. I was thinking counselor, or maybe psychotherapy.”

“Well shit, Frisk, that’d fit ya,” Undyne said. “You really helped a lot of monsters down here.”

“Thanks. I was working toward my Bachelor’s degree in psychology for starters.” Frisk continued to walk. Wow. What a strange feeling. Walking together with monsters, instead of humans. They really were different. They made her soul feel different. It was a cozy kind of connection, even though she hardly knew them, or made any contact since she was eight. It felt like . . . like the comfort of old friends.

Monsters. Souls. Strange things.

“So? Can you tell us what happened yesterday with Asriel?” Alphys asked. “We just need to make sure he didn’t do anything illegal. That’s all.”

“Well, what is illegal in this whole thing?” Frisk asked.

“Anything that you say no to,” Undyne said. “Except cuddling at night. That’s law. Same bed, that’s law. Um? Anything else that you say no to, that he tries to do anyway.”

“Besides that stupid kiss move? None of that. He just likes to cuddle. A lot,” Frisk noted. “He does it too much though.”

“So much that it made you uncomfortable?” Alphys asked.

“Nah, so much I just farted,” Frisk admitted. “I can only take so much.” She noticed both of them stopped. She didn’t cross a line, did she?

“You are a human whoopee cushion?” Undyne started to laugh. “Sans is going to have fun with you.”

“That’s probably not royally appealing.” Still, Alphys couldn’t help a small grin. “Does that annoy him?”

“Makes him back off about five to ten minutes,” Frisk said. “They aren’t even that bad.”

“Yeah, but royal treatment and such,” Alphys squealed. “They don’t do that kind of thing. I think that’s one of the things Toriel liked about Sans.”

“Yeah. He don’t give a shit about nothing,” Undyne laughed. “You really got to work on being royal material, Frisk.”

“I’m not royalty material,” Frisk said. “I’m not sounding mean though, am I? It’s natural. I was hopped up on a lot of fast food burgers to help heal my soul, so what did he expect?” She shrugged. “Hell, I’ve been told even water makes me fart sometimes.”

They both started laughing.

“It’s not funny,” Frisk said to both of them. “Well. Maybe a little. It’s not like I meant to.”

“Was he being all romantic when you did it?” Undyne pried.

Okay, it was funny. “He called me his darling Princess. Then he left his ‘darling Princess’ for ten minutes.”

“Okay. Anything else we should know and/or is hilarious?” Undyne asked.

“No. Well?” Frisk looked toward both of them. “How nice of a wife do I have to be? I mean, do I have to let him call me wife all the time?”

“Ah, that’s affection,” Alphys said. “You’re only going to hear that from Sans pretty much when he’s in front of royalty and that’s it.”

“It’s not a bad thing,” Undyne said. “Asriel was an affectionate little hugger when he was little. He’s probably hoping for an affectionate name from you too.”

“Eh. I called him Goat boy. He was driving me crazy.” The two of them started to laugh.

“That’s not funny. That’s *not* funny,” Alphys corrected herself. “His former sister Chara used to call him that. She was human too.”

“Yeah. I thought it’d get him to stop doing the wife thing in a subtle way,” Frisk said. She caught glances from each of them. “The voice leading me was most likely her because when we bumped into him, it’s what she always called him.” No, she didn’t want to go there. “She’s free though, and so much happier. Which is good.” Frisk groaned. “Doubt she’d want anything to do with this.”

“Cuddling up to her own brother?” Undyne asked. “Guarantee not.”

On Duty . . .

“You could warm up to her closer, Sans,” Papyrus noted after a few minutes of inactivity. No monsters were outside except them. Even the humans seemed more laid back. Good time for conversation. “She’s your wife.”

“Temporary,” Sans said. “Just gotta get past this thing with Asriel somehow, get her safe out there in the real world, then she’ll be gone.”

“Sure, because any of that’s going to happen overnight,” Papyrus criticized him. “The human thing? With the speed at which they get things done, and how many would have to be made? I bet it would take every bit of five years, even with continual pushing. And Prince Asriel? You know he’s not letting go.”

Sans kicked his feet around. "Okay, so it's a long temporary," he said. "I don't know, Papyrus, can't we just bum around with the human like last time? I don't wanna . . ." He groaned. "I'll put up a show, but I don't want a real wife. You know that."

"Of course I know that. You don't even want a girlfriend," Papyrus said. "Not even if it happens to be a very nice, charming, jokeful . . ."

"Don't," Sans warned him.

"The queen has a crush on you."

"Ah." He had to say it out loud? He waved his bony hand. "Distant past, maybe. Maybe." He scratched his pelvis.

"I'm not so sure about that, Sans." Papyrus sighed. "Only my brother would ignore a queen's advances."

"Nobody knows for sure," Sans countered. Geez. He liked having his knock-knock buddy. It was fun. It was great! She was a blast. Then though, it wasn't such a blast. And with every joke around her, he seemed to be pulling her even closer to him.

And he didn't want that. He just didn't. Sans shrugged. He usually tried not to tell jokes around her much anymore at least.

"Well, at least you are married. Eventually, instinct will pull you." Papyrus said it, like it was a fact.

"The wimpy Prince can get pulled. I'm not getting pulled by instinct," Sans remarked. "Besides? I mean, hello? Frisk is just that funny little human." Okay, older human. Okay, slightly more attractive human.

"Sure, sure. Just bum around like a friend," Papyrus said, "try that if you must. Doesn't change your nightly duty though."

"Still nothing. As soon as I hit my bed, I always go to sleep. I can sleep anywhere and everywhere." He chuckled. "It's more like a stuffed teddy bear than romance. Everything will be fine. Couple outfits here. Food. Hell, I helped feed the human before," Sans reminded him. "Not much different."

At the Castle . . .

"Would you like some extra pie? I still have some from what I made for Frisk." Toriel asked her son. He looked so forlorn. "It's only twenty four hours."

“It’s not that.” Asriel looked toward his mother. “Momma? I have to tell you something.”

“Oh?” Toriel put the pie down and went toward him. “What is it, dear?”

“I really like Frisk,” Asriel admitted. “I do. I think she’s wonderful, but there’s something you should know.” He sighed. “I don’t know how to tell you this. Or ask it. But? You’re my mom.”

“Of course I’m your mom.” Toriel patted his paw. “Forever and ever, Asriel.”

“I need to win Frisk,” Asriel insisted. “Help me win her from Sans.”

“Uh?” Toriel held his paw gently. “Asriel? This is not something I can really help with my child. Frisk will decide which one she will choose, as long as it takes.”

“What if it’s not me? She’s not exactly . . . well, she’s great, but. Well? She ain’t real good at being royal,” Asriel said. “She doesn’t cuddle nearly as much.”

“Well, not everyone will.”

“You and dad won competitions for nuzzling.”

“Oh, Asriel, it will take time.” Toriel stood back up. “You have nothing to worry about. If you like Frisk, and she learns to like you, it will be fine.”

“What. If she picks. Sans,” Asriel’s voice sounded strange.

“Um? Sans isn’t-“

“You’ve already said that, you’ve said that,” Asriel said to her. “He won’t mind this. He’s not going to do that. He has so far. So what. If she. Does?”

“If. If Frisk ends up giving her heart to him, then there’s nothing anyone can do.” Toriel shrugged. “Don’t worry, Asriel. You have many years to try to win her heart. Ease up upon the poor human. Start out as friends if that’s what it takes.” Toriel touched his head. “Trust your heart.”

“I can’t.” Asriel closed his eyes. “If Sans wins, I have to give back the entire power to her. If that happens, I will go back to being a flower, mother.”

“What?” Toriel gasped. “But, I-I?”

“It’s a shared power,” Asriel said. “A shared power with a husband. Sans already knows how much power I have. He knocked me out without even pulling out an encounter board.”

“Well, encounter boards can’t be used in these issues,” Toriel said. “He had to use his own strength, without any magic, to do it.”

“I only have enough power to hold this form,” Asriel said, almost chattering. “Don’t let me become that evil flower again, mother!” He clung to her. “I’ll be good to Frisk! I’ll treat her

like a Princess and no different, just please help me! I don't want to become it again momma. You have no idea what it's like . . . to have no . . . love. Only, LOVE."

"Asriel!" Toriel's eyes wept for her son, holding him close. To lose her son again? No. Never! "I don't want to lose you again my child! You are mine! Don't leave!"

"I don't want to." Asriel shook in her arms. "I don't want to," he whispered softer. "Are you sure Sans won't win? Can you bet *me* on it?"

Toriel just stared at him with tears in her eyes.

"You said he wouldn't care. He would denounce her. He hasn't, momma."

Toriel glanced away a moment, but looked back toward her son. Her heart was beating so fast.

"He even punched me for not following the rules. He even studied rules, momma," Asriel warned her. "He demanded her back in her dress. He wants Frisk. He wants to win Frisk."

Toriel's breathing was ragged as he looked at her desperate son. "Asriel. I don't want to lose you. What you are asking of me?"

"What am I asking?" Asriel asked. "Is there something you can do to save your son?"

Toriel closed her eyes, and then looked back toward him. "I never imagined you would be back here with me. You should have always been here. With me. Oh my child, Asriel. All those years . . ." She trembled. "Asgore!!"

The Royal Conference Room . . .

Asgore and Toriel were both silent, simply exchanging looks.

"We can't lose him," Asgore growled. "We can't lose Asriel."

"He needs the power. What are we going to do? Go out and steal more souls?" Toriel asked. "That would defeat the entire kingdom's fourteen years of friendship! We would be placed behind the barrier again. No one would forgive us." She lowered her head. "What do we do, Asgore?"

Asgore looked straight ahead. "You know what we have to do."

Toriel placed her paws over her eyes. "I can't. We can't."

"If anything is made, it must be made the *first seven days* of the exchange. We will discuss options with the human lawyer coming in today." Asgore pulled out one of the oldest tomes.

“The human deserves her freedom. Asriel deserves to live.” Toriel lowered her head.

“I cannot make this decision alone,” Asgore said to her. “Not *this* time, not like I did with the children’s souls, I will not do it. You are the queen, and you have your say.”

Toriel cried on the table.

“Frisk or Asriel, Toriel. It is all we can do.” Asgore held his spot.

“I . . . I can’t lose him again. We can’t lose him *again*,” Toriel insisted. “. . . she could have a good life here.”

Asgore nodded. “Is that what you want?”

“Freedom or a life.” Toriel lifted her head. “I *hate* being queen.”

“And one day, she’ll know that burden too,” Asgore said as he stood up. He held his hand out. Toriel received it. “We will call for the standard three day delay. Asriel teleported to us with Frisk when we first saw him again. With that power, we should be able to get this done.”

Alphys Lab Three Days Later. . .

“Ooh, that’s neat. You look good in blue lipstick,” Alphys chuckled as she showed Frisk her makeup.

Frisk laughed. Getting a three day break from Asriel was nice. She was a little worried at first but Sans said it was probably all ‘legal and royal stuff’. So, she got to know Sans and Papyrus better, she was learning her teleporting a little better, and she got to have a nice time getting to know Alphys and Undyne. Before, they all treated her like a child, but now they were on more even footing, making their friendship much more fulfilling. “Oh, wow? I always looked good in red. Never imagined what I would be like in another color.”

“Green’s my color,” Undyne said. Then her cell rang. “Ah. Majesty? Ah?” Undyne looked back toward Frisk. “I need to what?”

Frisk noticed the strange look in Undyne’s eyes.

“Uh?” Undyne touched her face. “But I can’t interfere in this, King Asgore. Uh huh. Uh? I don’t understand this, sir?”

Frisk was really noticing Undyne. She looked uncomfortable and was even swallowing.
What’s wrong?

“Yeah. No, uh, I’ll get to finding the human, Sir.” Undyne hung up the phone and looked at Frisk. “I gotta go outside real quick. Alphys, um, just watch her?”

Lookout . . .

Sans felt his cell phone ring. He waited until the coast looked clearer. “Pick up the slack for me, Papyrus? I got my phone going off.”

“Sure thing, Brother,” Papyrus agreed.

Sans answered his phone. “Yup?”

“Sans. Royalty *is* doing something, you were right. They took three days for a damn good reason. Asgore has commanded, firmly, I take Frisk to the castle in the meeting area,” Undyne said on the phone. “They aren’t playing under the radar, whatever they are doing.”

“Oh, great.” Sans sighed. “Alright, I’ll meet you at the castle.” Sans hung up. “I gotta go, Papyrus. They are making Undyne bring Frisk to the castle.”

“Eeh, why?” Papyrus questioned.

Sans shrugged. “Don’t know. Better go pull out some ACT again. See ya soon.”

The Castle . . .

When Sans arrived, he already knew something heavy was going on. Toriel and Asgore were both in their full royal robes, and Asriel stood proudly next to them. “Sup? Why you bugging my wife with Undyne? A delay of three days, is a delay of three whole days.”

None of the royalty spoke a word.

Sans watched as Undyne arrived with Frisk beside her, once again in her blood-stained dress.

Toriel looked away only a second before she looked back toward Frisk. “Undyne, please escort the human away to the guest bedroom.”

Ooh. That was warming.

“We have been keeping things loose for this arrangement, until we could decide how much of the book we would follow,” Asgore said. “As firmly as Sans was about following the rules, we can see that this will be an intense marriage situation. After confirming some simple facts, and taking more facts into account, we call in the Multiple Monster Wife rule book.”

“The what?” Sans didn’t know that one. Multiple Monster Wife? “It’s just two husbands.”

“Multiple. Consisting of, including or involving more than one,” Asgore announced.
“Therefore, even a two husbandry can fit this definition.”

Kay. What the hell they doing? “Fine, where is this book?”

He watched as Asgore drug out a couple large tomes, that clearly were barely dusted off.
“One of these. I think this one. Here ya go, Sans.”

Sans looked at the book he handed him, then glanced toward Asriel noticing his professionalism slipped into an almost evil smirk. *Bad, bad vibes.* Sans picked up the book, turning to the page that was bookmarked by an attached lizard’s tongue.

That book was old. “A couple years old, huh?” Sans teased, trying to lighten the moment. It didn’t work. He looked at the section he needed to.

He closed the book right away and scooted it across the table. “Bull.”

Asgore folded his arms. “Care to repeat that?”

“Majesty?” Sans gestured to the book. “Bullshit!” Hell no, that was not gonna work. He grabbed his phone to call Papyrus.

“He’s already been called,” Asgore said knowingly. “Deal with it however you wish.”

Papyrus appeared next to Sans. “Sans?”

Sans grabbed the book again roughly, placed it in Papyrus’ hands and pointed at it.
“Switching to that archaic thing.”

“Nyeh?!” Papyrus looked toward the royalty. “This is barbaric and insane and-“

“Bullshit,” Sans said again. “This ain’t fair. This ain’t right.” He pointed straight at Toriel.
“You know that.”

The royalty wasn’t moving.

Undyne came back over after sending Frisk away, seeing their reactions, and joined with her own reaction to the book. “Fuck me with a fishing rod. That can’t fly.”

“It *will* fly,” Asgore said. “We are royalty. *We* decide. It is within the first seven days of the husbanding, so the right to decide is still open. This is what has been decided.”

“No.” Sans had to reason with them. He approached the table and leaned against it, directly in front of Tori. “I know you got reasons to do something this desperate, Tori. But those reasons aren’t right if it costs this.”

“She will be fine,” Toriel answered.

“But not freed. *Never* freed.” Sans pointed to the book. “Even a thousand years ago they didn’t like working with this book anymore. Don’t do this.”

“She came for help. For sanctuary,” Undyne tried to add. “We were out to *help* her.”

“This isn’t how you pay back someone who broke the barrier!” Sans shouted at her. “She took us all into a much better life, a much better time, how can you do this to her Tori?!”

“Stop yelling at the queen!” Asgore warned Sans. “It would have taken at least ten years to get everything worked out for the human to be safe out there anyhow.”

“Then it takes ten years. This isn’t right.” Sans both knew they weren’t going to change their minds. “Let me guess? Let me take a stab at this?” Sans pointed to the Prince, looking at him straight on. “Not only do you not having fighting power, you can barely keep your form. And if I win Frisk, then you have to give away the soul power you stole, meaning you’d be a flower again.”

“I am not losing him again,” Toriel shouted at Sans. “These are the rules of it. Now leave the table.” She looked toward Asriel. “Escort Frisk out. It is time for us to talk with her.”

Sans left the table and went back to Papyrus. He stuffed his bony hands in his jacket and looked back at him. He tapped his slippered foot constantly. He looked back to Undyne too.

Then he turned and looked at Frisk coming out with Asriel. Such an odd human. Radiating energy. Seeing how Gaster started to use his energy before she was ever taken Underground again? Her eyes too, that turquoise blue should have been a dead giveaway something was funny before. Human eyes were never that shade of blue.

“Well, we tried, Sans,” Papyrus said softly. “Poor Frisk.”

Definition and Translation

Frisk came back. She noticed everyone's demeanor was high. Beyond high. She could have sworn she might even be able to *feel* how upset everyone had been. All but Asriel. He seemed to have exhilaration all around him. Why?

"Come to the table," Toriel insisted to Frisk.

Frisk came to the table with Asriel close beside her. *Whatever this is, it isn't good.*

"After much deliberation," Asgore began, "we have decided that the best thing for you wasn't the book we often use. You see, at this rate, you won't be able to leave the Underground safely for years. Many years. Anywhere for five to ten years."

I had that feeling. Humanity is tricky.

"So, instead, if we work out some minor deliberations in one gigantic contract, and have each kingdom/country sign that instead, it might only be a year to two years," Asgore continued.

Sounds good. Sounds too good to be true.

"It wouldn't be the same kind of freedom," Toriel admitted. "It would be more like . . ."

"Vacationing outward," Asgore said, "because you would technically belong to the Monster Kingdom."

"Technically?" Frisk watched both of them. "If I marry Asriel?"

"Either one. This book is ancient, and it spells out many different things." Asgore patted the book. "The highest being that there will only be one husband within six months, and power does not change hands."

"Power doesn't change hands?" Frisk asked carefully.

"It means that since Asriel has your power, then that is that," Toriel said. "He wouldn't have to give it back, even if Sans won. It also means that Sans couldn't collect his power back either," Toriel said. "If he won. Everything is as it will remain."

Okay?

"Power means *everything* to a monster," Sans spoke out of term. "They are pulling in an archaic book to keep his power. That same book though makes you belong to the Monster Kingdom like property."

"Not like property. It's just the way it must be." Toriel reached for Frisk's hand. "If you take your power back from Asriel, then he goes back to being the evil little flower. Please, Frisk. That isn't right. You always did the right thing before."

“That’s a hell of a way to butter her up,” Sans said again.

“Please stop speaking out of term,” Asgore warned him. “You are still in the presence of royalty. We may not be as strict usually, but this is a serious matter. Silence from you.”

Frisk actually heard Sans’ slipper pound the floor. Sans’. Slipper. Pound. *This is bad*. No more freedom. It wasn’t even a choice. Frisk knew it wouldn’t happen overnight. Maybe not even within a year. But no more? Ever? Property? That’s when she heard something click on her foot. It looked like a glow ring from a party attached to her foot. She had a feeling with this news, it was supposed to prevent her from teleporting in desperation.

“This book also has different rules since it was only used for relationships for six months. Courting was done much quicker.” Toriel laid her hand on the book. “Sans? Are you going to follow these rules, or do you denounce Frisk?”

“This is absolutely fucked up!” Sans said to her, taking his chance to speak again for all it was worth.

Frisk noticed that Alphys snuck into the room, and seemed to want to talk to Sans. She was inching closer.

“Alphys,” Toriel said, addressing her as well. “This was a closed manner with Sans, Papyrus, Frisk, and Undyne.”

“Um?” Alphys appeared in the room. “Hello?” Alphys looked toward Undyne. “Undyne texted me. So, can I speak please with Sans real quick? Please?”

“No,” Asgore said firmly.

“Oh. Uh.” She snorted softly. “Well, can I please speak on this matter? As a fellow modern day monster? I-I promise just a little and I’m gone? Please?”

Toriel looked toward Asgore, then back at Alphys. “You have the floor, Doctor Alphys.”

Alphys stood beside Frisk, not taking a seat. “When monsters first came into being more civil, there was no real respect for each other yet. The ‘marriages’ were not marriages, they were enslavement, and used between 15-20 Monsters at a time with one woman. They shoved their energy into her, and five out of ten times the ‘bride’ didn’t survive. After the six months, the woman did choose one if she survived, but it was usually not based on love, but the one who was the gentlest with her.” She coughed. “The other ‘husbands’ didn’t take their power back, even though power is important to monsters, because the woman would often be pregnant before a husband was picked anyhow, and they all wanted it to have its power, just in case *it was* the father. You see it was only the clear consummation of ‘choice’ that decided the husband. Regular matings against her will occurred often. Anyone could have been the father. When things got better, there was choice and only one consummation of choice. That’s why the power statement of staying ‘as is’ was abolished soon after, and why it’s only available at such an archaic time.” She cleared her throat. “In closing, it was a different world. No decent monster of today would consent to the barbaric actions described. Not

one.” Alphys looked back toward Sans. “Everyone knows no modern day monster would ever dare to say yes to it. Everyone.”

Alphys bowed to the royalty. “This is quite unfair, and I plead that you change your minds before something dreadful happens.”

“Your voice has been heard,” Toriel remarked. “Now please leave.”

Home. Home. Home. Home. Home. Home. Out of here. Anywhere! Frisk was trying anything she could. The writing was already on the wall. Whatever that book said, it was bad. Sans was definitely going to denounce her. He was nice enough to save her once, twice, and then good enough to put up with the husband nonsense.

Asriel would win her. She’d be a Princess against her will, trapped in the mountain forever! *I’d rather take my chances out there!* Except that people also died because of her. Chance taking meant risking innocent people too. *Maxie. Ida. An entire restaurant of people that I may or may not have known. A walking area in front of a movie theatre. Women, men, children. Killed. Their loved ones had their lives torn apart because of me.*

Sans kept his eye sockets closed as he listened to Alphys. She was the one who knew the most history in that area. It was a vicious time. However, she was also trying to talk to him too. And at the ending, he heard it loud and clear. He knew what he had to do.

He opened his eyes as Alphys walked away, but gave her a small thumbs up, to let her know he got it. He looked over toward Papyrus. “Don’t worry,” he whispered. “This isn’t going to happen to the poor human.” Papyrus looked back at him oddly. “Don’t judge me, Pap.”

“Back to where we were,” Toriel said. “Sans the Skeleton? Do you wish to denounce Frisk?”

Sans sauntered over toward the table. “Nah.”

Toriel and Asgore both gave him an odd look.

Sans grasped the human’s shoulder. “Could be interesting.”

“Interesting?” Toriel lost her composure a moment.

“Sure, yeah, I mean she’s human. Who knows how that’ll feel?” Sans looked toward Frisk. “What say you, human? Are you ready for a good time with me tonight?” *Please guess it’s a damn ACT. I can’t get pass this without it.* Her whole body was clenched up tight.

“I. Uh?”

He watched Frisk. *Come on, remember me, Kid. Don’t start us back at square one.* Then he saw a strange sheen run over her eyes. *Yes, she knows.* Now that he knew she got it, he pulled her up out of the chair. “So, do I have to wait ‘til tonight, or can I go ahead and get off work for the rest of the day?”

“No!” Asriel was the one surprisingly who bent. “No, I can’t do that to the human.” He groaned. “Forget it, standard two husbandry rules.”

“He’s . . .” Toriel glared at Sans, then back towards Asriel. She knew he was ACTing.

Asgore didn’t look as convinced, but he shared a look with his son. “By law, if we do this-“

“-and she picks Sans then that’s it for me, I get it,” Asriel said quickly. “I can’t.”

Heh. Good. Sans knew that ACT wouldn’t work on Toriel, but King Asgore and Asriel had more doubts. Instinct was supposed to be one of the strongest forces in the world after all.

“All you had to do was talk to me, Flowey. I won’t take back my power.”

Hm? Sans looked toward Frisk who spoke.

“I won’t take back my power,” Frisk said again, as she addressed Asriel. “I don’t want it. I don’t need it, Flowey. Like I said before, what you see is what you get.” Frisk stood up at the table. “You have been through a lot, and I can’t pretend to know how it felt to not be able to love. I would never wish that upon you either,” Frisk said. “I understand how important you are to your father and your mother as well, that they were willing to go this far to save you.” She took her hands and pushed them away from her body. “I refuse to take the energy back that keeps you alive. Just be decent to me, and I’ll be decent to you.” She laid her hands on the table. “I am Frisk, and I try to do what’s right, but you gotta treat me right too. Got it?”

“I can . . . I can keep this power?” Asriel approached her. “You mean, even if you don’t want to choose this sort of kind of wiley little flower-er-goat, you’ll still let me borrow this power?”

“Yeah. Of course,” Frisk answered coolly. “I don’t want to take away your right to love, just for extra power. That’s not me. And no matter what gets shoved in my soul, I’m still me.” She felt something smooth briefly touch her hand. At the same time she felt something else wrapping around her other hand.

She heard a sort of grunt to her side as she felt vines wrap around her.

“You called it right, Frisk.” Asriel slowly approached her. “I grew up as Flowey. Everything he did and remembers is mine too. You felt out the name I respond to the most.”

Frisk heard ‘Hey, hey,’ from her side. Sans’ voice. She turned to look at him to see what he wanted, but felt her chin being grabbed and her lips more than pressed against a goat. She was practically being mauled by a goat tongue! She felt the vinery around her starting to cut into her skin too, sending pain rippling through her body. It was like a thousand paper cuts at once!

Then, it was all over. She felt herself against some kind of jacket. She looked up and saw Sans. The expression she once saw in his eyes. When she knew what he’d been all about at Mettaton’s fourteen years ago. The eye sockets had no twinkle, just blackness inside. It

wasn't directed at her though, it was directed ahead. The small cuts on her body she felt all over didn't hurt anymore. She stole a glance at her arms. They seemed fine.

"A small correction I *tried* to fix for you, Frisk," Asriel's voice said toward her. "A more evenness upon the energy. Didn't work, but I tried anyhow. My way of saying thank you," he said to her. "That's the nicest thing anyone's ever done for me. To let me stay. You're letting me stay." He tried to approach her again, but Frisk felt something break on her foot, and she was being swerved quickly to the left. "Move her as you wish, Sans. Things are different now. It's not instinct anymore. She has the kindest soul in a hundred dimensions, but I *feel* it now." Asriel pointed toward her. "There's no confusion between her and Chara." He started chanting another kind of language. Frisk had no idea what it was, probably monster, but it made Sans growl.

Sans. Growl. Sans could growl? Skeletons could growl? She heard the same kind of chilling language from Sans too and she felt herself being pressed deeper into his jacket.

Then, she finally understood something in her language again.

"Sans, don't!" Toriel?

Then, she heard Sans. "Go with Papyrus. Now, Frisk." He let go in a hurry, and she felt herself almost in a kind of whirlwind, and then into Papyrus' arms.

Sans and Papyrus' House . . .

"Don't worry, human, everything is fine." Papyrus transported her away from there to Papyrus and Sans' home. He let go of her. "Well? What an exciting day for you! Would you like something to drink?"

That was fast and weird, yet she actually heard Papyrus' bones rattle while he was standing. Frisk looked at her foot and saw the glow ring now gone. *What just happened?*

Back at the Castle . . .

"Stand down, Asriel!" King Asgore tried to reach his son again. "Do you have any idea how many infractions you have brought upon yourself?!"

"Here, Kid, it's learning time!" Sans yelled at the Prince, not caring about his royal status at all. "Where do we even begin?"

He had a lot of things to address that he didn't want to. He'd rather be out eating right now, getting to hang out with Papyrus, getting Frisk soon again to teach her a little more of her magic control, and then heading home for lunch. Just relax, enjoy the day. It was the best time, when he could just kick back and enjoy life. Been pretty great for the last two days.

But oh no. Oh no, that chillaxed version of him wouldn't be showing itself *anytime soon*.

Every bone inside of him was vibrating. What Asriel just did. What he made *him* do? That's right, what he did. "Apologies, but it couldn't be helped."

"Understood," Alphys said quietly. Undyne nodded. They both understood the situation.

"Okay. Let's go through this. One at a time." Sans tried to keep his cool. "Prince Asriel. You took my wife and you kissed her, forcefully inside of her mouth." He held up one bony finger. "You held her in your embrace." He held up another bony finger. "You absorbed and exchanged power through her." Sans said that slowly, holding up a third finger. "Not through her soul, through her own body without permission you sicko!"

Asriel scratched behind his ear. "I was making it fairer."

"Asriel." Toriel finally addressed it. "You gave and took her energy through your body and her body without permission, and *not* through the soul. It's an archaic move with a name no one uses anymore."

"Fucking," Sans interrupted her.

Toriel winced. She wanted to correct him on language, but no one had that right. That was the true word. Words evolved over time, but when the actions did not continue, they stopped evolving.

Fucking. It wasn't love or sweet. Asriel was forcing an infusion exchange into her body.

"Please." Asriel scoffed. "Sans just did the same thing."

"I barely recognize you, son," Asgore said as he looked toward Asriel. "He *had* to. You were taking his energy that was inside of her, taking that into yours, and putting your own into her body, replacing it without approval. Not only that, but your energy is weaker inside than his, and it saw yours as an invader, leading her into pain!" He looked disgusted even having to discuss it. "Monsters have been killed over what you did, Asriel! It's archaic, no one's done it since B.C!"

Asriel sighed, rudely. "So what? You're saying it's like we both fucked Frisk just now?"

Toriel dropped her head in shame, Asgore tilted his head up and Sans just continued to stare.

"Same difference to me," Asriel said. "There wasn't any enjoyment in it. It felt no different."

Sans held up another finger. "You tried to up your claim on her soul, *forcing* me to take action if I wanted to keep her as my wife." He tightened up all his bony fingers. He was so lucky she had enough of *his* energy inside of her soul that it didn't hurt her body, and he was able to reheal Asriel's damage too.

“Sans the Skeleton,” Toriel began to address him, “I *know* that he has caused a great amount of pain inside your instinct.” She glanced away and then back. “As well as just the real you.” She said it more in a whisper. “Double husbandry, if we can put this archaic business all behind us?”

“Ooh?” Sans approached the royal table. “You mean, just kind of pretend that you didn’t demand I forcefully have sex tonight with the poor human I used to stack hot dogs on top of when she was a kid in order to keep her as my wife? Or, you know, that your son there didn’t just grab and kiss my wife again?” Sans scratched his skull. “Or the fact Asriel was fucking with Frisk, making me do it too?” Sans gestured at Asriel. “I will fight you if she has *any* growing powers now, I mean it.”

“Sans the Skeleton,” King Asgore began, “the situation was taken more out of control than it was meant to get.”

“Yeah, uh huh. So, Asriel Dreemur, hugging and kissing on Frisk, you know, and fucking with her, it shouldn’t really phase me, huh?” Sans crossed his arms. “Methinks that’s *more* than enough to release Frisk to me, but that’s not gonna happen, is it?”

“That one isn’t really in this documentation.”

What?

“Oh!” Toriel looked toward Asgore. “We forgot about Lawyer.”

“Oh, yes.” Asgore waved his hand over to the corner and Lawyer presented himself. “Sorry. Certain things. We don’t need any more help in this matter.”

“Involving the human?” Sans looked toward Lawyer. “What were you here for?”

“To make sure all facts were pulled together coherently.” Lawyer looked at his documentation. “Unfortunately, I have no knowledge of this old type of sexual play for monsters, and it’s not written down in the books that I studied to make these contracts.”

“It’s not sexual, it has a different meaning. One that evolved from its original archaic meaning,” King Asgore said. “It’s not going to be written down in the books we gave you for study because it didn’t exist anymore. Everyone infuses through the soul.”

“Until today,” Sans corrected the King, “and what is this about contracts?”

“We didn’t want you or Frisk to think we were using our powers over the situation,” King Asgore explained. “All we wanted was Asriel safer. Ergo, the human’s ‘contract’ would be the decider. However.” King Asgore held his paw out. “Lawyer, we no longer need your assistance. We will work out something else.”

“Hm?” The Lawyer looked at his watch. “Well, the contracts have already been signed and confirmed for,” he warned them. “In less than half an hour, they will start to become valid. There’s no time to renege on the signatures you got for it without breaching it.”

“What?” Toriel asked. “No. No, that can’t be.” She looked toward Asriel. “You didn’t get everyone.”

“I didn’t,” Asriel said, “the third kingdom, I didn’t collect theirs.”

“No, but the fourth choice warned him of the contract and he took the initiative to come to my land and sign it,” Lawyer confirmed.

Toriel covered her face. “Oh no, please no.”

“What’s in those contracts?” Sans took one of the papers. “Multiple Monster Wife?” Oh no. He was getting a bad vibe throughout his bones.

Toriel brought more books out in a hurry. “We never gave the volume number, find a decent one!” She looked at Lawyer. “I mean, try and find that particular book we wanted.”

Asgore, Asriel and Toriel were going through the books as fast as they could but the Lawyer tapped the one he had seen previously.

Lawyer picked it up. “I have to be fair. This is the book. I saw the whole thing, remember?”

“Different volume,” Toriel pleaded. “A different volume, please?”

Ooooh shit. *I can’t do any of that crap!*

“Well. I could be wrong, it could be this one.” Lawyer tapped on the other book beside it. “Possibly. They are right next to each other.”

Thank goodness, the human’s giving us some slight leeway. Lawyer had to follow his own rules, but he could go with ‘he was confused’ if any of it was recorded. And everything was recorded at the castle now. Sans picked up the second book Lawyer tapped on. It was a slightly higher edition. It was a little more ‘romantic’, but it wasn’t much better than the other one. *Damn!* There was no way he could do any of that. Old monsters were just so different.

Lawyer took the book from him. “You’re a Skeleton, right? You are supposed to be one of the most brilliant species of the monster race. You ever study contracting?”

Sans didn’t feel like answering. Flattery wouldn’t get him shit.

“Well, you might want to learn about them, and flexibility, translations, and definitions. Because as awkward as you think that little display was with Frisk Shades, it’s not nearly as bad as the other definition.” Lawyer winked. “The more you know. You know? Now, I need to get copies of these for the other signaturists. King Asgore, a copier if you please? Oh, and?” He gestured to Sans. “The original way *with* permission? That’s just called ‘infusion’, correct?” Sans nodded slowly. “Fine. I’ll get the addendum in for that. It’s generic already since we expected some wording, definition, or translation to be missing.”

Lawyer was speaking in a whole other language. Generic addendum? *Definitions? Translations? Generic addendum, why’s he talking to me about that?* “Just, you know,

wondering?” Sans said looking toward Toriel and Asgore. “What happens if you break this contract?”

“I don’t know,” Toriel confessed. “Humans are tricky. I just didn’t want all the responsibility on us. Oh, who knows what they could do?” She looked at Sans. “I’m sorry. I *just* wanted Asriel safe, not to take away Frisk’s freedom.”

“Breach contract?” Lawyer said. “I would advise against doing that, as per the warnings I gave before.”

“Why did you do this?” Sans had to ask them. They *knew* how dangerous human creatures were with those contract things. “A contract *just* for your kid?”

“We had to save Asriel, but we had to make sure the kingdom knew that we weren’t pressing the issue so Asriel won,” Asgore said. “We didn’t care about winning, just to have him be safe. The last thing we needed was more bad light shined on the kingdom by letting others think we were being manipulative.”

That’s exactly what you were doing. Sans looked at the book that Lawyer brought back. *Definitions* .It felt . . . like a puzzle.

“I’m sorry to make you wait. I will show you to the copier,” Asgore sighed as Lawyer followed him out.

Asriel and Sans stared at each other until Lawyer came back with copies from the book.

“Okay. This is how it goes,” Lawyer said, distributing clipped sheets to Toriel, Asgore, Asriel and Sans. “The top sheets are from the pages of the book. The other sheets are copies of the contract.” His sight lingered on Sans more though. “Mister Skeleton? Are you okay? You look a little . . . different.”

“Stressed,” Sans said. “*Heavily*.”

“Seeing these sheets, I’d guess so.” The Lawyer gestured to the papers. “The royalty felt they were being too biased in the matter since the prince was involved and they asked for intervention. This is actually not uncommon, to help keep a kingdom running smoothly when royalty could be seen using its influence upon a given situation it has a stake in, several kingdoms and/or several territories can often come into play. Now, I will be distributing the copies of the book referred to in the contract to the kingdoms and territories who are now involved, and together they will find the best judicial action each time. The consequences will be used out of the book itself for foul play, and any consequences that had more than one option will be decided by a vote.”

Sans looked through the sheets. Seven kingdoms. “A lot seem to be invested in such a small thing . . .” Sans said it carefully. “Really invested in the love life of a couple of monsters.”

“I just write it,” Lawyer said to Sans. “So.” He brought out a few of the original contract papers with a pen from his pocket and clicked it. “Be prepared to sign, Mister Sans the Skeleton.”

Sans looked at the paper. He could easily set it on fire, but something told him it wasn't that easy. "If we don't sign, then nothing can happen. I know that much about these things."

"Yes, but unfortunately--"

"I already signed it," Asriel said, a hint of guilt in his voice. "Mom and dad did too. Once you said no, I was supposed to get the last signature on it and it would be official. That was the ACT that was supposed to take place."

Sans looked at the copy of the contract papers. He didn't speak to anyone as he looked through them several minutes.

"Sans, please?" Toriel's voice was soft. "There's nothing left to do. If only one husband signs, then the one that doesn't forfeits. Asriel will take decent care of her."

Sans still wasn't answering. It looked grim. He couldn't do what the book wanted, but to let Frisk end up with that evil flower that brought all of this out? Just to win. They all did. "So, you all think I should just give up Frisk, huh? She deserves the rosy life of a Princess?"

"It's not a bad deal," Asgore answered. "Many little girls grow up dreaming about being a Princess."

"Yeah, not Frisk." Sans didn't even look at him as he talked to them. *People were out killing for Frisk. A simple contract in three days where seven kingdoms happen to want to help out?*

"The contract is almost in effect," The lawyer said. "Mister Sans the Skeleton, if you want to sign, the time is now. Signing later will be impossible, although you *should* look at the definitions and translations at the top."

"What happens if I just burn it?" He had to know.

"Prince Asriel signed other papers still giving him legal domain over the property known as Frisk."

"Give it up," Asriel said. "I promise, I'll be good to her."

"I really suggest you sign it, Mister Sans the Skeleton, after looking over some general definitions." The Lawyer said again. "Time is running out. Skeletons are supposed to be one of the smartest monsters around, correct?"

There it was again. Sans tapped his foot, looking through it carefully. Something wasn't right. Lawyer's job was to remain unbiased between his kingdom and theirs while he worked for them. However, he was the only one urging him to sign. Why would he care? It was already done. Not to mention if he wrote the contract, he would know what Frisk would have to endure. She was human.

He'd looked into Lawyer more than once. While he wasn't the most innocent of humans, he wasn't full of evil. *Definitions. Translations. Generic addendums. Insisting I sign. Insisting I learn contracts. Knowing that I was smarter than most people would mistake me to be.* Why was he focused on that?

No. It was a puzzle. There was something right in front of him in that paper that he was missing. And when it came to puzzles, he and Papyrus were the best. *Definitions. Translations. Definitions. Translations.*

Then he saw it. The wording glowed as bright as ever, like when he discovered that lost word in a puzzle, the eye couldn't look away once it was found. And. It was.

He dropped the paper, and grabbed Asriel. "Do you have any idea what you signed?!" Sans looked toward Lawyer who was taking several steps backward. He had warned him, but he was *still* the one to make the contract. Sans took a step toward Lawyer, as Lawyer took a step backward. Lawyer held his hands up. "One foot in obeying your kingdom, one foot in helping this one. One is commanded, one is mandatory." He took another step forward, and Lawyer took two steps back.

"I." Lawyer cleared his throat. "Definiton-wise, it's doable. I *made* it doable. Just look at the definitions."

"I don't know if the definition can bother to compare with the translation!" Sneaky humans. Sneaky greedy humans. Sans looked toward the top of the contract where the definitions were.

Yeah. Now that he knew how they worked, he could start to see it. "For not living under darkness in a mountain, mankind has become pretty damn evil."

Sans slammed the paper down. "Addendum: Another translation fix."

Lawyer cleared his throat. "A generic addendum?"

"Yeah," Sans said. "Frisk isn't 'property'."

Lawyer nodded. "An excellent choice. You'll need more, but an excellent choice."

"Property?" Asriel watched as Sans turned slowly to him. "Where would that be?"

"That's what she'd been," Sans told him. "Isn't it? Did she get a say in anything? Her signature was never even asked for."

"Frisk was considered property of the Monster Kingdom?" Asgore asked. He looked toward Lawyer. "She wasn't property. She is here of her own accord. I mean. Well, she would belong to the Monster Kingdom. Property is such a harsh word though."

"I was making a contract without her permission, you said to do it by all means possible," Lawyer reminded him. "I can't betray my own people."

But he didn't leave Frisk on the selling block without at least a shot at redemption. Sans took a long look into Lawyer, making him back up a couple of feet. *Anything else you hiding slippery human?* No. That was it. There might be some small surprises in there, but he got changed what needed changed.

Lawyer handed the paper back after writing in the addendum. "Are you ready to forfeit her now?" Lawyer asked Sans.

"I barely get a few minutes to look over an hours worth of reading," Sans said. "Of course, it was supposed to be that way. Right Majesties?" He addressed Toriel and Asgore.

"There is no need for hours of reading," Toriel said.

Wow. She completely missed what making Frisk property meant. Did any of them get it? Did any of them know what they were about to do to the legendary hero of the Underground?

"Lawyer? Is this doable without hurting Frisk?" He had no choice. He had to trust in Lawyer. While Lawyer obeyed his own people, he took the risk to try and help Frisk.

"It's in the definitions," Lawyer said.

Yep. *Leap of faith*. Sans signed his name as he heard everyone almost gasp.

Lawyer took the paper, and pulled out more papers. "I also need it here, and here, and here." Sans signed each one.

"Sans, you are being ridiculous!" Toriel yelled at him. "Those actions, you can't take those actions. It's just postponing the inevitable."

"Frisk will be mine by midnight," Asriel said to him. "I don't get why you're doing this?"

Sans watched Lawyer collect those papers. There was no time to read.

"Last stack." Lawyer put out two more papers.

Sans signed them.

Lawyer put them up. He held his hand out toward Sans. Sans shook it. "Skeletons truly are brilliant. If you are ever freed, I suggest learning how to be a contractor. You might have learned a great deal by the time this is all over."

Property

Sans held onto his copy of all of the papers after Lawyer left. He stared at Toriel and Asgore. “You’re still waiting for me to denounce her, aren’t you? Even after I signed all those papers?”

Toriel gave him a strange look. “Sans? This isn’t a joke. I’m sorry the way this turned out, but these are legal contracts and not governed by us.”

“I’m *not* denouncing her,” Sans said.

“Have you read it?” King Asgore said astonished. “The book, did you bother to see the book at all?”

“Yep. Got extra papers right here.” He wiggled the papers. “Humans are thorough. I like the dancing and dating, kind of tries to throw some romance in there. Kinda cute.”

“You can’t do that,” Asriel said to Sans. “You’re nuts, you can’t do that!” Asriel marched toward him, and actually tried to lay his hands on him. Sans’ blue energy was radiating with that move. “You’ll hurt Frisk. Do you have any idea what you did by signing those papers, Moron?”

“Do you?” Sans tucked the papers into his jacket. “Just over the small glimpse, I can tell you what would have happened. You, yeah, you?” Sans pointed toward Asriel. “Had to do everything for six months.”

“No,” Asriel corrected him. “Without another husband, it would be a forfeit.”

“Only on me,” Sans said. “You didn’t do what the contract said for six months?” Sans didn’t even want to say it, but they needed to know how bad they screwed up so they’d never do that again. “Then she went to the other benefactors. Meaning, the other seven kingdoms. Meaning, not only does our kingdom get split up into seven factions but Frisk? Gets split up. Into seven kingdoms.”

“That doesn’t make sense,” Toriel said. “You can’t split a human.”

“No, but you sure as hell can marry her, and with a contract all about multiple husbands?” Sans dusted off his jean jacket without a word. He dusted off his sleeves without a word. “Let’s just say if she doesn’t get Asriel or I as a husband, I’m gonna just ask Frisk if she wants me to kill her.”

There. Yeah. Now they got it.

Asriel was almost speechless. “But we *can’t*. We’ll hurt her.”

“No more than we just did,” Sans said. “Lawyers smart. He couldn’t disobey his kingdom. Yeah, he knew what he had to put in, probably because his own kingdom told him to do it.

But inside, he wasn't evil, and he did his best to give Frisk a chance."

"How?" Asriel asked. "But how?"

"Archaic meaning. Modern meaning," Sans said. "What did you do before, Asriel, that pissed me the hell off?"

"Fuck Frisk?"

"Hm. And what do we have to do each day?"

" . . . "

"Archaic. Modern." Asgore said, starting to get the hint. "Definitions. Translation." Asgore had his own set of papers he was going through that lawyer gave him. "Sex, soul-sex, mating, fucking, loving. The human put the same vague definition for each one."

"Yeah, technically. Humans are wordy, and all about definitions." Tricky but smart creatures. "They didn't even put the word sex once."

"They have no different kinds?" Toriel asked looking at the papers.

"They sure as hell do," Sans said looking at his papers, "but Lawyer gave us a fighting chance by putting them all down as the same thing."

"But we have to follow the *book*," Asgore said still confused. "Not the contract definitions."

"Nah, book is inside contract. He translated definitions to the contract in the beginning. Humans always start the way. Have to put what a 'client' is and what a 'patient' is or whatever. The contract references the book, but the definition of it goes with the contract." Sans gestured to the paper. "Sticky language. Sticky definitions. If instead of putting sexual advances it wrote 'make pancakes', then we could just make pancakes and it would be the same thing."

Asriel looked at the copies of the book he had and started to compare the language. "The book says we must fuck our wife by midnight of the next morning." He looked at the contract and started to read it. "'From this moment hence, the term 'fuck' means any sexual advances. Sexual advances?" Asriel looked between the two. "Could it really be that easy?" Asriel asked Sans.

"Yeah, and he just made some addendum for infusion too, 'cause they go together, 'cause translation and definition. So, just gotta think what else fits the definition the human put down at the top." Sans put his papers away. "And you better *think*."

"No one has to hurt Frisk," Toriel said with relief.

"Yeah, 'cause of Lawyer." Sans wasn't dropping it that easy. "I. Have to go feed Frisk. No doubt after this, she's gonna need at least three burgers and maybe a nap."

“I didn’t plan on making you hurt Frisk,” Toriel said. “I never wanted her hurt. Not like that, never. I-I thought the most we were risking was monetary, or under extreme stress some property.” Toriel lowered her head. “I never wanted this to happen.”

“You just really wanted me to denounce her. I get it. Save your kid over her happiness,” Sans said. He pulled out the book papers he now had copies of. “Nice thing about the old days, more lenience. Take this next part.” Sans shoved it in Asgore’s face. “Any sexual advance in front of another husband can result in loss of life. In other words, if your boy kisses Frisk again in front of me, then I have the legal right to kill your kid. Isn’t that nice? Ah, for the old days.”

“You’re not happy about *anything* right now.” King Asgore said. “It’s understandable. We trusted the humans, and we were tricked.”

“Yeah. ‘Tricked’ sure is a good enough word.” Sans stuffed the papers back in his jacket. “Prince Asriel?” Asriel caught his eyes with his. “You better use infusion for the definition. She ain’t got enough of your power. If you don’t, it’s gonna hurt her. You got it?”

Asriel nodded. “What about you?”

“I’m not gonna hurt her, and that’s all you need to know,” Sans said.

“I am very sorry how this worked out,” Toriel said to him. “It was an ACT that went wrong.”

“At least no one got killed,” Asgore pointed out.

Sans didn’t say anything else. He simply disappeared.

Sans’ and Papyrus’ Home a half hour later . . .

“Need at least three of these?”

Frisk heard Sans’ voice above her. She smiled. He looked more like himself, and he had food. She was starving! “Do I ever.” She took the foiled burgers he offered. She had no idea where they were from or how good they were, she just needed some comfort food for the soul. That whole thing with the vines, it felt weird.

Sans moved around the corner and sat on the couch. “Yeah. That wasn’t pleasant, but it’s over now,” he said. “Got a lot worked out. Some of the rules changed though. We’ll touch them later, just relax for now human.”

“Ten years though?” Frisk asked Sans. “King Asgore said it’ll take ten years before I’m freed. Is that true?”

Sans looked upward on the couch, wincing one of his eye sockets. “Well? I don’t know, Papyrus thinks with tons of pushing, we might get it in five. Five to ten? But, you know, that

whole one big contract and getting them all to sign thing sounded good. I bet Lawyer could do something with that later on.”

“Lawyer?” Frisk asked.

“Yeah. Humans never like to share their names with us.” Sans leaned back more, placing his bony feet on the coffee table in front of them. It didn’t ring a bell to Frisk as much as the outside. Many things were added probably as comfort or luxury. The monsters really deserved that anyhow.

Not that they were perfect angels. They were far from that. However, history showed humans and monsters were both at fault. But, at one time they used to exist together. In fact, beside the souls difference, they were no different than anything else to each other.

Frisk ate the burger happily. It was already 1:30 and she hadn’t even had breakfast. Papyrus could get her water, but he said he couldn’t offer her any food. Probably a rule of the marriage thing.

Someone knocked on the door. Sans remained chilling and Papyrus answered it. Frisk just took another bite of her burger.

“Sans? It’s for you,” Papyrus said from the door. Sans placed his feet back on the ground, rocked himself a few times before he finally pulled himself up off the couch. Frisk tried not to laugh. That was always adorable. It was hard to believe Sans had actually been the one on the motorcycle saving her life that night.

He was just a sweet funny skeleton anyone would be happy to call a friend. Being around him felt cozy to just about anybody. He just radiated a positive, fun energy. It was hard to be in a bad mood when he was around.

When she was first remembering, the scariness popped up first, even though it hadn’t been as scary as she thought. A few truthful words and a tiny short time of scary eyes. The rest of the time hadn’t been so bad. Although their first meeting was truly kind of scary, pulling out the whoopee cushion on her was more than enough to make her lighten up right away. He was the first perfect monster to meet after the hard trip from Toriel’s.

Her memory almost seemed completed now. Remembering the mountain though, in detail, she knew it was bound to bring up other bad memories. *I have friends. I have sanctuary. The worst possible thing that could happen is me being stuck with Asriel, but even that didn’t happen because Sans helped me.*

She didn’t have Chara to get through it all, but she still had friends. Although, in her heart, she knew that while they helped? She needed someone else right then. Someone she couldn’t see.

Frisk watched as Alphys and Undyne both came over. They had been at the door Sans answered. Alphys sat in another couch in a corner, but Undyne came by and patted her head. No, she was stroking her hair. Okay? Sans just sat back on the couch next to her like he had before.

“How you doing, Frisk? You okay?” Undyne sounded really concerned.

Frisk felt weird. Almost tingly, but she was okay. Most likely it was because of lack of food. “A little tingly. I just needed food,” she said. Undyne was still stroking her hair. “Something wrong?”

“Nah.” She was definitely lying. “Alphys and I got you something.” She went over to Alphys. Alphys had a gift beside her. Undyne took it and brought it to Frisk. “Here you go.”

“It’s from G and M,” Alphys spoke up. “So, it’s from Mettaton too.”

Frisk opened it up. Ooh. “Cake?”

“Expensive cake,” Sans said as he looked it. “Makes my burgers look like nothing. Thanks, guys.”

“Sorry. Hey, it was a three monster thing, so it shouldn’t look bad,” Undyne said.

Cake. Burger. Cake. She should probably go for burger. Frisk yawned, her body feeling really drained along with tingly. She grabbed the burger out of the foil, noticing the kind it had been. The foil was regular, nondescript, but the bun was a unique brand by the company. “I was craving one of these a few days ago.”

“Well, lucky you,” Sans said.

“Not craving it anymore.” Frisk bit into it, knowing she couldn’t be ungrateful, and she had to eat. *He just forgot, that was all.* Or he didn’t know how painful it was to eat a Monarch burger after her choice of restaurant had gotten all those people killed.

“Something wrong?” Sans asked.

“Fine.” Frisk lied. She touched her lips. Those felt weird too.

“We can reapply some makeup tomorrow if you want?” Alphys asked. “We just came to stop by for a bit to see you. That whole debacle kind of ruined our time together.”

“You’ll see them in a couple of days,” Sans said to Frisk, turning to look at her. His funny little light guiders seemed okay again. He stretched against the couch and yawned. “Come on, Frisk, I need a nap.”

Hm?

“Burger later, nap now,” Sans said as he tugged her up. He waved at Papyrus. “Be up in . . . just uh, get us up by uhhh . . .”

“I will wake you in an hour,” Papyrus said. “Good night, Sans. Good night, Sister.”

“Night, Frisk,” Undyne said.

“Nighty-night,” Alphys answered.

“I’m guessing I don’t get a choice even during the day?” Frisk asked Sans. “Yip?”

“Yep. Your body is tired anyhow.” Sans trotted ahead of her, stopping at his door. He looked back down at Undyne and Alphys. Frisk watched them leave out the door. Sans looked back in front of him, grabbed a key and unlocked his door.

As they went in, Sans rolled right over on the bed from the right side.

Frisk moved toward the bed and watched as Sans almost instantly fell asleep like always. Then he grabbed her like a teddy bear again. Hanging out with the funny skeleton was much easier than with Asriel. Except he also tended to—

“Noogie the Frisk.”

Noogie her gently before falling asleep. The more messed up her hair was, the happier he’d be. If she tried to fix her hair after the noogie, he’d just noogie her again. So she left her messed up hair alone and fell asleep on him.

She started to stir as she felt gentle poking in her side. She looked toward the other side of the bed. Sans was poking her to get up? *How long did I sleep?*

“Rest and food was really needed,” Sans said as he rolled out of bed. “Heh. I remember I used to kind of feed ya, hang out, and let you be on your way. Um? Not this time. Come on over here, Frisk.”

Frisk moved out of bed the other way and approached Sans. “What is it?”

“Closer.” He wiggled his finger bone toward her. “Not a word, okay? Close your eyes.”

Frisk closed her eyes. She felt a tingling sensation through her body again.

“Okay, you can open them, Pal.”

Frisk opened them again. “My body felt warm.”

“Yeah, don’t worry about it.” Sans held her hand and trotted her out, but Papyrus was already coming up the stairs. “Uh? Hey, Papyrus.”

Papyrus stared at Frisk. He looked back toward Sans.

“I didn’t like it,” Sans muttered to him.

Like what? Frisk didn’t know.

“Only a few strands were white, Sans.”

“I didn’t like it,” Sans said again.

Frisk didn’t know. *Wait.* “Did Alphys and Undyne sneak in and do my nails or something?” She looked at them. That strange, exotic blue as her hair was on her nails.

“Sans?!” Papyrus seemed to be scolding his brother, upset about something.

“It’s not. Exact science, I was just trying to fix it. Shut up, you don’t get it yet. Let’s go, Frisk. Downstairs.” Sans let go of her hand and trotted down this time.

Frisk followed. *Less than three days ago I was with Maxie and Gloria.* Maxie was dead. Gloria was in the hospital. She bit her lip slightly, thinking about the Monarch burger she just ate, but followed downstairs.

“Hey, why you got tears in your eyes?” Sans asked. He seemed half scared. “You okay? You’re not hurt?”

A lot more compassionate than he used to be. Funny and laid back was him. Compassionate? Not so much. “No.” Frisk wiped her eyes. “Just thinking about my cousin, Maxie. It happens sometimes.” She wiped her eyes.

“Oh. Grieving, okay.” Sans gestured to the couch. “Take a break, Frisk. There’s a reason we ate a ton of food and rested for a good hour.”

Frisk sat down and watched him sit down next to her.

“Here, prop your feet up on the coffee table. That’s what it’s for. We don’t drink coffee around here,” Sans said to her.

Frisk followed his lead. Boy, her feet were filthy. She lost her shoes on the way to the mailbox in the shooting. Her chances would have been better if they hadn’t been her casual loafers that day. “I should have worn sneakers.”

“Well, no one said you were going to get shot and get sent Underground. So don’t worry about it. Oh? Actually, hang on.” She watched as Sans rocked a couple of times on the couch and then stood up. He went up to his room, and then came back down with a pair of slippers. “You’re my size now, so these should work.” He reached over and shoved the slippers on.

Well, at least they were comfortable. She bopped her feet back and forth against each other, noticing Sans doing the same thing. Heh. Funny, her feet tingled as she moved them. “I can’t believe they got my feet somehow too? Is that nail polish on my feet, or is your energy still doing stuff to me?” He stopped bopping his feet. *Did I say something wrong?*

“Let’s not focus on the infusion,” Sans said. “It’s not a, uh, sort of social topic? Alright?”

“Oh. Faux pas,” Frisk apologized. “Sorry.”

“Nah, Frisk. *You* ain’t got a thing to be sorry about.” His voice had lost a lot of its jovial sense. “So, you know that whole Multiple Monster Wife book thing that we kind of dodged?”

“The thing that would have taken any chance of freedom away?” Frisk asked. “Yeah, I remember it.”

“Well. We didn’t exactly dodge it, more like curved around it,” Sans revealed. “After you left, I found out the royal family didn’t want the whole kingdom distrusting them after such a

rotten move, so they left it all up to contract.”

Frisk could feel her body seize up. “Human contract? Yip?”

“Yep.”

“Hm.” Things weren’t going to be so easy now, she could feel it. “I don’t blame you if you denounce me then. I don’t know what everyone was hiding from me, but I knew it was bad. You’ve already done a lot for me, Sans. Really, thanks had been paid up a long time ago. I don’t know why you’re even putting up with this.”

“Because we can’t ever pay *enough*.” Sans demeanor changed again. “Come here, Buddy. Let me show you something.” He rocked twice and got off the couch, this time snagging her hand and bringing her away too.

Then, they were in the middle of . . . “Echo flowers are down there?” Waterfall? She didn’t recognize it. A bridge, a high bridge. Another new addition to the Underground. Then, that’s when she saw it. It took her breath away. It wasn’t in front of her, and it wasn’t below.

“It’s not just me,” Sans said, gesturing out past the bridge.

Sans took her to a spot where she could see almost the entire Underground. From Snowdin to Hotlands, and above it all? Above there were red lights, mixed in with all the other colors of the new Underground. And in those red lights, was one huge message. If she had stood anywhere else, she couldn’t see it. Every red light had to be on to see it. But, there it was.

THANK YOU FRISK

Her throat went dry at the sight. It wasn’t just a small thank you, and it was clear from the lights used, it wasn’t made overnight. Everything from simple light bulbs, street lights, house lights, Christmas lights, and even certain lights of what was clearly the G and M places.

The mountain was still so dark, and yet the monsters took the beauty of the small amount of freedom and made it count. Frisk felt goosebumps on her arms. “I didn’t . . . it’s not like I fell in just to do this.”

“Nah,” Sans said. “But it doesn’t matter. You did it. Everyone’s life changed out there.”

Frisk backed up. “I don’t know how to feel about that.”

“Don’t have ta think about how ya feel. Just wanted you to see, ‘cause you never got to see.” Sans moved away. “The Underground did that for you while it was changing. Just in case ya ever came back, not every monster would be able to say it. So, everyone got to say it at once.”

Oh. It was nice, but it was so nice, that her brain couldn’t quite wrap around it. It was making her stomach feel funny.

“Once you start interacting, you’re going to feel the difference. Whether you want it or not,” Sans warned her. “Just letting you know ‘cause you’re going to have to mingle sooner or

later. Well, sooner actually. We're going to eat out at G and M later tonight."

She felt herself back in Sans' house again. No, wait, the lab?

"I actually got to leave you with, uh, Undyne and Alphys for about half an hour," Sans said. "You two watch her."

"Fingernail polish?" Undyne gave Sans an odd look.

Sans didn't say anything, just disappeared without her.

Sans' House . . .

"Okay, yeah, I know it sounds bad," Sans said as he handed Papyrus the contract papers, and tried to explain what happened. "Calm down, Papyrus."

"Calm down?!" Papyrus shook the contract papers. "They pulled it into the humans hands, and-and using that barbaric book?! It's circa 2400 BC!"

"The things are a lot less bad than you think," Sans pointed out. "It's all about definition thanks to Lawyer. See?" He pulled out the paper. "It could technically mean lay down with your wife with sexual advances in mind afterward. So, we took a nap, and I gave her a little unknown infusion and uh, pretty fingernails?"

"It used to just be cuddle at night." Papyrus placed the contract papers down. "Fucking?"

"Yeah, let's just call it unknown infusion," Sans said. "I know, I know, it's what Asriel did, but my energy is built up in her. She can't feel any pain, so let's just go with that, okay?"

Papyrus groaned. "Dating?"

"Eh. She'll think we're just getting food."

"Ceremonial dancing?"

"I'll take her out on the dance floor and teach her when the part comes."

"Energy residue cover up?"

"Uuh." Sans couldn't say anything for that one. "I'll get to that one when I gotta get to it. She knows dog residue. At least she knows residue."

"Not to mention there is still the regular cuddling, along with the bridal style exchanging and . . . everything done in six months?!"

"It was competitive back then, Papyrus. Not long lasting." Sans held his bony hands up. "I know, it's *not* good. It could be a hell of a lot worse though, Papyrus."

“You’re finagling definitions just to get through it,” Papyrus whined. “You can’t finagle the last part, Sans. This is absolutely dreadful.”

“Yeah. But. I can’t just let her go to Asriel,” Sans pointed out. “Plus, I don’t *really* want the royalty to win now after pulling that **bone-headed** move they just did!” He didn’t want to get into details. “The humans got some heavy trickery the other way too. If me or Asriel screws up, Frisk is going to be divided into seven different kingdoms.”

“You can’t divide a human,” Papyrus said.

“No, but you can divide her *hand*,” Sans said.

Papyrus gasped. “I . . . oh.”

“Yeah. I gotta study those contracts, every inch of them,” Sans insisted. “I had no choice but to sign, it’s the only way I got any say-so. Especially if Asriel does mess up.”

“Sans.” Papyrus spoke softer. “I know everything the human means to the Underground. I know that every monster would put their life on the line for it. I know that everyone took that vow in front of the queen herself. I know you’ve done that too, but this is different. What if . . .?”

“I’ll ask her if she wants me to kill her,” Sans said. “If we mess up. It’s better than that kind of life. I’d help her run away, but a lot of people already died just because they were around her, or had her name. Pretty sure she won’t go for that.”

“This whole contract business is horrible,” Papyrus moaned as he looked through the papers. “Can she still be freed by you at the end? Or will that release make her property?”

“I don’t know. I haven’t had a chance to study it.” Plus, he needed to study contract making in general too. “Contracts are big. Heavy. Influential. The final word. Everyone kingdom and territory have to obey it. I think, from the way Lawyer spoke, that we might be able to make a single big contract, freeing Frisk.”

“Really?” Papyrus asked. “How?”

“I don’t know exactly. Look, it’s all still new to me too, Pap,” Sans told him. “A day at a time though.”

The Castle . . .

Toriel entered into her son’s room. Books were all scattered through the floor. Many different kinds. Basic Monsters. Growing up Monster. Human anatomy. Infusion 101. Relationships. “Asriel?”

“Flowey,” Asriel addressed his mother, his eyes didn’t leave the book.

“Not anymore,” Toriel reminded him.

“Officially, Asriel. Deep in my heart, Flowey.” He put the book down. “Call Sans and tell him to take another three extra days with Frisk. The contract says I can switch out for the most three days. I’ll bet he’ll go for it. Especially after this whole mess, say it’s a nice gesture.”

“Actually, your father and I talked, and we wanted to go over something with you?” Toriel moved through the flow of books on the floor. “My son? Since Frisk has already shown herself willing to let you continue to have her power, we feel it would be in everyone’s best interest if you denounce the marriage.” She held her paws out. “Not that you’ll never be ready for marriage, but we had to do some unsightly things to keep this going.”

“Of course you’d say that. Look how I’ve treated her. She’d be much better off with Sans.” Asriel swiveled back in his chair. “Forced infusion hurt her on my end because she didn’t have enough of my energy within her. It must be more bonded. Sans was right to intervene, she could have been very hurt. A part of me wouldn’t have cared though. Then the contract, not even knowing what I signed? Still.” He picked up a piece of paper, a pen, and another book. “Things have changed.”

“They have,” Toriel said. “Honestly, please honey. If it weren’t for him, we would have lost Frisk to a terrible future. Please. Even this action isn’t enough to make up for what we’ve done, but it’s a start.”

“No. Things have changed. I’m not ACTing anymore.” Asriel started to write more notes on the paper again.

“ACTing?” Toriel asked. “What do you mean?”

“I had to win Frisk. I *needed* that power. Deceiving the human used to be easy. I mean, sometimes she caught on in other timelines. Other times, she was smart, but I’d always get her for something. I mean, look at me? I’m cute, I’m cuddly, and I knew how to snuggle. I was sure I could get her that way.” He tapped his foot. “Now, I don’t *have* to have her. She’s willing to let me keep it no matter what. It’s mine now.”

“Yes, I know, and that’s good,” Toriel said.

“No. You don’t get it.” Asriel stole a glance toward his mother. “You’ll never understand what it felt like. Living, and knowing, and traveling, and going . . . through a hundred timelines. Some vicious, some terrible, some not so terrible, and yet just encouraging that. Not *understanding*.” He took a deep breath and focused back on his paper. “*This* Frisk. She conquered everything. And there’s a reason.” He took his pencil and drew a heart on it, then shaded it softly in. “Her soul was more pure than my hatred. She is as good as I am bad.”

“Was. Was,” Toriel corrected him.

“Am. I tried to con her again. Even if I wasn’t even close.” Asriel grabbed another book.

“Then knowing how far away I was, and how little I even knew, I coned you. I used you and

dad to try and make sure she would give me what I needed. I didn't care if I won her or I just got the power."

"Oh." Toriel could barely breathe. "You. You conned us?"

"Well, I need the power, but the whole blurble speech. Sorry. Genuinely, this time." Asriel looked at his paper.

"Well. At least it sounds like you are changing," his mother said. "Then will you do the right thing?"

"Give Sans three more days. I need three days to do this," Asriel said, going back to his work.

"Three days to do what?" Toriel asked him.

"Get myself together. I need to learn. I lived as a flower, underground, no matter how many times I saw things. I still missed so much. All the things I should have learned if I had been older. I won't hurt her again." Asriel stood up. "Frisk is safer with two husbands competing, then lying it all on Sans with that contract. Besides, I need to learn to be a compassionate monster for my human. I need to learn about humans and love. Their relationships." He gulped. "I will put my all into keeping my wife safe."

"Huh?" Toriel moved toward his sight. "Asriel? You're not ready--"

"Not yet but I will be." His eyes were so focused on what he was doing.

"Asriel," Toriel whispered. "Oh my goodness. This . . . isn't instinct anymore, is it?"

Asriel didn't answer. He didn't need to. Frisk's action, just like in the past, had a profound effect.

Asriel had genuinely fallen in love with her.

No Choice

Three days later . . .

“Okay, let’s get this over with,” Sans said as he swung Frisk around and chuckled. “Almost time. You’ll have to go back to all your royal treasures. Remember, no talking.”

“I got it,” Frisk insisted. She groaned. “I’m gonna miss Undyne and Alphys. Papyrus. Oh, and you.”

“Well I should hope I’m in there somewhere,” Sans said back as he looked at her. “You got endless burgers with me.”

“And endless jokes.”

“I gotta have someone to test them on. They’ve got to get a chuckle before they are ready for public,” Sans insisted. In six days, he had become friends with her again. Actually, better this time, because last time she was only eight years old and he was mostly just watching her for Tori.

She seemed to get to know him too. He was more than just a funny skeleton good for a burger and hot dog break. “Sans, you don’t have to hold me *yet*.” She kicked her feet.

“Aww, poor Chum,” Sans chuckled. “You’ll be fine.”

“Ugh, I hate this luggage part,” Frisk complained to him. “Why does the wife have to get carried across to each other? And why are you carrying me now?”

“Cause it’s bugging you.”

“You know I hate this part, and this stained dress.”

Sans chuckled again. “Almost there.” At least he got an extra three days again too. In that time, Asriel should have learned a thing or two about the rules. “Alright, here we go. Remember the rules?”

“Stay still. Be quiet. Be luggage,” Frisk complained. “Got it.”

Sans got in position with Papyrus still at his side. Up ahead was Toriel, Asgore, and of course Asriel. They were all quiet this time. When it hit 7:59, Sans moved forward with her. Asriel bent down slightly to pick her up. Still quiet. He was following directions fine this time. Sans returned back to Papyrus while the royal family went into the castle itself with Frisk.

Yeah. “Alright. Guess that leaves an hour before work.” Sans trotted along.

“I hope she does better this time with the prince,” Papyrus said.

“As long as he doesn’t hurt her, I don’t care. And if he does, then I just have to take care of her myself.” So, it worked out both ways in the end. Still? “He really better not hurt her.” Nah, nah. She’d be fine. Toriel and Asgore were there, and thinking wouldn’t help. “Let’s just concentrate on something else.”

“Okay,” Papyrus agreed. “You’re right. There was a three day grace period he took again. He should have learned the rules by now.”

The Castle . . .

Frisk was placed on the ground as soon as she was in the castle.

“Welcome home again, Frisk,” Asriel said to her.

Frisk? He actually called her by her name instead of wife. That was a good sign.

“First, let’s go ahead and get you dressed. This way.” Asriel led the way in front of her. She went into her room. “I didn’t know your fashion preference, so there is a little bit of everything from casual to formal.”

Frisk opened the closet and looked. *Oooh*. He was right. He didn’t just buy fancy dresses. He even had white shirts and white pants. From designer to cheap.

“I’ll leave so you can get dressed. I also have undergarments for you in the drawers, and a few pairs in front of the closet. Mom helped. Just leave your things on the bed and we’ll get them washed soon. I’ll see you in a bit.” He smiled. “I have a surprise for you.” Asriel closed the door and left.

Not a single hug or trying to nestle beside her. Not that she was complaining. Frisk checked out the door. *Ooh!* Never knew how much a girl needed basic bras and panties.

Frisk eagerly got dressed feeling so much better. I mean, a shower would have hit the spot, but the whole pail dumping wasn’t something she was looking forward to. After she got her undergarments she looked at the closet. She picked a pair of nice white pants and a white shirt. Then, she picked some white sneakers.

When she opened the door, Asriel turned around. He smiled at her and held something in his hand. “For your hair?”

A barrette. It was wild looking, like vines with white flowers. *Pretty*. She took it and placed it in her hair. “Thanks, Asriel.”

“No thanking yet. And, I’d rather you not call me that yet. You still think of me as Flowey,” he said. “So, if you could call me that instead of Goat boy, that would be great.”

Geez. He sure did change in the last three days. “Okay, Flowey.”

“Good. Come this way, Frisk.” Asriel led her three rooms down. Toriel and Asgore were over by the room.

“You look quite beautiful,” Toriel remarked to her.

“She is,” Asriel said for her, “but she would have been fascinating in red. If only I had established *that* as your color. First day, I bought you white though.” He gestured toward the door. “Go ahead and open it.”

Frisk opened the door and her mouth. Just

Dropped. “Gloria?!”

Her friend was sitting on a chair, completely fine, just reading a book. Frisk moved so fast to hug her, Gloria almost got toppled.

“Frisk!” Gloria hugged her back. “It’s okay. I’m okay now. Your prince left the Underground and he helped me. His mom healed me too. I was shocked.” She gave Frisk a small hug back. “I heard what happened, Frisk. It’s okay, I am living here now with your husband, so that we can still stay close.”

Frisk’s eyes were starting to well up with tears. “Gloria,” she choked. “I . . .”

“I know.” Gloria was starting to cry too. “Maxie and your Aunt, I know. I’m so sorry, Frisk!” She held her so tight.

Frisk felt herself finally unlocking her doors of grief as they both moved toward the floor and cried in each other’s arms. Someone finally held her, letting her just let go of it all. They both cried for several minutes as they reminisced too about what happened.

Her soul felt so much more relief now. That pain, she’d been mostly hiding it. It would sneak in every once in awhile, but she would try to close it off. She was constantly around Sans, and he wasn’t someone she could just weep on. Not like Gloria. She just couldn’t do it to Alphys or Undyne either. They didn’t know her family. None of them knew them.

Their attitude. Their love. Their personality. “I’m so sorry,” Frisk finally said. “I’ve put you in this position.”

“It’s not your fault,” Gloria said. “I get to hang out here for six whole months, in a castle, with royalty.” She tried to make her feel better. “Oh, Frisk. I know. It’s not your fault. I mean, you were great. You were the fabled one that broke this kingdom out. I can’t blame you. That was fucking brave as fuck, Frisk!”

“I didn’t mean to cause any of it. I didn’t even mean to become the ‘pacifist child’. I was just getting out,” Frisk admitted. Then, she remembered the door. It was closed. They must have closed it a long time ago to give her personal space. She had been so deep in her grief, she didn’t even notice.

“I know, Frisk. I know, of course I know,” Gloria said. “It’s going to be okay though.” She lifted Frisk’s face and moved the wet hair from her face. “I am your best friend forever, Frisk.

No matter what. I'll be right here, until this whole thing gets worked out."

Frisk spent as long as she could with Gloria. Talking about everything that happened, and hearing what Gloria had to say too.

After an hour, there was a knock on the door. Asriel was right there. "Hello, Frisk. Is your soul feeling better?"

"Flowey." Frisk moved from Gloria and stared at him. "I don't know how to thank you for what you're doing for her."

Asriel shrugged. "Just wanted to make you feel better, human. Um, Frisk. Sorry."

"Don't be. I am human." Frisk bit her lip. "I . . . just thank you."

"Don't worry," Toriel said from behind Asriel. "We'll take very good care of Gloria. She is a wonderful friend too."

"Okay, so?" Gloria stole one more hug from Frisk. "I have been in here for a day and a half waiting to see this big old Underground. Show me what's what?"

Frisk laughed. "There's so much!" She looked toward Asriel. "Could we try and go somewhere?"

"Yes, I think a ride would be a great idea," Asriel agreed. "Follow dad, Frisk."

Frisk grabbed Gloria's hand and they both ran toward Asgore.

"Oh my goodness," Toriel sighed and looked toward Asriel. "Her soul is open."

"Being stuck without grieving right closed it off more. She was limited in her actions." Asriel nodded. "Now, her soul is open. I'll give her another hour with Gloria, then I'm spending quality time with Frisk."

"Good luck, Asriel." Toriel's heart began to soar. Her son. He really had studied humans. Maybe. Maybe he could take care of a wife?

Asriel skipped lightly. "Wait up, girls!" He laughed as he ran after them.

A royal carriage ride. Frisk laughed and talked constantly with Gloria until Asgore insisted Gloria needed to go back home. She knew the three-hour rule, so she wasn't surprised. Every twenty-four hours she'd get to see her best friend though. Now she did have something to look forward to when she was forced to stay with Asriel. Although, so far, he hadn't been bad at all either.

“This way, Frisk.” Asriel held his hand out to her. “I need to talk to you. In order for our marriage to work, I must have complete honesty with you.” They walked hand in hand. “When I screwed up and tried to change everything on you, just to keep my form-“

“Oh, don’t apologize,” Frisk stopped him. “I told you, it’s fine. I can’t judge you, I’ve never been there. And. And.” She couldn’t help herself as she wrapped her arms around him. “Thank you sooooo much, Flowey!”

Flowey gently hugged her back, but didn’t say anything until she let go. “You’re so . . . your open soul feels so good. No Chara interrupting it. No grief. Just. So open.” He closed his eyes briefly and then insisted they sit down on a log. “Okay, Frisk. Remember honesty? I’m going to be honest. I have no idea how Smiley Idiot did it, and I can’t know either. So, I’m just going to do it the way I think I must. Honestly.”

“Honest is the way I’d appreciate it,” Frisk said. “What is it?”

“The things that are involved, well, I have to work with it. Definition wise, because raw is too hard. Only thing is, you are loaded with Sans’ power,” Asriel warned her. “That means when I do what I have to do, which is basically infusion? It won’t feel good. Like last time.”

“Before Sans did something?” Frisk knew that much.

“Yes. So, I can’t force it,” Asriel smiled. “I need it mutual, so it doesn’t hurt. Can you bond with me for that energy, or expose your soul to me?”

“How . . .?” Frisk didn’t know what he was getting at.

“Okay, subtlety not working. The book used was from 2400 BC, Frisk. That contract is basically telling Sans and me that we have to have fuck with you every day.”

“What?!”

“But, definition wise, we can just get away with infusion.”

“Sans hasn’t said anything about . . . Okay, no, I know I’m not.” She wasn’t supposed to say, but Sans never did anything!

“He was working the definitions differently. No one wants to do that to you.”

“But consummation is how I’m supposed to pick,” Frisk said.

“The wording was more like . . . when you could stand to be with someone.” Asriel patted her hand. “Monsters weren’t always . . . easy back then,” he settled with. “I’m sorry. But don’t worry, we can get around most of it. We just need to lie down with each other, and I will push some energy into you.”

Oh, that’s what the naps were always for! Tricky Sans, of course. “Just lie down, and let you put power in me?”

“Very gently,” Asriel said. “Do you want to expose your soul?”

Flashbacks to fighting in the Underground came back to her, as well as with Gaster. "No."

"Okay," Asriel said. "I figured not. Well, you are overflowing with his power, and I need you to visualize and remember that I am not here to hurt you. Do you understand, Frisk?"

Frisk nodded.

"Okay." Asriel gestured to the ground. "Here fine?"

"Outside the castle?" Frisk looked around.

"Well, I'm an outside kind of guy?" Asriel shrugged. "If it helps, I want you to be able to look up. Even if you can't see the sky, it should make you feel better. It did me."

"I got it." Frisk went ahead and moved to the ground, but so far Asriel had been quite decent. Plus, he brought Gloria back to her.

He laid down beside her and took her hand with his. "Alright. Remember, I'm not trying to hurt you this time, Frisk. These pellets actually are friendly pellets."

Frisk laughed at that, remembering the first time she met him. 'Friendliness pellets'. She lied still and felt a sharp sting.

"Easy, easy," Asriel insisted. "I've got to exchange a little of your power with me too, or I'll turn into a flower. Is that okay?"

"Yeah," Frisk squealed, feeling the sting around her. It evened out slightly though as she felt warmth also invade her body. It was a different kind of warmth. After a few minutes, it was over.

"Not too bad?" Asriel questioned her.

"No. I've been through worse, believe me." Frisk hopped back up on her feet. "Wow. Did I just do that?"

Asriel did the same thing. "A little." He touched her hair. "Looks like you got some white strands again. Sorry about that."

"No problem." Frisk looked at her fingernails. They were back to normal too. "I really appreciate you being honest with me, Asriel. I'm quite used to secret keepers, if you know what I mean."

"Secrets have a time and place, and they can be fun!" Asriel chuckled. "However, you can't have secrets from your wife. So, here's another one. I really was just trying to get you to pick me so you'd let me continue to have this power. I was playing everything up to a really high degree. I'm sorry."

"So that's why you haven't glomped me at all today?" Frisk questioned. "Well, that's great. Thanks, Flowey."

“But, you triggered something. Something you only did one time,” Flowey said. “Something that was strong enough for me to break the barrier last time. And this time, me already being in this form, really got triggered.” He held back onto her hand. “I like you, Frisk.”

Um. “Okay.”

“Listen. We’ve only got six months. I’ve only got six months to prove I’m the monster for you,” Flowey said. “Just, remember? I know I’ve messed up a lot. A huge amount. A tremendous amount. But? I’d spend the rest of my life making up for it, if in the end, you choose me in six months.”

“There’s that six-month thing again. Over and over. Gloria said it too,” Frisk said. “What happens in six months?”

“It ends,” Flowey said. “You didn’t know that? You’ll choose one husband in six months.”

“And if I choose nobody?” Frisk asked.

“Well? You have to choose somebody,” Flowey said. “There’s no choice.”

“Well, I knew about the-well, I mean.” Frisk felt frazzled. “So what, I just give a name?”

“You know how you choose.” Asriel stood up and gave her his hand. “That’s never changed.”

“So what happens if I break the contract?” Frisk asked.

“I was desperate, mom was desperate, and dad was desperate. I’m sorry. They put some things in there that we didn’t know about. Basically, you’ll go into the possession of seven kingdoms, and they’ll divide up our kingdom in the process amongst each other.”

“So, uh? So. Uh. Huh. Uh?” Frisk spluttered her words and then blew a raspberry. “I’m gonna have ta *be* with you or Sans? Or end up as some concubine for seven kingdoms?!”

“Six months is awhile to get to know each other,” Asriel said. “We’re dating every other day. It’ll be alright. Come on. Let’s walk back to the castle. I had dinner prepared last night for you.”

“Then it’s freedom?” Frisk asked. “Right? After I choose?”

“Well, your husband can’t release you,” Asriel said. “If we do, then it’s like rejecting you. I’m sorry.”

“I’m stuck. I’m.” Stuck. Sans never said that. He never said that again, she assumed . . . *why else would he still be doing this?* “Sans is my friend,” Frisk said to Asriel. “If he can’t free me any more than you, then why is he still doing this?”

Asriel shrugged. “We are all stuck for six months, or we forfeit. You are safer with two husbands, then one. Does that make sense?”

“I don’t.” An illusion? *He wanted me to think I had choice.* “Sans is my friend. He likes me as a friend. You like me as more. I have to pick one of you.” Well, it was obvious how this would end.

However, Asriel was doing a very good job to still make her feel welcome. He wasn’t holding it over her. “Thanks for . . .” She took a deep breath. For the good of the Underground. For her life. Asriel was her future in six months. “Thanks for being honest with me.”

“No problem, Frisk.” He moved some of her wild blue hair out of her eyes and then reached into his pocket for a box. He popped it open and inside was a beautiful ring. “Do you want to try it on? I know that humans really like rings.”

Frisk looked at the box. *My future. My unescapable future.* No, no. She wouldn’t get like this. In life, there were things she just had to do. She moved her hand out to him. Asriel took it from the box and slid it on her finger.

“If you are my Princess in six months, that can always be on your finger. Just like a human marriage.”

Frisk looked at it. It sparkled lovingly, but it still didn’t feel right.

“Frisk?” Asriel asked as she stared at it. “Do you think . . . I can . . .”

Get a kiss. She already knew that was coming. Frisk took the ring off her finger, feeling a sense of relief with the action. She gulped. “Uh. Here, hang onto that.” She tried to chuckle, but inside she was starting to feel lost. She watched as Asriel came closer to her. *Your future husband wants to kiss you, Frisk. Just accept it.* She nodded and opened her mouth for him.

No big deal. She’d kissed plenty of guys before. He gripped her gently in his embrace as she felt him gently kiss her mouth. Her fingers tingled, and her feet did too.

“Heh. Thank you, Frisk.” It didn’t last long. “Look at that?” He touched her hair. “More and more white. The blues almost gone because you’re *accepting* me. That’s the way it’s supposed to happen. A natural infusion that never even needs a name.” Asriel took her hand and placed it on his heart. “I’ll do my best to one day set you free, with me.”

Frisk nodded slowly, but she felt tears welling in her eyes. *I’ve kissed several guys before. Why am I getting like this?* Her body was even trembling. *Marriage. Marriage. Marriage. Marriage. Marriage. Marriage.*

“What’s wrong?” Asriel asked. “Eh? I moved too fast?” He patted her hand. “No rush. Sorry. Everything’s going to be fine. Let’s go back home, okay?”

Feeling like Garbage

7:50 . . .

Sans skipped a few times over to the meeting spot, humming. It'd be nice to see Frisk again. "Hey, Papyrus, you got the hot dogs?"

"I don't have hot dogs," Papyrus said.

"Oh yeah, that's right, I do." Sans chuckled as he stopped skipping and brought out two foiled hot dogs. "Let's hurry and pick up Frisk so we can eat." He put the foiled hot dogs away again as he trotted normally with Papyrus to the meeting spot.

Only two minutes later, Toriel emerged with Asgore. Then Asriel and then something in a robe? *No way, he wouldn't.* Only what she was supposed to wear, the blood-stained dress. *He better take it off in a few minutes.* Talking and everything ended in three minutes.

Asriel lifted her in his arms as Asgore took off the robe. Asriel whispered something in her ear.

What. The. Her hair. Her hair was white, with just a few tendrils of blue here and there like highlights. *What the-freaking-how much power did he put into her?!* Sans was worried. To do something like change her hair color, he definitely overdid it. *What else is new? All he's done so far is hurt her.*

When it reached 7:59, Asriel handed Frisk over to Sans. This time, Sans grasped a little faster than last time. He quickly trotted back to Papyrus. He kept his back turned until Papyrus said the coast was clear.

Frisk just held on, but she could smell the hot dogs. *Ooh, he's got hot dogs. I know he's got them.* But his look toward her didn't spell her getting one yet. He looked mad. "What?"

"You're ugly in white hair," Sans spurted out as he continued to walk off with her in his grasp.

Ugly in white hair? *He's a skeleton, he's all white. What is his problem?* If anyone had a problem, it should be her. He lied to her about everything. Secret Keeper Sans. "Can you put me down yet?" Frisk asked. She noticed Alphys and Undyne not very far in the distance.

"Here." Sans stood her up once they reached her. "Go have girl time." Then just like that, he disappeared.

Frisk watched Alphys and Undyne. That was crude and fast, not even a simple goodbye.

“Um? You’re hair’s almost all white,” Alphys said. “Uh.”

“Damn, what did Asriel do? That’s way too much power to take away,” Undyne complained as she touched Frisk’s hair. “Last time it was just a couple of strands and he was piercing you. Ahh! Did he hurt you?!” she asked anxiously as she tightened her fist up. “I will grab my spear and end him, Prince or not!”

“No,” Frisk insisted. “Asriel was a prince, a sweet prince to me.” She smiled. “He was really sweet and honest.”

“Oh?” Undyne grabbed Frisk’s left hand while Alphys grabbed her right. “He’s finally straightening up?”

“He finally told me the truth,” Frisk said. “He didn’t glomp or hug or nuzzle or anything like that when he didn’t have to.”

“That’s good,” Alphys said, “but what else? Did something happen over there?”

“Oh, yes!” Frisk said excitedly. “Asriel and Toriel rescued Gloria. She’s here, she’s Underground,” she squeezed their hands harder. “Gloria was my best friend, and when I got hurt, she did too. I lost two already, and I . . .” No, no, not with them.

“You expressed your grief,” Alphys said knowingly. She squeezed Frisk’s hand tighter. “I can feel it, your soul is so much lighter.”

“Somewhat lighter, but not completely light,” Undyne said.

“Gloria is living in the castle, they are all taking care of her now,” Frisk told them.

“Wow.” Alphys sighed dreamily. “He left the safety of the Underground to get your friend? Oh, wow!”

“That’s really being a prince,” Undyne said in shock. “Holy shit. I mean, he doesn’t even have much power right now.”

“They healed her all up too,” Frisk said. “It was really nice of them.”

“Well, that’s good, Frisk,” Alphys said. “I hope we can meet her one day.”

“Yeah, she’d like you guys. Don’t worry, she could handle you too. She’s a brave soul.”

“Bravery and determination are usually the best human traits.” Undyne pointed to the lab up ahead. “Want to try and shoot us over there, Frisk? You got enough of Sans’ power still?”

“He said I was ugly in white hair,” Frisk said to them. “Sans *actually* said I was ugly in white hair.”

“Oh, that’s just his instinct. It just ruled him for a second.” Alphys pointed with Undyne. “Want to try?”

The Lab . . .

Frisk brought all three of them to the lab. “I’m so tired of this dress.” Frisk pulled at the blood-stained dress. No matter what, the blood would never fully come out of it. At least she only had to wear it for so long.

“So anything interesting happen?” Alphys asked Frisk. “You said he was really sweet, so why’s your hair white? I mean, your eyes are still blue, and you are still about Sans’ size, but you are sharing a lot more of Asriel’s energy.”

“Oh.” Frisk looked at both of them and shrugged. “I let him kiss me.”

“What?!”

Frisk didn’t blame them. “He was honest about a lot with me. I know a lot of things I didn’t know before because *somebody* likes to keep secrets. That fact never changes.” She shrugged. “Whatever.”

“You. You kissed him? Wow.” Alphys smiled. “Wow!”

“So, does that mean you’re going to become the princess of the Underground?” Undyne asked.

“I don’t get a choice,” Frisk said as she walked around the floor. She kept wiping at her eyes, refusing to let anything fall. “I don’t get a choice. No one gets a choice! If I break the contract, something dreadful is going to happen. So, at the end of six months, Asriel *has* to be my husband. I mean, it’s him or Sans. And . . .”

“And Sans is not a choice,” Undyne said. “He doesn’t have a past showing he really wants to date anyone, let alone marriage. Any lovey dovey he’s pulling out of his pelvis, if any, is just instinct.”

“Yeah,” Alphys agreed. “I mean, he didn’t even want to give the queen a chance to even ask for something more.”

“I know,” Frisk said. She shrugged. “Not like he’s my Prince Charming either. I only know him a little better because of the days Asriel gave up. But, at least Asriel thinks he really wants to be with me. Whoopee.” She drummed her hand along the wall. “My freedom, it’s not gonna return either way.” She tried to keep herself strong. “I just have one choice. I kind of have to accept this.”

“Oh. Yeah. I’m sorry, Frisk,” Undyne said. “Gaw, Punk, that’s terrible to hear.”

“I know. I guess this is home.” Frisk tried to carry herself strong. “As for the energy too, he willingly shared what was happening there. He didn’t hide it with a-“ She switched to a deep voice to imitate Sans, “-‘we need a nap’.” She sighed. “So, I willingly helped out.”

“Eh. So Sans is hiding stuff, huh?” Undyne shook her head. “Okay. So then he’s just stuck in this too?”

“Asriel said I’m safer with two husbands, then with just one during the next six months. I guess if one messes up, the other can catch me?” Frisk threw her hands up in the air. “It’s just that . . . I mean-“

“Prince charming isn’t your prince charming,” Undyne said easily. “Yeah, I get it. Tears are a dead giveaway. Aw, Punk, ah, it! You know? This is, ugh!”

One Hour Later . . .

“Work.” Sans appeared in the middle of the lab. Again, he still seemed upset. “Come on, Frisk.”

“Sans!” Undyne held her spear out to him. “You’ve been lying to Frisk!”

“Ah.” Sans kind of glanced over toward Frisk. “Frickin’ great, he actually told you?”

“Yeah,” Frisk said. “He was honest.”

“He was honest,” Sans mocked her. “Well, there’s a first for everything.” He shoved his bony hands in his pockets. “Let’s go already, Frisk.”

“You could have at least told her there was only six months,” Alphys said softly.

Sans started to speak in another language that Frisk couldn’t understand. Probably monster. Oh great, more secrets? Yeah, that was making her cheery. She stood up and headed toward the window, looking out it. *I am determined to do this. I can do this. Prince Asriel, six months. I can get used to this. Six months, I wear the ring. I can do this. He’s a nice guy. Six months to get to know him. I’ll be fine. Baby goats is my future. Ba ba. That’s the sound of a sheep not a goat. What’s the sound of the goat? Oh, my mind’s just wandering now, I need to get out of here soon.*

“He told her what?” Sans said in Monster. “Naw, that’s not true. Well, not completely and not *not* completely. He hit his head. “I’m . . . working on it.” He gestured to them. “And you *could* have at least acted like you knew what was going on. You were there, all silent in the background. Don’t want her mad at you, just me, huh? Just yelling at me in her language, like it’s all on me?”

“What do you mean working on it?” Undyne said in monster too. “How?”

“Contract making, okay? I’m working on it. I’m learning about them as we speak,” Sans complained. “You know ‘cause maybe then there’d be a way.”

“Is there?”

“I don’t know. Maybe?”

“But you hid everything from her, Sans, and he was honest,” Alphys said in monster too. “He’s been real sweet too, like the sweetest. Like the things? Oh.”

Sans held his bony fingers up and closed them up and down. “Yeah, yeah. Prince Charming probably bought her everything she could ever want. Yada, yada.”

“Try the only thing she wanted,” Undyne answered. “You need to tell her what’s going on, and what you’ve been doing.”

“Nunya business anyway. Hounding me like this to tell her ain’t right.”

“Don’t. Even.” Undyne gestured to Frisk. “It’s *her* business.”

“My magic ain’t hurtin’ her,” Sans griped. “It ain’t, so just knock it off.”

Alphys groaned. “A monster should always know their power level. Always. What if she gets into a fight and doesn’t know how much stronger or weaker she is? What if one hit that would usually just graze killed someone because of this archaic thing you’ve been doing?”

Sans shuffled his feet uncomfortably.

“What about this six-month thing?” Undyne asked. “You didn’t even tell her that.”

Sans rubbed his skull. “Look. Just. Look.” He rocked back and forth a little. “This ain’t me. None of this is me. I just wanted to help the human survive and gain freedom. It helped it when it was just little guy. Girl. Little guy-girl. So, that’s it. All this complicated stuff, it’s not me.” He wanted to be out there just watching again. Hell, at this point he’d rather be watching snow again. “I owe it. The whole Underground owes her. But I.”

“Stepped into something you didn’t want to.” Alphys nodded, finishing his statement. “That’s easy to tell, Sans.”

“I’m just gettin’ through it, and the less she knew, the better, you know? I wasn’t aimin’ to hurt her.” He started to pace slightly. “I can’t believe he told her,” Sans muttered.

“Okay.” Undyne crossed her arms. “Let me take a guess here, Sans. Your plan is to keep taking naps, giving her energy afterward without telling her what you were doing, and then when six months came up just hope that you can get freedom through a different contract you were making?”

“Somethin’ like that, yeah,” Sans said quickly.

“How hard are these contracts?” Alphys asked. “You and Papyrus used to be pretty good at learning stuff.”

“Well? I don’t know, but to make sure there are absolutely no extra loops that anybody can use, and covering every single kingdom and territory out there? Um. Tough. It’s like writing 300 different contracts, all into one. So basically, I’d rather eat a hundred more years of Papyrus’ old frozen spaghetti food than even start the nightmare.”

“Oh.” Alphys looked at Undyne. “Then, are you sure you could free her?”

“Um.” Sans shrugged. “They got schools for learning contracts today, full entire schools. The money Lawyer makes, it’s not chump change at all. These things make or break relationships with other kingdoms and territories. Mess up, and you could, well?” Sans gestured in the air. “Get your kingdom divided into seven for a mere screw up?”

“Sans,” Undyne said directly. “You’re dodging.”

“What if you can’t?” Alphys asked. “I mean, what if it’s so complicated it takes twenty or thirty years?”

“Then twenty or thirty years.”

“Married. For twenty or thirty years,” Undyne pointed out. “To a human? I mean, love Frisk, love her to death. But?”

“Yeah, and when you become a single husband, the rules change again,” Alphys pointed out. “And those won’t change by any definition.”

“Don’t gotta remind me,” Sans said. “Like I’m not stressed enough?”

“You should duck out,” Undyne told him. “Tell her the truth, stick it out for the six months, but then end it. That’s way too much of a price to pay, and Frisk has already got it figured out that you can’t help.”

“I don’t know, there’s a little more to it,” Sand groaned. “Her hair is white.”

“Yeah. It’s bound to change color with both of you fucking her on and off,” Undyne complained with a sigh. She strolled over to Alphys. “You better tell her, make it an *even infusion*. She’s human, she probably won’t even care about it much. Only a monster cares.”

“Yeah. Yeah.” Sans took a deep breath. “But, uh. Her hair is white.”

“You already said . . .” Undyne seemed to watch his jittery movements. “What’s wrong with that?”

“There’s something else that doesn’t, you know, have multiple definitions and it’s kind of written ‘as is’, and I’m kind of.” Sans stretched his neck bones, making it pop. “Energy residue.”

“Oh!” Alphys covered her mouth. “Oh? Oh.”

“Well? What was your excuse for *that* one, Sans?” Undyne asked. “You used to be real brilliant at making excuses to get out of something. What would work this time?”

“I don’t know,” Sans said softly. “I don’t know.”

“ . . . and that’s why her white hair is ugly, huh?” Undyne cornered him.

“You need to talk to her, Sans,” Alphys reminded him. “She was half crying about Asriel when she had to kiss him. She’s all confused.”

Had to kiss him. “Wait, what?” Sans moved his bony hand back and forth. “Go back there a second. She kissed him? And cried?” Ah, cripes, no. That’s where the white hair came from.

“Yeah,” Alphys said. “She *wants* to like him, but she doesn’t know if she can. He’s been really sweet though. He . . .”

Sans gestured with his bony hand. “Second hand knowledge is okay. Spill.”

“He brought back her best friend, Gloria. She’s all healed and living in the castle. You can tell something happened because her soul feels so-“

“Uplifted,” Sans said. “It’d be a lot higher if she didn’t have that all on her too.” Okay. Okay. That probably scored Asriel a thousand points in the favorite scale, no wonder she kissed him. Still. *Crying when she kissed him?* “Do you think she’ll get better with it?” Both of them shrugged. Six months was a long time to get to know the Prince. Maybe something would spark. Or maybe not. He was kind of a flower before. Evil. An asshole. An asshole that assholes would call an asshole. “Well, I guess in that case, I could give a benefit.”

“A benefit?” Alphys asked.

“Yeah. I can be a friend with benefits.”

Both Alphys and Undyne winced uncomfortably.

“Yeah. My jokes aren’t ready for public yet, huh?” Sans said. “Trying out for Grillby’s Comedy Club, they need a new performer.”

“Subject changing isn’t going to help,” Undyne warned him. “Better go tell her what you have to do.”

“Yeah. Guess I better come clean about this dirty situation. As long as she doesn’t fall in love with me, I can do my part.”

“Oh, it’ll be hard to contain herself, I’m sure,” Undyne said sarcastically looking toward Alphys. “We’ll make sure no spell is being casted upon her heart for endearing love to you because of the cleaning. Goodness knows, you’re the hottest catch.”

“I make and break those poor girls all the time,” Sans joked. “They can’t get enough of me.” Okay, enough joking around. “Undyne, can the Royal Dogs fill in a while? I need to talk to her, now that I got residue to take care of.” Being able to explain the monster way into the human way.

Hopefully it wasn’t too hard.

“Whoah, where’d Frisk go?” Undyne said, noticing she was gone.

“Took off some time ago. Don’t worry. I know where she is.”

Napstablook’s home . . .

Frisk had her hair laid out, lying on the floor. When she felt like garbage, there was only one monster to turn to. Well, ghost. Right beside her was Napstablook and they both just listened to the tunes. No matter how much the Underground changed, Napstablook never would.

“I tried with the music. It’s not the best.”

“Don’t gotta be the best. Just gotta feel it,” she said back.

“I didn’t think you’d want to see me. You have lots of other friends. They aren’t so down all the time. They are so much better than me.”

“Sometimes, we all just need to feel like garbage,” Frisk said to him. “I like your tunes.”

“Thanks. Even if you don’t mean it,” Napstablook said. “Thanks.”

Frisk looked above her head as she felt a familiar presence. Secret keeper Sans coming to fetch her. “Howdy. Not really up to it right now.”

Sans seemed to have something strange flicker in his light guiders. He extended his hand. “Trash time later. We need to talk at my house.”

“Like I get a choice.” She teleported herself straight to his house.

Sans’ Room . . .

Frisk had herself in the same position she was on the floor at Napstablooks, now on Sans’ bed. She was getting better at the magic. As she saw Sans ahead of her though, her mind focused on something else. *Do I get the hotdogs now?*

“So. Um? Gotta talk,” Sans said.

“Over hot dogs?” Frisk asked.

“You kissed the Prince?” Sans asked outright. “Didya do it cause you wanted to, or because you thought you had to?”

Frisk looked downward. “He’s my future, I can’t deny it. This six months is mostly a vacation from the reality I’ll be facing.” Realizing she probably sounded horrible, she tried to change something. “I’m sure I’ll get better at it. I have a lot of determination.”

“Yeah? Enough to make yourself love him?”

“Hopefully,” she said.

“It don’t really work that way you know.” Sans sat on the bed next to her. “If it did, I’d have been with Toriel.”

Hm? He was admitting to something?

“Can’t change who you are, Kid. I’m sorry about the way this went.”

Not again. Frisk covered her face with her hand. “This Miss don’t go by that if we’re talking about *this* subject. Pal, Chum, Buddy, Amigo, any of your other go to words right now, but not that one.”

“Well fine, ‘Miss’ Priss.” Sans chuckled. “Nah, Miss Frisk.”

Frisk raised her eyebrow and lifted her body enough to look at him. “Did I just add to your repertoire of names?”

“Aw come on Buddy, Chum, Pal, Amigo, *Miss* Frisk,” Sans said. “Lighten up cause we got some dark situations to talk about.”

Oh. Frisk paid attention. “What?”

“I’m guessing you know why we always take daily naps now?”

“Yeah. You’re putting energy into me,” Frisk said. “Changing things with the definitions.” *Hot dog, for the love of-* “Can we have a hot dog yet?”

“Do ya have any idea why you’re craving that?” Sans asked. “Because it’s my craving. Sometimes, little things get in there too. I’ve been infusing you without permission. In monster culture, basically, I’ve been fucking you, Frisk.”

Frisk looked at him oddly. He was definitely trying to say something. “Excuse me?”

“Infusion for a monster is when you give power to another monster through the soul. It can also be from the body, to the soul. You already know that. But, when you absorb energy and don’t know about it, you can get into a fight, and not knowing your hit power beforehand, either kill something or get yourself killed. In short? You’re fucked. That’s why the action that caused it was called fucking a long time ago. It’s infusion through the body without permission. The soul always knows, but when it changes through the body, it *don’t* always know what’s going on. Meaning, the encounter boards don’t always show the truth either.”

Weird. Not used to hearing him say that so casually. “You could accidentally kill someone because you couldn’t guarantee your hit power?”

“Yep,” Sans said. “Board reads your soul, and if the soul’s clueless, it won’t show accurately in time.”

“Really?” She never knew that. It could only read the soul. “Why does the body change it?”

“Body’s flexible. Like, right now, you’ve got energy up in your eyes?” Sans pointed out. “In an hour, it may be pulled into the soul giving you 5 extra hit points, and then it might just slip back again.” He moved his hands through the air in a flowing manner. “The board can’t read something that’s continually in motion, and a connection between the body and soul energy is one gigantic moving connection. Flowing like water, one to the other. Make sense?”

“Sort of?” Frisk said.

“Well, here, come with me.”

Outside Snowdin . . .

Frisk felt herself being pulled into an encounter. *No, my soul!* She hated when it was exposed like that.

“Trust me, Frisk, I’ve got more to worry about than you,” Sans said as a reminder. “One soul hit point, remember?”

“Oh yeah. Okay.”

“What’s it say your hit points are?”

“Um. 15.” Ooh, she was weak.

“Okay . . .” Sans started to sing a jaunty tune for about thirty seconds. “Check your board again.”

“Um.” Whoah. “32?”

“Yep. Check it again.”

“Already?” Frisk checked again. “34?” Frisk waited 20 seconds. “30.” She only waited five seconds this time. “49?!”

“Continual flow,” Sans said. “And your striking power is changing toom, and there is no way to see that. So. That’s why monsters don’t do it anymore.”

“Yeah, can we quit? I just sailed to 5 hit points.”

“Yeah.” Sans hit Spare and not long after it was all over.

“What about natural infusion?” Frisk asked.

“ . . . back to my room.”

Back to Sans’ Room . . .

“If there’s not enough of that same magic inside from previous infusions too, it can hurt a lot,” Sans continued. “Like, piercing vine thorns all over your body bad. And the more of that magic being shoved in, the more it cuts you even deeper. So it’s nothing to mess around with. Gaster must have done it slowly over time, letting it absorb into you over years for you not to notice it.”

“Oh.”

“Yeah, and uh, natural? Is, well, natural. Not pushing any power, just happens. Doesn’t even get called infusion, it’s just a natural thing. It doesn’t move around wildly, just a few hit points here and there. No big deal.”

“Okay.”

“Now, uh? Fucking’s got more than one definition too. There is the general ‘fuck’, where you get yourself into a bad situation. And then there’s the slang word for sex,” Sans said. “Not used as much for monsters, but it’s there. More modern.”

“Fuck has three definitions for monsters,” Frisk said trying to keep up.

“There ya go,” Sans said. So I’m fucking you, so I don’t have to fuck you, because this is already a fucked up deal.”

“Okay. So you’ve been infusing me with your power, through my body, without permission,” Frisk said, putting his previous sentence into perspective, “so that you don’t have to get intimate with me because this is already pretty bad?”

“Yep,” Sans said. “Yay for knowledge, right?” He rubbed his bony hands together. “I’m sorry but you humans don’t really like putting your soul out there on display, and I didn’t want to have to go over this with ya. And I really, really hate putting my soul out there too. So, just taking it a day at a time. But, that’s why the whole you changes.” He pointed to her hair. “It changes the body and some other things too. Like, you *definitely* got my hot dog cravings. And, that kind of thing? It’s way more intrusive. Sorry.”

“You should have just told me that.” Frisk laid back on the bed. “I’m not eight, I’m twenty-two, Sans. I would have understood.” She sighed. “It’s okay though. I really don’t like exposing my soul either. Especially after the last time.”

“Yeah, but it gets more fun,” Sans said. “Twice as much fun. Door number one or door number two?”

“Hmm.” Frisk stretched on the bed. “I’ll take . . . is there a hot dog behind one of them?”

“Dang, Miss Frisk.” Sans pulled out the hot dog and gave it to her. Finally! “Eat that so you can concentrate.” He chuckled slightly as he took out his own hot dog. “Yes.” They both lifted them up and said ‘lunch’ at the same time before devouring it.

Sans was quicker but Frisk was no slouch. After she started cleaning off her fingers, Sans just watched her. “You’re a messy thing, aren’t you?”

“Like you can talk?” Frisk gestured to his shirt. “Red polka dotted look is out.”

“Same to you, Miss Frisk.”

Frisk looked at her shirt. “Yip?”

“Yep.” Sans chuckled. “Gaw, I hope this works out. I don’t want to lose ya.”

Yeah. “I’m gonna be fine, Sans. Really,” she said. “I know that contracts aren’t something you can do easily. Even a professional contractor who worked years is going to have problems.” She patted him on the jacket. “I’ll marry Asriel, it’ll be fine. I’m not taking you down with me.”

Sans looked toward the floor. “Maybe in like twenty or thirty years-“

“This would be home by then anyhow,” Frisk interrupted him. “Even five. Even ten. I mean, it’s not so bad?” she said pointing out the good things. She just, she wasn’t going to take him down with her. Not for just a shot at freedom several years down the road.

“Nyuh.” Sans made a funny sound in monster language. “Wish I could help.”

“Hey? I’m used to stuff happening to me,” Frisk said. “It’s fine. Heck, maybe even in twenty years monsters and humans will be established enough to have online reachout classes way out here, and then I could still get my degree. I mean?” She chuckled. “Princess getting a degree, but not too far out of the park, right?”

“Sorry I kept it from ya,” Sans admitted. “I didn’t want you to feel like you just had once choice. Because that’s no choice. And Asriel, he’s not exactly the best . . . monster.”

“He’s learning.” Frisk shrugged. “I forgive him. I feel like he’s going to be okay.”

“I can still try,” Sans said. “If you want me to, Pal? I got six months.”

“Sure, go ahead and keep trying if you want,” Frisk said. “If you feel regret about it, then trying might help you. If it doesn’t, then don’t though.” She laid back down on his bed and stared at the ceiling. “Besides, you winning would probably ruin your life. You shouldn’t drag a wife around just because you’re trying to do the right thing. It’s just too much, and I can’t do that to you.” She heard an audible sound of rushing air from Sans.

Relief. "I'll keep studying it though," he said. "But . . . yeah, different shit happens when you're the one with the only wife, and."

"And I want to be friends with you, Sans," Frisk admitted. "Last thing I want is for anything to get awkward. You really are a pal to me. I mean . . ." Even though she'd only known him for about a week, it felt like he was becoming one of her best friends. Monsters. Weird.

"Don't know about that awkward thing," Sans said. "I'm nowhere near close to dropping you yet. I don't trust Asriel to keep it all straight forever. He's messed up a lot. So? You gotta pick a door still."

Ooh, that didn't sound good. "Door number one," Frisk said, getting the hint.

"You've got residue," Sans said.

Seven Minutes in Heaven

“Like dog residue?” Frisk looked around herself. Oh, that stuff accumulated so much.

“Nah, energy residue.” Sans pointed to her mouth. “You got it all over, and I gotta get rid of it. It’s in the rules. Plus, with me sharing space, I *really* want to get rid of it too.” His fingers gripped the bed. “I sensed it a lot when I picked you up and brought you over. That’s why I kind of said you were ugly with white hair,” Sans said. “You feel sort of like warm sunshine when you’ve got my magic dominating in you. And when you don’t? More like cold shit.”

“Okay?” Frisk said, a little surprised. At least he was being honest. “Asriel didn’t say anything about that.”

“Oh no, ‘cause mine was easy to cover,” Sans mentioned. “Okay, so? My instinct craves this, not me. Everywhere that Asriel has touched you needs to be cleansed with my magic.” Sans let his bony finger glow. “The more willing you were to him, the more residue he left on you.”

Frisk looked at herself.

“Invisible. Only monsters can feel it, and only Asriel and I can feel it the most.” Sans reached toward her shoulder. “So. Until I take my power back from you? Anything I do or say, it’s total instinct.”

Frisk nodded.

“So I mean, if I get kind of . . . edgy during it?” Sans said. “Just give me a minute to collect myself, all right? ‘Cause that’s not me.”

“Edgy? How edgy?”

“It’s instinct,” Sans said again, ignoring her question. “Instinct is the strongest thing in the world. It’s because you’ve got my energy, I’m drawn to you. I can usually ignore it just fine, but when I get that close, it might be a little . . . harder.”

Everything was so different with monsters. Everything always was. “I get it. Don’t judge you during whatever you need to do,” Frisk said as she shrugged. “I made friends with monsters that once tried to take my soul. I’m pretty sure I got it.”

“Okay then,” Sans said. “Ready?” She nodded.

Sans touched her shoulder first. Being able to concentrate with all the instincts running through him was hard. *Dirty, filthy goat getting all over Frisk like that.* The more he fought against the instincts he felt, the worse they would get. So he kept himself relaxed on the outside, while riding them on the inside. *Three days for an apology, it’s the least we can*

offer', they said. Liars! Getting her some best friend human, and opening her soul to expel all that grief gave him the perfect opportunity to touch her! "Shoulder area is better." He moved down the side, causing her to slightly tickle. "Well, I found a spot to remember later. Not hurting at all, right?" She shook her head. *It better not because he better not have more than me. She's my damn wife, not his, we shouldn't even be in this mess! Anyone else and the royalty would have said 'no case', but no, it just had to be their gaw damn son brought back from the gaw damn dead involved.* "Side better."

He had to slide his bony fingers over every area that goat touched long-term. *Her shoulder. Back side too. Her hair? He ran his claws through my wife's hair that dirty, selfish, she should have my power running through her hair. She was gorgeous with my power.*

"Is that it?" Frisk asked him.

"The rougher spots," Sans said. "Alright. Can you close your eyes and open your mouth a bit for this next part? You did kiss him, so I kinda gotta get in there." He pointed to her mouth.

Frisk nodded, closed her eyes and slightly opened her mouth.

For me, that's for me. She's accepting me. He concentrated on his power. He could manifest whatever it was that he needed when he pulled all his magic into one, and every bone inside him knew exactly what it was he needed. Feeling his magic transform into a tongue inside his mouth, he could feel all the residue built up in her mouth, even with her still a distance away. *Touching my wife in her mouth, that son of a bitch. That's mine, and I've never even tasted it. I have to taste his cruddiness before I can taste her.* Sans moved closer and pulled her mouth open more as he slid his tongue in.

It was simply an extension of magic, to reach in a way he couldn't elsewhere. He was caught between wanting to deepen the kiss, and choking. *He's on her, I taste him on her. I can taste her through his nastiness. Gaw, clean it off!* He brushed his tongue over the top of her mouth, then on the sides. The left side was the hardest side to reach. He moved his body up higher against her. There was still basic residue from Asriel simply holding her too, so he laid down on top of her.

Once he started to get the residue up, he could finally taste her. His human. His wife. The taste was sweeter than he expected. Not too sweet, but definitely not something he wanted to let go of.

Let go! Okay, it was done, time to stop. His. Instincts. In just a bit. Tiny bit.

Was kissing like that with all monsters, or just the human? It wasn't flavor, but it was something, there was something that made it hard to want to stop. He couldn't put his bony finger on it yet. Later. He'd look it up later. Find out why his bones were thrumming with energy, why he felt so good inside, why he- *Crap, I'm still kissing her!*

He pulled himself off. Crud. "You're clean, Pal," he said. His voice was a little off.

Frisk sat back up. He'd apparently pushed her down on the bed too? "Residue gone?"

“Um, yeah?” Sans looked back toward her hair. Her gorgeous hair. *My power is back, yes! Suck on that you stupid goat!* “All fixed.” He even strayed to look at her fingernails. Blue. *Even better.*

Okay. She had no idea how that would be accomplished, let alone feel, with a skeleton. It was . . . definitely not like Asriel at all. Or anyone else. *Kay. Didn't know that.* Old Buddy-buddy chill guy Sans. *He packs a wallop.* He may not have lips, but he was a French kisser to the max. Whatever he did, her body was tingling like it was half asleep and half excited.

She didn't want to make him feel self-conscious about it or make it awkward in their friendship though. She remembered what Alphys and Undyne said about him and Toriel. Their friendship was on the rocks because of those complicated feelings.

And Sans was a super good friend, just like Papyrus. Just like Undyne and Alphys. Probably even more because whenever he walked into a room, everyone just wanted to gravitate toward him. When she was younger, she didn't understand why everyone yelled out his name, welcoming him at Grillby's. He had a deep, charismatic charm no one else could have.

Frisk brushed her mouth. *No way, I refuse to make this awkward.* The last thing she wanted was for him to never be home when she came around.

So. ACT casual. Like it wasn't anything at all. “Is it done?”

“Yeah?” He hesitated. “So . . .”

Frisk stretched. “Don't worry, Sans. I've played Seven Minutes in Heaven before after all. What girl hasn't?”

“Seven minutes in what?” Sans asked.

“Nothing,” Frisk said. “Do you have any more hot dogs?” Yes, she saw it in his eyes. Relief she didn't say or do anything else.

“Come on, then, let's go get some more hot dogs, Miss Frisk.” He disappeared first.

Frisk hated this part. She was still learning. She knew around where he'd go, so she was visualizing it, but that was cheating. Sans was trying to teach her to refind a magic path.

She stepped about where he used to be. Her eyes tried to focus. Blue sugar should be around it. She moved her hands around, about where he was, blue sugar falling from her fingers. It took so much more when she was trying to ‘follow’ then when she just visualized where she wanted to go. *Sensation, I'm looking for that sensation, a different picture than what I see.* A different vision. *There it is. Liar.* Aw, he picked the lab instead.

Well, focus. *Maybe he can feel confident with contract making in six months. Maybe I can still be free.* But that would be one hell of a contract. Those things were not easy to make. Frisk would never even attempt to do it. So many loopholes, so many definitions to learn, so

many rules of conduct, so many signatures, so many everything. Screw up? And you ended up with someone in as bad a situation as her.

The Lab . . .

“You so lied,” Frisk said as she entered the lab.

“Lied about what?” Alphys asked.

Then the vision in her head changed again. An intriguing vision. “Yes!”

“Yes, wha-?”

Hot Dog Corner . . .

When Frisk arrived, Sans was at a picnic table, eating his hot dog, with his phone in his other hand. With an article titled *Seven Minutes in Heaven* on it. Well, ignore it. He was learning.

“You doubled on me. What if I couldn’t have figured out a double teleport?”

Sans put his hot dog down and glanced toward her. “You shouldn’t be playing games like that.”

“Like what?”

“Seven Minutes in Heaven.” Sans grabbed some catsup and put it on a new dog. “You humans are kind of disgusting. You better not have done anything more than kissed.” Ooh. He was definitely mad again. “I mean, I know nobody’s touched ya touched ya or you wouldn’t have infused nearly as well, but you better not-“ Sans stopped himself.

Instinct? Was it his instinct? “I haven’t done anything since college, so calm down,” Frisk said. “Humans don’t always take those things so seriously. Kissing doesn’t make or break anything.” It wasn’t exact truth. Not like humans just suddenly grabbed someone and kissed them, but the less he felt she was drawn to him, the better the friendship could stay.

And if she was stuck in the Underground for the rest of her life with Asriel, she sure as hell wasn’t going to ruin it. “Can I have a hot dog now?”

“You humans are weird.” Sans took the dog he just put catsup on and gave it to her. However, she did get the result she wanted, she could feel it. He felt a lot more comfortable again. “I wanted to try to see how well your magic was coming,” he said. “Knew since you were thinking about hot dogs anyhow, you’d figure it out if you didn’t see the second vision.”

Oh. Frisk sat down and ate her hot dog. Blessed, fantastic things. On a bun with catsup oozing on the side it was so much better than almost anything but a burger.

“You’re gettin’ all messy again, Miss Frisk.” Sans grabbed a napkin out of the dispenser. “You want some Ice Cream too? This place only serves hot dogs and ice cream.”

“But I am moving up in the world,” the server said. “One day, I’ll have my own real place like G and M, with all the fancy stuff. At least I have a picnic table attachment now, and a second choice.”

Frisk stared at him. He looked familiar. He was definitely a tall bunny or a rabbit, but she couldn’t recognize his name. But she knew him. *Oh yeah! He tried to sell ice cream where it was too cold at first, then he did great in Hotlands.* “No, I’m fine with my hot dogs.”

“Alright then.” Sans let her finish her hot dog and he paid the bill. “Well, better get to work then. Knowing Papyrus, those Royal Dogs are probably driving him crazy.”

Yeah. There wasn’t awkwardness now. Just some slight upset. It was better that way though. The less he thought Frisk would be hung up on some ‘residue cleaning’, the better off their friendship would be.

Besides, she really needed to concentrate on other things. Like, how she really was going to be royalty material. ‘Cause her as royalty? That had been the farthest thing off of her mind. When she wasn’t dressed up for day of fun, she’d been a casual wearer of clothes. Shorts and shirts. Mild colors too, usually crossing. Polka dots was one of her favorite, but she loved stripes too. And she had to admit she was kind of messy and clumsy. She couldn’t blame that on any infusion.

One day at a time. Six months was still a long time. She could do this.

She could do this.

Kingdom of District 24: AKA, The Pride of the Grasslands

“Sir?”

Garand of the Grasslands was looking over some important documentation when one of his employees came in. “Yes?”

“We found all twenty of them,” his employee said. “Plus, the special three.”

“Good. Keep them prisoners for now.” Garand put down his documentation. Not long now, the Monster Kingdom would be his. With a bigger cut of not really land, but profits, the Grassland was going to make a killing.

Unable to come out without strict restrictions, the kingdom of Initiative was making a high profit, with stores, resorts, and quick 2-3 hour deliveries of anything anyone could want. They were making plenty of money off the Monsters.

That's the only reason no one had bothered the Underground, Initiative was protecting its profit source. The Mountain was unique, and with residents who couldn't ever leave, the only establishment that could legally be established was between a Monster named Grillby and Mettaton, and it was making more profit in a day than most would see in a lifetime.

They joined their companies together. They got the finest things that monsters dreamed of having, including water and access to real TV and even live shows. But those idiots? Were still just dumb monsters. They took the profit and reinvested in either better luxuries to share at decent pricing, or they donated it to King Asgore and Queen Toriel, to help in the ways they could to make the Underground a little more 'open'. They were even trying to talk out ways of irrigating paid for water to *more* than just their facilities.

Fuck that shit! Monsters had no vision!

He had no intentions of splitting that kind of raw power up seven different ways *if* something happened.

He wanted it all. Gain the Kingdom. Gain access to the three G and M's of the Underground. Ban importing except for G and M. Fucking Fish in a Bucket with only his water to splash in. And all he had to do, was get one measly twenty two year old girl.

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Kingdom of District 22: AKA Overflow

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"I have to get one measly twenty two year old girl?" A man of about twenty, Lyons Forager, said to his dad. "How?"

"I don't know. Try some, uh, nice wooing," his father suggested.

"Wooing, dad? Who the hell uses wooing?" Lyons groaned. "Do you have a picture of her?"

"Her current state is different, but this is what she originally looks like." His father handed his son her picture.

"Ooh?" he chuckled. "Yeah, okay, I could hit that on a good day."

"There's no 'hitting that', she would be the second leader of this country," his father said.

"Besides which, you cannot 'play' me," he said using his son's slang. "I know you are dearly

in love with Stacey Throng, but it's not going to work. She doesn't have what it takes to rule a kingdom."

"Yeah, sure, and I so shouldn't marry on gaw damn love or feelings," Lyons scoffed.

"If this deal falls through, she will be yours, like it or not. So go meet and greet her," his dad confirmed. "Lyons!"

His son didn't answer.

"She will already have six horrible husbands, what's one more?" his father said.

"Sick and twisted," Lyons remarked. "Who the fuck would sign such a stupid contract anyhow?"

"Why the hell can't you see that Stacey is taking you for a ride?" his father announced.

"Can't you see anything straight? How much have you spent on that girl in a month alone? She is a gold digger and you deserve better. So does this kingdom."

"She's had a few bad past relationships," Lyons said, "everybody isn't perfect you know. It doesn't make her a gold digger."

"Go. See. The woman," his father commanded.

"I don't want to go down in a hole full of monsters, they'd kill me," Lyons said. "For being so caring, you aren't."

"Oh please. It would take every one of their souls to equal the strength of your soul," his father said with little mercy. "An eight year old went down and did it. How bad could it be?"

Diarchy of District 4: Cromwell and SaeTRAN

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"Madame Cromwell?"

Madame Cromwell looked at her assistant. "Is it ready?"

"Yes. You may visit the Underground when you are ready. You have all the correct papers in your possession now." The man lifted the older woman from her chair. "Are you sure of this, ma'am? It is quite dangerous. That world is filled with Monsters."

"As long as I am good, they will not hurt me. If they did, their kingdom would be seized within a day and picked apart." Her old body stood and she began to walk. The Kingdom of the Monsters was her chance. Her chance to save not only the last of the Cromwell blood of

her country. She would offer a small contract, a small monetary exchange for the girl known as Frisk.

She had several reasons she felt she would be successful. For one, she was the last Cromwell in a Diarchy. When the Cromwell's were gone, the Saetran would rule alone. The Saetran and Cromwell had always ruled together, holding a good check upon each other. When the Cromwell's fell, only the Saetran would rule, and he knew how a country built on two rulers would fair with one?

Her daughter and her daughter's husband were unfairly slaughtered eight years ago, and her only grandson was in a coma from that same incident. He would never wake up.

This Frisk woman could marry him, and never feel obligated to any kind of duties attended to as a wife. She would never have to feel pulled down.

If the contract 'as is' failed, that poor young woman would be divided among seven kingdoms. If she wasn't killed, that would be one hard life. If she made a contract with the Monsters that she should belong to them, that increased the chances of the young woman's survival, only belonging to one other.

One with a husband in a coma, to never awaken.

Of course, it didn't mean she would be safe forever. That girl had danger written at the top of her head, *especially* involved in such a dangerous contract. Yet, she would be alright for at least the time that she, Laurianne Cromwell, was alive. With the selection given, it was the best choice.

Two of the territories involved were actually there just to help out and establish good will. Civilian and Peacemaker were the leaders in establishing good will throughout many districts. The oldest in democratic strength, they wouldn't bother the poor young woman Frisk if things went sour. Initiative was also a part of the signing. It was beside the Monster Kingdom, but it also had a lot to gain. It strutted the line between good and bad, as several other places did. However, keeping peace with Civilian and Peacemaker was very important to Initiative because of their influence and outreach to other districts.

So going in with such a contract, they clearly tried to make it hush-hush on gaining a foothold of the very Kingdom they were protecting. She would have to make sure to have conversations with Civilian and Peacemaker about this 'error-filled because it was fast' contract.

That contract was thick, too thick and too precise to be made in three days. No, no, it was clear Initiative at least had an idea for some time about this mysterious 'Frisk' coming back. Yes. No doubt Initiative was playing on a dangerous line. She would visit Civilian and Peacemaker next after her trip to this King Asgore and Queen Toriel.

If this Frisk was the rumored Pacifist Child, and the monsters truly had kept their word and been honorable for fourteen years? It may be time to start backing *them* up and figuring out true peace relations and territory for them.

Which would cut into Initiative's already assumed territory. Although, surely their territory should have already been established somewhere? Mankind factored everything into its decision. The Monsters coming back should have been one of them. They needed room to spread and grow again, with limitations of course.

Was Initiative holding their territory too?

Yes. Things needed to be looked at. Changes needed to be made.

She coughed as she continued to walk out. Hopefully this Queen Toriel and King Asgore would see her contract and plea as her last chance for this Frisk to have a decent life if the other contract went bad.

Otherwise, it may be better to murder the poor girl.

Especially considering one of the the districts who wanted her was Kudara.

She would have murdered her own daughter, if she were still alive, to keep her away from that foul beast of a district.

District 241: Kudara's Domain

It would not work. The servant of John Kudara looked onward though, not saying a word. He valued his life, so he wouldn't say a word. There was no way, shape, or form that the young woman as Frisk should end up with him.

How could anyone be so stupid as to sign *anything* with Kudara's name? Being born in Kudara's Domain, he was unable to leave and find kinder places to live. This same reasoning was why he never took a wife and had family. They would be left in the hands of the domain. Anyone within that domain was headed for a hard life, or a hard death.

They either pleased the Kuderases, worked for the Kuderases, or died in 'historically humorous' ways for the Kuderases. Of all 311 Districts, the Kudara was the last of nine that still ruled with absolute cruelty. It once had such a cruel army with tactics of underhandedness, it had ruled an area of about 59 Districts. It had been an empire of dramatic proportion. Since the new beginning had split up everything 'equally' though, they were luckily snuffed out from trying to rule the world.

But for those unfortunate to still live inside that domain, and have families within it, the cruelty was no different.

And today, there was a good chance he could be beaten or killed, unfortunately proving his own point. Four hundred years ago, his chance of death was more certain, but as there were only so many residents, and no others unless they stumbled into the domain accidentally? They would be making it harder to keep their kingdom plentiful. "Mister Kudara? Sir?" He

tried to stand tall, like it was no big deal. The more he groveled, the more pain there would be. “There was an additional generic addendum added to the Monster’s Marriage contract.”

John Kudara didn’t answer him. Bad sign.

“The word Frisk no longer means ‘property’,” he said.

John Kudara still didn’t answer.

“Your collaborating contractors will know what this means.” He bowed and walked away, hoping the silence would give him time to get away. If he led the contractors to being the ones brought in there, then the chances were higher they would be punished instead of him.

“Come back here.”

Damn. The servant turned around and went back to Kudara. “Sir?”

“They are feeble beings, almost wiped out of existence. How did they *know*?”

“I. I don’t know, I don’t have the skill to know, Sir, I just deliver the messages for you obediently.”

“Fetch the Contractors.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“And ready the torture chamber,” Kudara said quickly. “I will find which contractor made the answer so obvious.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“This isn’t over with you either.”

“ . . . yes, Sir.”

Goodbye Instinct

The Next Day at 11:00 . . .

“Sans?” Papyrus asked him. “Sans!”

“Still break time.” Sans was still studying. He didn’t get it. So many clauses, so many details, and so thick? *There’s just no way a mere human could make this in three days.* The kingdom beside theirs that always sent them Lawyer, the just the, extremeness of it.

Sans used to work with Gaster in the lab, making some pretty crazy stuff. Stuff that would make a weak human mind collapse. And? Even he couldn’t make a contract like that in three days. *We’ve been played.* He was betting with the extensiveness of it all, it was getting planned out ever since Frisk left the mountain and disappeared at eight years old.

Fourteen years sounded about right for something that complicated. That detailed. That extensive. With contracts connecting to contracts, with new contracts being able to be within that contract. The humans didn’t know how or when the monsters would ask for help with the ‘pacifist child’. The three days was probably just fixing it, adding in the book name and details of that nature, which wasn’t a large part to the whole thing. After all, they didn’t even have the rules until King Asgore copied it for them.

“Still trying to figure out if it’s possible?” Papyrus asked. “Any luck?”

“Nah.”

“You really have to give her up? You didn’t want to, Brother. The poor human.”

“I’m still here,” Sans said. At least until he knew Asriel was good enough with the rules to handle her alone. “She seems okay with him.”

“But he’s an evil flower.”

“Lot more evil out there too. Life’s not perfect.” Sans put his second copy of the contracts back in his jean jacket. He already made copies of the copies and kept them safely at home so he could study the others every chance he got.

“I still think-“

“She doesn’t want me wrapped up in it,” Sans reminded Papyrus. “By the time I could figure out something, it’ll just be too long for her to even want to leave. She said by then this would be her home. She’s right.”

“Well?” Papyrus shuffled. “You should at least take the rest of your power back before you call it quits, otherwise that instinct will hurt.”

“I don’t want to leave her defenseless either,” Sans said.

“Take some back? It would be tough on you. You know she doesn’t want to be tough on you.”

“Yeah, I know,” Sans said. “I’ll take back a good sum of it so that instinct will be broken, and then Asriel can uh . . .”

“Fuck her naturally?”

“Did ya *have* to put it that way, The Great Papyrus?” Sans scolded him. “Trendy modern words aren’t always the best words.”

“Infuse her naturally with their bodies doing intercourse?”

Gaw! “Let’s just go with make her his wife completely.”

“Fine, Sans, fine.” Papyrus shrugged. “Almost time for work.”

“Yeah.”

“So residue cleaning was really fine?”

“Pap.” Sans tapped his slippered foot twice. “Look, it was nothing to her. Humans play games like Seven Minutes in Heaven.” Which was good. He’d hate to lose her as a friend. Losing one was enough, and she would still be infused with Asriel. She would live thousands of years. So she could be as good of buddies as Alphys and Undyne too.

“Was it anything to you?” Papyrus asked. “How did it feel to technically be making out with a human?”

Fucking good as shit. “I don’t know, okay, not bad?” Sans settled with. “Just, drop it, okay? I can’t- I’m not thinking of the human that way. That’s instinct. As soon as I get most of my power back again, I’ll be fine.”

“Telling me or telling yourself that, Sans?” Papyrus asked as he checked his watch. “It’s time.”

Well, good, because that conversation needed to end.

“By the way, until you quit, isn’t Asriel just going to be leaving more and more residue on her?”

“Yeah.”

“And, you’ll be doing the same thing to take it off because she’s willingly letting you do it?”

“Yeah.”

“Then, isn’t it pretty much established from yesterday onward you’ll be making out with the human every day?”

“ . . . yeah?”

“Did Frisk figure that out yet?”

“ . . . gotta work, Papyrus, let’s concentrate on work.”

The Castle . . .

“Whoah, whoah, whoah.” Frisk held her hands up toward Asriel. “Look, Flowey, no?”

“No? You. But. I.” Asriel grinded his teeth. “Sans is all over you!”

“Well, residue?” Frisk said.

“Yeah, residue, *his* residue.” Asriel tried to approach her. “I have to get that out, I have to, Frisk. It’s the rules.” He cringed. “I have to taste him to clean you, how disgusting.”

“Frisk?” Toriel came to her side, along with Gloria. “It’s in the rules. Now that you did kiss my son once, Sans and him are going to be doing this back and forth. There’s no stopping it.”

Crap. No one told her a harmless kiss would start this.

“Frisk getting tongued by two different guys?” Gloria teased her. “Lucky girl, you.”

“Oh, don’t start, Gloria,” Frisk said to her as she walked off to her room to get dressed. “This isn’t funny.”

“We are getting that off as soon as you are done getting dressed!” Asriel yelled at her.

“You’re not having him on you!”

Frisk closed the door behind her and Gloria. “Geez.”

“Monsters are possessive. A good kind of possessive though,” Gloria noted. “I know like it’s weird to say you have a choice between a skeleton and a goat and make it sound good? But-“

“Don’t-“

“Asriel’s hot and powerful! At least you are lucky there.” She smiled. “He’s so furry. I bet it feels good being wrapped up in him.”

Frisk opened her closet door, deciding on what to wear.

“Are you going to wait for six months until you do him?”

Frisk rolled her eyes. “I have six months to wait with Sans and him.”

“Oh yeah, residue cleaning. If you do Asriel, then this other guy you’re with, you’re gonna . . . hm. Yeah, that would make it harder,” Gloria said. “You better wait until you only have one mack.”

“That and I’m not ready for anything like that.” Frisk picked out a nice dress this time. Something to show she could kind of be more princess-like?

“Well, six months. It ain’t that bad,” Gloria said. “Unless you’ve never been with a guy. You’ve been with a guy, right?”

“I’ve . . . done stuff,” Frisk settled on.

“Aw, that’s so sweet,” Gloria said. “Your first is going to be your own husband. For sure, a much better way to go.”

“I don’t really want to talk about that,” Frisk said as she slid her dress on.

“I know. This whole thing feels rushed and it sucks. Things could be a lot worse though,” Gloria said to her. “At least you have a caring husband. Hey, by the way, when am I going to meet your other husband?”

“I don’t know,” Frisk admitted. “You kind of go to the castle here, with Asriel.”

“Hey, I’m not property, Frisk Shades,” Gloria reminded her. “Are you sure there’s nothing for this other fella though? Is he cute or anything? I mean, are Skeletons really just like . . . all bone? ‘Cause you just said he tongued you.”

“Removed residue,” Frisk corrected her.

“Yah, from your mouth, with some kind of tongue somehow? How?”

“I don’t know. I don’t need to know, and I don’t want to know. We are just friends, and I don’t want to make this any more awkward than it already is,” Frisk said.

“What do you mean? So you know for a fact he’s *not* gonna have any feelings except this whole instinct thing?” Gloria asked her.

“He’s a kind of a lone monster,” Frisk said. “He’s never been with anyone, even if someone kind of maybe wanted to be with him in the past.”

“Ooh?” Gloria got closer to her. “You got dibs on info, huh? He’s like . . . what, Ace?”

“I don’t know,” Frisk said.

“Has he ever had anyone?”

“I don’t think so.”

“He’s probably either asexual, or no monster down here ever really did it for him,” Gloria said. “That’s always possible too. Pretty limited selection I hear before the whole boom of the barrier being dropped.”

“Look, it doesn’t matter,” Frisk stressed. “He’s a friend, *not* a choice. He’s just dealing with this, and then I’ll eventually marry Asriel. So, let’s drop it, okay?”

“Okay,” Gloria agreed. “It’s just that, I only get to see one side of this thing. You know? You’re my best friend Frisk, and I want to make sure you’re alright.”

“I know,” Frisk said. “You don’t need to watch out for me. We all know how this ends.” She spun around in her dress. “Whattaya think? A little more royal-ish?”

“A little more ish than royal,” Gloria said. “Go enjoy your Asriel.”

When Frisk came out of the room, the first thing she felt was Asriel’s hand bringing her forward. “What are you doing?” He was pulling her somewhere.

“Before you get girl time, food, or anything else, I am cleaning up that nasty body of yours,” Asriel insisted. “You’re covered in Smiley Idiots germs!”

Not surprising. Asriel brought her into his room, closed the door and pointed toward the bed.

He was supposed to be her husband soon. *Why does this feel like . . .* nah, in her head. Asriel was her future. He touched her all over in almost the exact same spots as Sans did, all the while growling and sometimes muttering obscenities.

Then, he had her lay down and he cleaned her tongue and mouth in a similar manner. Except, slightly different. He was holding her chin open more slightly and running his paws through her hair, up and down. A lot. Like he was really concentrating on her hair.

“Don’t do that.” He finally pulled away. “I’m sorry this happened, I didn’t mean to trigger residue, it just happens. Don’t do that though?” he pleaded.

What? “It’s the rules,” Frisk said, assuming he meant Sans and the residue. “We have to follow them.”

“Sans doing that is not what I meant. I know he has to do that. I mean. Don’t. Just. Lay there and let me do this,” he said. “Kiss me back?”

Frisk gulped. *Okay, now what the hell is wrong with you? You’ve done this plenty of times. You just kissed him a couple of days ago.* She did as she was told though, and started to participate.

He wasn't a bad kisser. It wasn't like a horrible time. It was just the pressure of knowing he was her only one forever that made the experience less than enjoyable. Probably.

But, if there's one thing Frisk had been, it was good at Acting. "Feel better?"

"Much better. Much, much better. Look at you." Asriel cheered up as he brought her back up. He gave her one last kiss. "He's all gone off of you. It's just my pure Frisk." He chuckled.

Five Months Into the Contract . . .

"There you go." Gloria helped Asriel with his last minute details. "Looking good."

"Thanks." He adjusted the tie a little himself. "Are you sure about this step?"

"Yes. Look, you've only got one more month with Frisk, and you two are about as far as, well. Friends?" She said honestly. "I mean, yeah, you go out, but you haven't." She groaned. "Look."

"What?" Asriel asked.

"You *gotta* do something, okay? Sometimes with a girl you just gotta take a chance," Gloria said. "This is a pretty good chance, Ozzy."

"Pretty good chance to get my head knocked off." Asriel was still uncertain.

"Well, come on. I mean, you like her, right?" Gloria asked him. "She's . . . gonna be all yours in another month."

"Yes, one more month." Asriel shrugged. "Odd. Time really flew by."

"Yeah. Yeah, your wife completely, with no sharing. One month," Gloria said again. "So, you gotta do something, or you are just going to run your whole marriage this way. This is no way to run it."

"Oh no, I wouldn't. There are certain things required for marriage," Asriel told her, batting her hands away as she tried to readjust his tie again. "No, no, no. That's plenty."

"Are you *kidding* me? So even when she's yours, you can't just run it the way you want to?" Gloria scoffed.

"Well, monsters like to make sure relationships stay strong. Humans tend to have weak relationships. The more a couple is together, the stronger the connection," Asriel smiled to her.

"Yeah. That's more true than you know." Gloria moved away and closed one eye, then the other. "I don't know. Still not that princely but hot hunk look you want tomorrow night."

Asriel laughed. "Oh, come on. Like I can accomplish the second?"

"You'd be surprised." She moved from the subject quickly. "Here, here, smile?"

"Why?"

"Something in your teeth there. Right there." She gestured with her own mouth.

"Okay. Uh?" Asriel tried to free it with his tongue. "There."

"No, like here." She moved her own tongue in her mouth. "More right."

"Oh." He lingered on her a moment. "Oh, yeah."

"Then try it!" Gloria laughed at him.

Asriel strived for it again. "Can you stay at the castle still after all this?"

Gloria looked around the room awkwardly. "I don't know if I should do that. You know, you'll have Frisk here the whole time?"

"Yes, but, well you are delightful though," Asriel told her. "I mean, you are tough to handle sometimes," he admitted. "Reminds me more of my older self," he chuckled. "Your . . . I'm used to seeing you every day. Splitting the chores of the castle with you. Your bright smile. It's fun to see you in the morning. That's why you're my Morning Glory."

". . . yeah I know," Gloria said. "Uuh. I think once Frisk is safe though, you know, I should probably scoot off. You know, back outside the mountain? But. I'll always remember it."

"Well, but you aren't going to move far away again, right? I mean, it's been five months. We could probably work out something with Initiative. You know, your whole degree and everything? Then, you could visit."

"Gaw, you're confusing," she whispered.

"What?"

"Nothing." She said it heavier than she should have. "Look, Frisk should be here, okay? Not me. She's your wife, and soon she'll always be *your* wife. Okay?"

"Yeah," Asriel said confused. "Of course she is, but . . ." He started to readjust his own tie.

"And Sans the Skeleton, her other current hub, well he's taken a great deal of his energy back over the last months," she said. "Instinct is gone for him, right?"

"I imagine most of it," Asriel admitted. "He's taken about sixty percent back."

"Good. Then, good Ozzy," Gloria said to him. "Have a good time tomorrow night. I'm going to be, um, out with your mom for the day. So, no girl time tomorrow. Tell Frisk sorry?"

"Alright. Okay. But, you'll be back the next day, Morning Glory?" Asriel asked.

“Of course, Ozzy,” she insisted. “You bet.”

Asriel watched as she left the room. He looked toward his mirror. “Hot hunk. Never gonna make it.” He sighed and took the clothes off. They worked out what he’d wear tomorrow for Frisk. A more down to Earth outfit. More her taste.

“Asriel?” King Asgore called to him. “How are you doing, son?”

“Nervous,” Asriel insisted. “I kind of feel like Sans is going to kill me.”

“Of course not,” King Asgore chuckled. “Instinct should be almost completely gone. I’ll tell you what. Before the exchange, I’ll make sure he takes all of it he wants back. Okay? Don’t worry. No more instinct to be with her.” He patted his son’s back. “It’ll be all gone by tonight. No more residue cleanup.”

“Right. Right.”

Sans’ Kitchen . . .

Frisk counted the hot dogs. “Twelve. Is that enough?” she asked.

“You’re right, probably one more pack.” Sans opened the fridge, and tossed the pack to Frisk. Frisk opened the package and tossed them onto a paper plate and put them in the microwave on the setting ‘hot dog’.

When it beeped, she took them out and grabbed buns, while Sans started sorting the condiments again. “Extra onion. Extra cheese. Extra onion and cheese.”

“And relish.”

“And extra relish.”

“And mustard.” Frisk squeezed on the mustard.

“And catsup.”

“Don’t forget sauerkraut,” Frisk urged him. “Gotta have sauerkraut.”

“I don’t know, you sauerkrauted the hell out of our bathroom last time you had it,” Sans warned her. “Bet the royal throne didn’t handle you too well either.”

“Can’t think of consequences all the time,” she defended herself. “Live for the moment.”

“Ye. Alright, Sauerkraut.” Sans wrapped his arm around her, causing her to let out a belch. “Why Miss Frisk? Whatever was that?”

“Oh don’t even, you know not to get me right there. Especially with all this,” Frisk complained as she gestured to the spread.

“You haven’t even eaten any of it yet,” Sans laughed at her.

“Well, it can be psychological.”

“Heh heh. Squeeze bottle.”

Oh, she hated when he called her that. Just cause he knew how to squeeze her just right. It wasn’t always a belch, sometimes it was a fart. Either way though, he knew exactly where to get her on her side so she expelled gas if she had any. “Can we dig in?”

“Do we have enough this time?” Sans asked.

“I think so,” Frisk chuckled. “Unless there’s going to be more than just us and Papyrus.”

“What, we were making food for Papyrus too?” Sans asked. “Yeah, maybe a couple more then. He shouldn’t starve too much.”

After inviting Papyrus to their spread, he just sort of glazed over the food.

“Aw, come on, dig in,” Sans said. “And keep Frisk company. I’ll be right back. King Asgore wanted to talk about something before the day was over.”

“Another contract reading?” Papyrus asked. “You have one from a Madame Cromwell, and that Lyons Forager that’s visited Frisk twice. How many more?”

“I don’t know, but I don’t think it’s contract related. He wants to meet at G and M 1. Don’t eat it all without me.”

He disappeared.

G and M 1 . . .

“You’re covering the door fee, right Majesty?” Sans said trying to make a joke. He moved toward King Asgore who was sitting in one of the only four tables in G and M 1. He’d never actually been inside G and M 1, it was too expensive.

“Sans. Take a seat.” King Asgore gestured to the seat in front of him.

Sans sat down. “So, no new contracts since Madame Cromwell, right?” That was a lifesaver of a contract. At least something good for Frisk, and the more he learned about her other suitors, the less he wanted to know. There was one, a kid a couple years younger that really wasn’t all that bad. Lyons Forager. He was sent in by his father, but Sans read him. That guy was madly in love with another woman anyhow. No threat.

“No, no new contracts,” King Asgore said. “I want you to take the rest of your power that you were going to leave Frisk.”

Uh.

“I know you said you don’t want her to be defenseless, so just take what you want. As if this is your last chance,” King Asgore said.

But. “There’s still a whole month left,” Sans insisted. “I don’t need to take it all.”

“You need to take the rest, Sans. Asriel will be her only husband in one month, and he will be pursuing something heavier than a date tonight. We cannot leave ‘residue’ anymore. Understand?”

“She . . . uh . . . buh?” Sans stared at the table.

“What’s wrong?” King Asgore asked. “She only has about forty percent? Still strong instinct?”

“Of course not. Complete friends.” Yet, he was still holding his eyes closed. “I, uh, I don’t know if I can really trust him yet. She’s safer with two husbands.”

“Yes, she is. We aren’t saying you need to give up that far,” King Asgore said, “but it’s time to give up the residue cleaning. She will be an official Princess in one month, Sans the Skeleton.”

“Yeah. Yeah, I know.” Sans scratched his cheekbone. “Just, you know, thought it would . . . really been five months already? Just kind of been hanging out with her. Time kinda flew by. I mean, she’s never even. You know, done anything with Asriel.”

“They kiss.”

“Yeah, and so do we . . . lll we. Clean.”

“Yes, and you won’t have to anymore,” King Asgore stated. “She should be ready with *only* the energy she will take into one marriage tomorrow. Understand?”

“She’s not ready for any of that,” Sans said. “She’s just not. She’s not.”

“What?” King Asgore frowned. “Sans the-“

“She ain’t ready!” Sans yelled, standing up. “No way, no, I refuse.” He tried to lighten it up. “Heh, I refuse, I’m starting to sound like her? Isn’t that funny?” King Asgore didn’t look at him with pleasant eyes. “Majesty? I don’t, um. I don’t think it’s a good idea to push that fast.”

“That’s their decision.” Not good at all. “You gave her up, Sans. You’ve been saying you are giving her up.”

“Well, um, yeah,” Sans said. “Don’t. Mean.”

“Your instincts should be quite damp by now. Are you actually falling for her?” King Asgore tapped his paws on the table. “Sans!”

“No? I mean . . . I’m one of her best friends now. Been hanging out daily nearly five months. Well, every other day. Got to know her, so I know that she’s not ready for anything that’s intense but doesn’t leave residue.”

“Her best friend is Gloria, and she is the one who insists this needs to happen,” Asgore said. “Comparatively? One of you is right. One of you is also human, like her. So, perhaps, you should consider just giving her up tomorrow, for good. Asriel is not going to mess up. Not at this stage.”

“Ye.” He knew Asgore was right. Asriel knew all the rules. It wasn’t rocket science. He’d been fair. He’d been just. He brought her best friend. He kissed her.

He was always the one kissing her. Touching her. All Sans was doing was cleaning residue.

“Are you her best friend and merely concerned, or is there more?” Asgore asked him.

“ . . . concerned.”

“Then no need. Besides, if she isn’t ready, then she wouldn’t go through anything yet, would she?” King Asgore folded his paws on the table. “And Asriel will not force his hand against his wife. He’s a good monster. But, tomorrow will be the first night he pursues it. Understand?”

“Ye.”

“You’re good with that?”

“Ye,” he said firmer than he meant to be. “Yes, Majesty. No problem.”

“Fine. I suggest from your display, you really not leave *anything* behind,” King Asgore said. “If you need to, no more than ten percent. Instinct does not interfere at fifteen percent, so ten percent is a more than safe cover. Understand?”

“Understood. Yeah.” He got up and headed off. He didn’t teleport away just walked down the stairs and toward the entrance. There, he just kind of lingered until he saw Toriel and another human walking up.

“Oh. I didn’t think you’d be here,” Toriel said to Sans. She gestured to the human. “This is Gloria. Frisk’s best friend.”

“Well, I don’t know, I bet we could have a match on that one,” Sans said, keeping it together. “Yo.” He held out his hand. “Hangin’ out with the queen for any particular reason?”

She glanced to her side, not quite breaking contact, but breaking contact. *Nervous*. She rubbed her shoulder. *Trying to adjust. Trying to adjust to what?* She took his hand. “What’s up there, fella. Uh, I’m uh, yeah, Gloria.”

Hm. *Frisk said she was real brave, overwhelming trait. She ain't so brave right now with those stumbles and that look, which means she got something else going on that's braver than this.* "Going to G and M 1, huh?" Sans said, making light conversation to find out what was going on. "Pretty ritzy place. Bet you'll have fun."

"Not really." Her voice sounded hollow, but then she tried to smile to hide it. *Hurt in her is high.* "I mean, yeah, lots of fun maybe."

"We are visiting the nicest place in the Underground. Gloria is leaving us soon," Toriel said.

"Thought you weren't going to do that 'til the sixth month?" Sans asked her.

"Things don't always go the way you want. Think," she corrected herself.

Ooh. She's practically wearing her feelings on her sleeve. Heavy emotions. What's that all about?

"Leave me alone psychic reader," she warned him. "Frisk told me about your history too."

"Whatchu hiding?" Might as well just ask outright then.

"Sans, you *need* to leave her be," Toriel informed him. "She really isn't in the mood."

Hm. *Tell me about it.* He left G and M 1, kicking a rock.

Nah, nah, he had to pull it together. *Time to smarten up. Even Papyrus said instinct would get me. Strongest thing in the world. Can't ever tell what's real or instinct. Instinct isn't me, wasn't me. All those possessive thoughts swarming in my head. That wasn't me. I ain't like that, not me. I gotta let completely go.* He shook his head. The thought. Asriel. His Frisk. *Nah, nah, once I get it back I won't be having these thoughts anymore!* Which would be good. Super good.

But not good enough.

"Whoah, that's a first," Jerry said as he strolled toward Sans. "Didn't even think that was possible."

Sans covered his teeth. "Not a word." That was disgusting. He had never done *that* in his life.

"Eww, it's got blue in it too," Jerry said, pointing it out. "That's definitely new in the Underground." Jerry looked toward Sans. "Hey? Isn't your wife gonna be going to Prince Asriel soon?"

"Not gonna be my wife much longer. Just call her Frisk." The taste lingered even without a tongue. That magic taste that he couldn't get rid of. *Why that? Why?*

"Oh yeah, 'cause the Prince wants her," Jerry said. "That's just terrible. Someone stealing your wife like that. Smooching on her. Touching her. Probably bugs you, doesn't it?" He

pointed to the ground again. “Gotta be something big for a skeleton to actually be able to throw up.”

“Quiet!” Sans warned him.

“What does it take to make a skeleton sick?” Jerry pulled out his phone. “Hmm. Extreme nausea that would often kill someone. So like poison? Were you poisoned? Sans? Poisoned? Sans? Were you poisoned? Sans?”

“No, knock it off, forget it.”

“Hm? Oh. You’re coming from G and M 1?” Jerry questioned. “You can’t afford that.”

“Neither can you,” Sans said.

“Yeah, but I caught a couple of monsters wiggling together that shouldn’t have been wiggling together.” Jerry pointed to the ground. “Is that what that is? Is your wife going to be wiggling too now?”

“She won’t be the same,” Sans said. “It’s just my energy, my own self-desires reflecting back. I know it, that’s not really who she is! I won’t care when I see the real her. I just gotta break this connection. Now.” Sans disappeared.

Sans’ Living Room . . .

“Do you want a napkin?” Papyrus offered.

“Nah, not ‘til the end,” Frisk said. Sans appeared in the room again. “I left six. That’s pretty good, right?” Whoah. He grabbed her hand roughly.

“I need my power back now, Frisk. No more borrows, okay?” Sans helped her up. She followed him toward his room. She was watching his bony hands. He was jittery as he unlocked his door.

“Sans, what-“

“Basic residue cleaning, power wipeout, and we’re done. Kay?” Sans said. “Then it’ll be bedtime ‘cause this is gonna hit ya hard when I take my power back.”

“Okay.” Frisk hated this part. She had to physically let him expose her soul to retrieve his power. When she did it, he only took a little bit at a time. “How much?”

“Leaving ya . . . ten percent,” Sans said. “No more teleporting. No more real power. Just, enough to keep ya safer, alright?”

Frisk nodded. She waited for her soul to be exposed. As she watched the blue stream of magic lead away like smoke from her soul, she felt her energy draining. It was faster than ever before.

Before it was over, she fell unconscious.

Sans closed the door to his room and went back downstairs. "I'm gonna go to sleep with her now. Night, Pap."

"Um?" Papyrus looked like he wanted to ask something. "Is the meeting with King Asgore why you needed to get your power back?"

"Ye." Sans held out his hands. "It's cool. It's almost over. I might be letting Frisk go here soon. Heh. I already feel less attached already. No more instinct." He stuck his bony hands back in his coat. "Nope, and no more confusing infusion invading on her real personality either." That's all it had been. The confusing feelings. Instinct, and a sort of kindred feeling. That kindred feeling was just the infusion though. She just preferred it over exposing her soul whenever possible.

He doubted the real Frisk loved hot dogs and hamburgers. Doubted the real one was as down to Earth. Her human traits would be more obvious. She'd be her real self. He knew he wouldn't have that same deep down connection. It'd be fine.

Asriel isn't taking my Frisk. My Frisk doesn't exist. The human, she isn't like this. It's just all from the infusion. He just had to remember that.

He had to remember that. The Frisk he started to fall for was just a figment of a dream. Part his instinct drawing to her, and part the infusion changing her.

No, the real human would be nothing like her.

And these feelings, these intense instinctive feelings to kill Asriel and take her away as his forever would fade . . .

Two Wives?!

G and M 1 Entrance the next night . . .

Frisk had been to G and M 3 before in the eating area with Sans. It was like a nice restaurant. On the higher floors there was supposed to be other things too. G and M 2 though was supposed to be even ritzier. When she'd gone out and remet Dogamy and Dogaressa, she found out they held their anniversaries there, along with a party for their little pup monster's announcement.

While G and M 3 and G and M 2 could be seen from the special bridge overlooking all of the Underground, she never spotted G and M 1. And no wonder.

Asriel knocked upon Toriel's old door. Repainted and elegant, it even had gold trimmings along the side. A monster answered. After Asriel gave him some money, they were brought through the long hall, and then moved up the staircase.

In the area where Toriel first read to her about snails, nothing of the old place could be seen anymore. The area was more confined and nice. A total of four eating tables only.

Asriel continued to take her out of Toriel's former place, and Frisk started to feel edgy. "Asriel? I don't . . ."

"It's not far," Asriel insisted. "I know you've missed your convenient hot baths. So, I figured . . . it might be time to have one?"

A hot. Bath? Really?! Heat. Heat, heat, heat. "Definitely," Frisk agreed.

"Then, follow me."

The old ruin walls were gone, replaced with actual walls. Many of the walls and puzzles had been taken down, leaving room for dancing and even?

"Oh my gosh, there she is!" Mettaton waved to her. "If it isn't the next Princess of the Underground!"

"That cannot be confirmed or denied," Asriel said, playing it safe. Good. "Here is Frisk though."

"Oh, hang on everyone, just two seconds!" Mettaton put up his mike and came down to them. "You are in G and M 1! Thaaaaat's wonderful, darling! Me and Grillby Grillby, this is the one we are always at the most. In fact, this is the only one Grillby usually cooks at. The food that's truly Grillby only, like a Grillby burger, are imported from here alllll the way to even G and M 3!" He whispered closer to her. "Grillby still prefers smaller environments. He's pretty

shy.” Mettaton chuckled. “Okay, you two have fun. I have to get back up there and make sure people get what they pay for. Me!”

He hadn’t changed much, Frisk admitted that as she watched Mettaton start to perform live for an audience of monsters.

“This way, Frisk,” Asriel continued to take her deeper. “Almost there.”

Okay. Okay. *No. No. Nope, no, no, no!* “No, that’s okay, I-I don’t need it this . . .”

All the way to the second door. Asriel opened it and gestured her in. He said something, but she saw the old ruins again. Decrepit and decaying. She imagined the light and the flowers and the . . .

Scream. Screaming. Screaming, screaming, screaming.

Frisk ran, she started to run as fast as she could. Not that area. Not where she first fell! She ran passed Mettaton and then slammed open the doors to the small dinner hall, heading downwards as fast as possible.

“Frisk!”

Get out. Get out. Get out. Get out. Get out. Get out.

She ran. Ran. Kept running. Asriel kept coming after her, after her, after her, but she just kept running. Even through the snow, just run.

“Stop, Frisk!” Someone grabbed her and held her tight.

“Let go of me, let go of me!” Out. Out. Out. Out. Out of the Mountain. Screams. All the Screams. The two fires. Two. The log. Standing on the log. “I want out, out, out!” She stared at her hand. *Oouuuuut!*

Sans’ Room . . .

And was right in Sans’ room.

Sans just curiously looked. Kay. *She* was not supposed to be there at all right now. She was just how he left her that morning. White hair. Her original height. Only her eyes were still blue.

He'd been trying to sleep the experience off, knowing what was happening off, but sleep didn't come. And if Frisk was showing up like that? *Frisk is trembling*. He watched as Asriel quickly came to his room, grabbed her and headed out. "Hey."

Hey. What the hell?! Only being gone from Asriel less than even twenty seconds didn't break any rules, but Frisk didn't even have teleportation anymore. So.

She used return power. She wanted to get out of a situation in a hurry. *I knew she wasn't ready!*

Castle . . .

"Hey!"

"No," Asriel held his hand out to Sans as Frisk took off again. "Back off, this is my twenty-four hours. You know the rules."

"Yeah? I do." Sans grabbed him and shoved the copy of the book papers in his face. "It ain't two husbandry! And I caught up on some reading." He left him to figure it out while he went to check on Frisk.

"Hey, she's not emotionally damaged!" Asriel said, appearing in front of him. "I don't know what's wrong with her, so go away, Sans."

"Gee, I wonder," Sans growled at him. "You pushed too fast!"

"I didn't even do anything yet!" Asriel yelled right back. "She started freaking out before I even asked her anything."

"So, she doesn't even know?" Sans asked. "Then, where'd you take her? What happened?"

Asriel growled. "My twenty-four hours, my--"

"Your pops already told me you planned on taking it to the next step, don't play dumb." Sans wouldn't stop staring at him.

"Leave," Asriel said. "Get out before you start breaking rules."

Hmph. She was hurting. He could tell. He did something, Asriel did *something*. "What did you do then?"

"Nothing that concerns you, get out," Asriel said.

Damn. He didn't get a choice. He couldn't risk seeing Frisk, only extreme situations called for another husband to see her when it wasn't their twenty-four hours. Emotional was one, but if Asriel didn't try anything, then he couldn't guarantee it was emotional.

Maybe I can't stay to find out, but I know someone who can.

Sans disappeared.

"Any luck?" Toriel asked. Her and Asriel were hearing weeping outside of the room with her and Gloria.

"Won't say anything," Asriel said. "I just tried to do something nice, and somehow I screwed it up." He looked at his watch. "I have to be near her. But, I don't think she wants me near her." He hit the back of his fists against the door. "I did a huge, huge human error somewhere. I don't know where! They like to eat an assortment of things. Cooked. They like bathing, especially warm. They need friends. They need some space, but feel wanted too." He was trying to think. "They like more than one pair of clothes, and prefer different styles. They need time to warm up to each other faster than monsters."

"Humans are different," Toriel said. "I'm sure you'll figure it out. I would go with very minimal touching tonight."

"Yeah, not a single nuzzle, just basic hug and hold," Asriel agreed. "Could it be the energy too? I mean, maybe my energy is still not pure enough for someone as simple as a human?"

"Hm? I don't know. It's a good start," Toriel said to him. "Maybe take back some energy, and then give less? Sans did take a great deal from her yesterday."

"I can't take it back so easy. She doesn't like to expose her soul to me," Asriel admitted. Then, he watched as Undyne and Alphys came toward him. "Leave it alone." No, no. Not them, not now.

"What happened?" Undyne demanded.

No doubt Sans sent them. "Go away," Asriel demanded. "Beat it."

"There is nothing to be done right now," Toriel told them. "I am sure you probably heard something was wrong."

"And hear," Undyne corrected her. "Frisk isn't good right now. What happened?"

"We don't know," Toriel said. "She was fine in G and M 1 according to Asriel, and then she wasn't."

"I think it might be unbalanced energy too quick for a human," Asriel said. "She won't expose her soul to me though. I don't know. Either way, she's *my* responsibility. So, go. Go see her tomorrow. It's almost bedtime."

Not long after, Smiley Idiot was there again. *I don't need this tonight.* "What?" Sans held more paper out to him. Great. "You really want five minutes with her for unknown, unconfirmed suspicious reason?" His dad was wrong, Sans was not letting Frisk go at all. "Fine, go! Take the lousy five minutes."

Frisk cleared her throat as she got into bed. That hadn't bubbled up in years. Everything that happened to her, it just brought everything to the forefront. Gloria was gone now for the night. She had about an hour before bed. She wiped her nose as she waited on Asriel. She heard the door open and expected to hear him crawl into the bed. When he didn't, she looked up.

No way. He wasn't allowed to be there. Was he?

"Hey," Sans said to her.

Probably some new law he could use to see her. "Hey," she mumbled back. She felt exhausted after that, like she hadn't slept in days. "I'm not at my finest." She looked away again as she heard the sound of his slippered feet coming closer. "I'm all decked out as Asriel's wife, including my hair. Why are you visiting me when I feel like cold shit?" She felt his bony arm wrap around her.

"Sans." Toriel's sharp voice. "I *think* this is a bad idea."

"Then maybe for once, it's a good idea?" Sans remarked back.

What were they talking about? Frisk watched her leave. "How are you here? Lives aren't supposed to mix."

"Ah, you're coming back 'round," Sans said to her. "I was worried, Chum. Do you remember anything?"

"Just. Too close. G and M 1 ." She bit her lip and forced her eyes closed. The screaming. The twin fire shots. Screaming.

"G and M 1? He took *you* to G and M 1?"

"I need rest," Frisk said, unable to concentrate with the echoes in her head. "I'll see you tomorrow?"

"Yeah. First thing, Frisk. First thing," he said. He moved away from the bed and out the door.

Outside the room . . .

Sans held no light in his eyes for Asriel. Blackness.

"I. Didn't. Know," Asriel said in his defense. "Frisk is my responsibility, I am handling it."

"You aren't good enough to hold my wife," Sans blurted out. No. Not instinct, there was no more instinct. It was just, seeing her like that. And, not knowing the real her still, and

thinking about the old her. Everything all confused.

“My wife right now, *my* wife,” Asriel corrected him. “And soon, my wife forever.”

“You took her to ground zero, right underneath where her family was brutally murdered!” Sans yelled at him. “How could you just *forget* that? She needs to work up to going back there on her own, if and when she’s ready.”

“I remembered her best friend,” Asriel said. “I knew her grieving, I just didn’t think she would still be grieving for the first loss after fourteen years. There wasn’t even anything back there that would trigger it, everything is completely different.”

“Same area, and yeah, she probably did deal with it a long time ago.” Evil flower. Still stuck trying to learn how to become more monster. “But a lot of things have made it resurface again lately, and bringing her straight back there should have been an obvious one not to do, Asriel!”

“Fine then. I screwed up,” Asriel came back on Sans. “I caused unnecessary emotional burden on Frisk. It was my responsibility to get it fixed, not yours! And you didn’t even do anything, her friend Gloria already helped. What good did you think you did for five minutes?”

“Maybe nothing. Maybe something,” Sans admitted. “Don’t try and take her back there again. No more trying to go forward until she’s better.”

“I know that, don’t you think I know that? Stop talking to me like I’m a child!” Asriel pointed away from himself. “You took your few allowed emergency minutes to see her, so get out. She’s not up for visitors right now.”

“Or you.” Sans pulled out another paper toward him. “She’s too distraught. Second paragraph on the left.”

Great. Just great. “No husband visits her for *three hours*?”

“Right. Keep your hands *off*.” He put the paper away again. “It’s the rules.”

He wasn’t letting go of Frisk at all. Asriel was surprised he didn’t just take the full advantage of unnecessary emotional burdens benefits. “You sure you don’t want to just stay with my wife already?”

“Nah.” Sans finally backed up. “Just, you got more smartening up to do. At least another month.”

“Don’t you judge me,” Asriel growled again. “I’ve done a good job so far.”

“Yeah. Sure looks like it, a bang up job so far, Kid,” Sans said sarcastically.

“Unless you’re taking advantage of the situation and staying with her, then shove off!” End of the rope.

“Fine. I’ll be here first thing in the morning,” Sans said before he disappeared.

“Easy, honey.” Toriel came toward him. “Asriel. I want you to take all but thirty percent of your power. Frisk is unconscious now. It would be the easiest way to do it.”

“Take, what? My power?” That made no sense. “Why?”

“Just please do it, and then return back to your room,” his mother commanded as she walked away.

He went to his own personal room after taking back a lot of his power. *Screw up. Screw up. That’s all I ever do. I try and I try. I’ll never get good enough.*

“Ozzy?”

Oh. Asriel turned and saw Gloria. “My Morning Glory. Is Frisk okay?”

“Yeah, um, just a little triggered. It never took much to make Frisk run,” Gloria admitted. “I was worried about you? How are you holding up?”

“I didn’t think. I should have known. Sans knew.” Asriel looked at himself in the mirror. “Pathetic. I didn’t even ask her anything.”

“Yeah. Well. That guy was really concerned. He came twice?”

“He doesn’t think I can take care of her yet,” Asriel said. “I’ve done great so far, but great doesn’t mean squat if I hurt her once.”

“Yeah. No. I know. Um? So.” Gloria groaned. “This is not me, this is so not me. I am brave and I am being such a pansy ass right now.”

“Huh?” Asriel looked toward her. “What do you mean?”

“Love kind of changes what you can do, and especially this situation. But, after talking to Toriel, I-I have to do this.” Asriel watched her come toward him. “Did you listen to your mom? How much power did you take?”

“For now, she’s about thirty percent my power,” Asriel said. “I don’t why my mother told me to do that.”

“Instinct? Is that kind of broken a little more?” Gloria asked him.

“More or less. Still there, but less. Why?” He was watching her. This wasn’t like her at all.

“I’m leaving, Ozzy, soon. Your mom is taking care of my protection until Frisk is safe.”

What. “No!” Asriel shouted. “What, what, now?! No, not now. It’s not safe.”

“I’m gonna have full-time bodyguards.”

“Not good enough, they shoot to kill out there, and your little human body is just so fragile.” He moved closer, pushing on her shoulders gently. “Any monster down here could take out your body up there and strand your soul. The weapons up there, they could do it. So easy, too easy.”

“Why can’t you let me go?” Gloria asked him. “No one is even after anyone else in Frisk’s life anymore. If she’ll be safe here, they have no need to even bother me.”

“Yeah. But.” Asriel fidgeted for the words. “I don’t want you leaving the castle.”

“But, you’re going to be here with Frisk.” Her hands tightened at her sides. “Frisk. The girl you *have* to marry because the other guy is a cowardly schmo who won’t do it. Remember? I don’t want to be here when you’re just married to her.”

“Why?”

“I don’t wanna be around her and you as an actual couple!” She yelled. “I mean, Frisk is forcing herself to be happy and laugh and chuckle. You know? She has to, but she doesn’t love you. She barely likes you!”

Whoah. What an outburst.

“She ACTs because she has to,” Gloria said. “You know that. Even tonight, she would have ACTed ‘cause there are no choices left. I mean, I didn’t think so. But. I mean.” She scratched her head lightly. “I like you. I like you a lot more than I should, Ozzy.”

Oh? “Um. Me?” He gestured to himself. “Me, me?”

“Every day here I just fell for you more and more, so um.” She growled, almost at herself. “I. I. I want you to take me as your second wife!”

Asriel and Gloria just stood there. She rubbed her elbow.

“You . . . want to be my second wife?” Asriel asked.

“Yeah, ‘cause I like you, and um, Frisk doesn’t? So, like, she could do the minor things but I can do the major things,” she blurted out. “It’s not. Well, I mean, marriages to more than one is kind of . . . not that popular, but I’d be a good wife. Frisk could still have the Princess status.”

“My mom said you could be my second wife?” Okay. That didn’t happen in the Underground. Ever. Anymore. But.

“Yeah, well ‘cause Frisk is like a pure daisy, but I can totally um. Do the other, save her you know, from the other she doesn’t um.” Gloria groaned. “Gaw, I’m supposed to be brave!”

“I’ve kissed Frisk,” Asriel admitted. “I’ve taken her out. But, I couldn’t even get to the ‘base I was supposed to get to’ tonight,” he said, using her language. “You’re right though, she

wouldn't want to, but have to."

"But I could," Gloria said. "Seriously, it would be fun?"

"That?"

"Yeah."

"Have you done that before?"

"Oh, sure. I've done everything before."

"Everything?!" He half yelled, half squealed. "With who?!"

"Oh. I mean, I'm not a real slut, you know? Just a couple."

"Names!"

"Why?"

"So I can tear them to shreds!"

Morning Glory smiled. "Aw, you're so sweet sometimes."

"I'm not kidding. Name, address, last known relative, *now*."

Gloria blinked. "Wow, your mom was right. You are into me too, but instinct for Frisk is blinding you." She moved closer to him. "It's okay? They don't like have any 'claim' over me?"

"I . . ." His breathing just seemed to become harder. "No one. My Morning Glory. Not you, not-*who*?"

"Long gone. Not important." Gloria chuckled at him as she hugged him. "What do you think, *Ozzy*?"

"If for no other reason than to keep you from doing something vile as touching someone else when they aren't married to you." Bleh! He squeezed her tight. Then, he caught his mom peeking in through the door. He wanted to say something about the situation but all he could come up with was, "someone violated Morning Glory!"

"Ozzy," Gloria warned him.

"Can I kill them?" Asriel asked his mother.

"No. No, you can't kill former suitors like that." Toriel held her paws together in excitement. "I'm glad everything worked out. That you broke enough instinct to see the truth, Asriel, and that your true self cut through, Gloria." She approached Asriel. "Sans is not husband material, but you have shown signs of loving Gloria for nearly four months, Asriel. And she, you, even longer."

Asriel looked toward Morning Glory. "Touch another man and I will sentence them to death by my own hand."

Gloria blushed. "Um. Okay?"

"I am taking care of Frisk tonight for you," Toriel said. She brought out her side of the papers. "You may have six hours out of twenty-four hours to take a second wife, if you so choose."

"Damn, that stuff is prehistoric." Asriel looked toward Gloria. "I. I will take those hours if you wish?"

"Farther away from Frisk, the better your mind will clear." Toriel held out two passes for them. "Here. Go to Initiative. Be here by 7:30 though."

"Right." Asriel took the pass. "Are you sure I can't kill-"

"No, you can't, and stop wasting time thinking about others who have touched her," Toriel scolded her son. "And think about why you can't easily let that go instead." She gave Gloria a brief hug. "Good luck."

A few minutes later in the royal meeting hall . . .

"What do you *mean* you okay'd him having two wives?!" Asgore roared at Toriel. "Are you nuts?! No one takes two wives!"

"Frisk doesn't like him the same way, most of his draw to her is still instinct, and our son found someone he really *does* love," Toriel reminded him. "If need be, one day, he may drop Frisk."

"Then a mere human who has no good record of anything except sleeping around with other guys would be in charge of the Underground when Asriel becomes King!"

"Asriel would be a fine King, no matter his choice of love. Frisk must marry, and Sans won't do it, but I will not leave my son out there confused with just his instinct. And I won't leave Gloria hurting, watching her best friend marry the monster she loves. I don't care about Gloria's past, it is the future that matters." That was the final word to Toriel.

"I forbid it!" Asgore yelled. "This is worse than two husbandry! Two wives? Wives?! Asriel will be the laughing stock of the Underground!"

"Somehow, I don't think he is going to care what others think. His instinct is quenched, as well as his real feelings. He can remain a friendly husband to Frisk, but take Gloria as his lover." This was over. The conversation was over. "They are talking this out, but he should be making Gloria his second wife by now."

“Where in the Underground are they?!”

“They are *not* in the Underground,” Toriel said to him. “That’s all you need to know.”

Asgore grabbed at his head. “If Asriel takes another woman as his wife, then Sans the Skeleton should get Frisk. It’s the way it should have been in the first place.”

“Sans will not want a wife. Sans is not interested in others,” Toriel said to him.

“Two. Wives. Asriel will have two wives. One intimate and one not?” Asgore rolled his eyes. “I can’t believe this embarrassment.”

“You see? You are such a fool.” Toriel scoffed. “You care, once again, more of what others ‘think’ then what would make everyone happy.”

“A wife that is not intimate with a husband, is no wife. It’s just a friend.”

“Then he stays married to his friend, and takes his other for his lover.”

“Monsters of old nobility.”

“We are working with an archaic book,” Toriel reminded him. “Choosing a responsible one to rule, and a responsible one to love, was what they *did*. As long as one of them was always queen, the other was free to leave if she wanted to. Or in the case of your great-grandfather, if he wanted to.”

“Frisk should be gifted to Sans.”

“She will not be gifted to Sans!” Toriel said sharply again. “He does not want a wife, and you will not pressure him about it!”

“Since 200 A.D. there has not been Two Princesses of one Prince through marriage.” Asgore sighed. “A strange woman named Gloria as queen one day, or a two-wife marriage. Either way, the Monster Kingdom is not going to be looked at with mercy anytime soon.” He groaned. “If she hadn’t freaked out, they would have bathed together for the first time. Mingling so close in the water, enhancing the power, there would be no residue. He could have taken it as far as he needed to.”

“It would not have happened anyhow, I had Gloria convinced of the second wife role, and of Asriel’s feelings by the time they even arrived at G and M,” Toriel informed him.

“I’m not. Unmoved, Toriel. We are simply making real progress in getting respect from the humans,” Asgore reminded her.

“Then perhaps having one next in line isn’t so bad? Frisk or Gloria. No matter what the future brings.”

Asgore shook his head, but succumbed. “As long as . . . as he is happy, and Frisk is safe.”

“Asgore?” Toriel questioned him. “Instinct is so strong. Most monsters cannot tell the difference. Your son *still* found enough room in his heart for love to her. That is very powerful. To fall in love, while instinct drives one to another?”

“Yes.” Asgore nodded. “You are right, it is true love. My son has not only a woman, but a woman he loves. Fine. I agree then.”

“And Give Gloria the Princess status as well,” Toriel said. “She will no doubt be the one bringing the new blood to the throne. Perhaps even tonight.”

“Grandchild Monsters?!” Asgore lost himself in the moment. “New blood indeed! Yes.” He caught himself. “We can only assign one with Princess status. It would be good to get royal blood in. Then perhaps swear Frisk in after our grandchildren are born?”

“Sure, yes. Who knows how many we could have over the next hundreds of years?” Toriel chuckled, forgetting herself too. Thinking about little monsters running around the castle again.

“Well, it always was nice to have a backup in those days. If one of them died, there was always another to take their place.” Asgore agreed. “Neither of us plan on going anywhere, so I suppose Gloria as the official Princess status would be the smartest move.”

4:00 AM . . .

5:00 AM . . .

“Sans?” Papyrus questioned him as he finally found him. “What are you doing here? The exchange doesn’t happen for nearly three hours! I woke up, too concerned, and I couldn’t find you anywhere! What are you *doing* here at five in the morning?”

Sans just stared ahead at the castle. “She was bad, last night, I know it. She returned, she used return. She didn’t even have teleport power, she wouldn’t have known that would work. She wasn’t thinking. She was scared out of her mind last night, I saw it.”

“Yes, you said that,” Papyrus agreed. “Still, you don’t get her back until 8:00.” He sighed. “I am happy nothing happened, Brother, but this doesn’t bode well for your decision. Perhaps you should think a little harder?”

“Her eyes, you should have seen them,” Sans said, still staring at the castle, not listening to Papyrus. “Fright. Just dead fright, I’d never seen her like that before. Her hair was more frazzled than I could have ever noogied out of her. Her whole body was shaking, it was just shaking.”

“Was her hair white again?” Papyrus asked. “It could be power exchange, maybe Asriel ‘s second guess was right?”

“Frisk is strong, real strong. She’s got determination and a human soul. There ain’t no way it’s just power. And yeah, hair’s jet white, and I don’t care, I just . . . want to get her here already.” He shoved his bony hands in his pockets. “Asriel screwed up, he shouldn’t have done that.”

“Sans.”

“He took her to G and M 1,” Sans scoffed. “How could he really be that stupid?”

“Sans, how *long* have you been here?”

“About four,” he admitted. “I bet he took her to be bathed, that must be what he was doing to not want to leave residue,” Sans said. “That area is almost *exactly* where she fell.” Sans rubbed his skull. “I know to a lot of monsters, Frisk was an invincible kid. Legendary. The ‘Pacifist Child’. But she *was* still a kid at the time, and where she dropped.” He shook his head. “Exactly where her family was murdered right above her. Can’t imagine seeing family murdered in front of me.”

“But she didn’t see it, only heard it. Right?”

“It don’t matter. It’s still the same. It doesn’t mean her soul wasn’t scarred.” Sans patted his pockets. “I gotta get hot dogs, place should be open now. Frisk really likes hot dogs. I mean, the old her did. I don’t know if the new her will.”

“I think you give your infusion power over her too much thought,” Papyrus said. “I bet, she will be very similar to how she had been before.”

7:40

Frisk stayed still in her blood-stained dress in Asriel’s arms. Last night was awkward. It all came rushing back to her. She knew it would, the closer she got to it. Luckily, Gloria was there for her. A grief that she had dealt with in the past came bubbling back to the top. It was hard reimagining it all again, but she made it through.

By the time Asriel came to bed, she was feeling better. And then Gloria crawled into bed. Which was more awkwardness.

Then Gloria told her she married Asriel too. And, that’s when Frisk noticed she had some white in her usually bouncy red hair. Lots of white. Way more than usual. She looked like she had candy cane striped hair. The bottom was red, middle white, then red, then white, then the top of her head was red.

Asriel married her best friend.

Asriel. Married. Gloria too. And, they naturally infused so deeply, it was clear to see she was the true wife.

Great. Now she was a third wheel on a bike, unneeded. She really was only married because she was in danger if she hadn't been. She gave full congratulations to Gloria though. She finally found love, and it showed in her face so bright. *I shoulda seen it. He does call her Morning Glory all the time, and she called him Ozzy. They grew so close together.*

This would be interesting, if nothing else. Today, Toriel gave Gloria her official Princess tiara too. Good. At least they weren't forcing that on Frisk.

"Things will be a little different today," Asriel warned her. "I am taking you as a wife of royal interest until this whole contract is over. After that, you will be my friend wife. It will protect you, but I . . ."

"Want to be with your real one," Frisk finished and winked at him. "No prob, Flowey, totally get it. Props to you and Gloria. Nice infusion too. She's so pretty."

"The stripes in her hair are gorgeous." Asriel looked at her side at Gloria longingly. "And the silver in your tiara brings it all together, my Princess."

He forgot he was even talking to Frisk. *Good!* She looked toward Gloria. "You look really pretty." Gloria definitely fit the Princess dress a lot better than Frisk did. At least to her.

"Alright, ladies, let's go!" Asriel laughed like Frisk hadn't heard him do in ages. Not since he was, well, evil. Happy being evil. Okay. "Oh, wait. I wanted to do one thing for Sans. You are going to be tough to carry for him like this." He used the little bit of power he naturally had to make her smaller again. "There we go."

"Travel size again," Gloria teased. "Your travel size luggage, Frisk."

"Oh, don't say that! You know I hate that," Frisk whined to her. Then she chuckled. Absolutely beaming. Gloria never looked happier. And the fact Frisk was finally off the hook from even kissing the prince? *Yes!* She could just learn to be good friends with her husband. Much better idea.

Bubbling Frisk

7:50 . . .

Frisk wanted to laugh at the funny expression on Sans' face when Gloria was standing right beside her, with the tiara. He couldn't ask any questions yet either, so it was probably really bugging her little puzzler. Even though he couldn't technically make expressions, his little light guiders were darting all over the place, and were much larger than usual. Even Papyrus was scratching his head, trying to figure out this one.

As 7:55 rolled around, all three of them met in the middle.

"There has been a change that makes us must speak to one another as per the rules," Asriel stated to Sans. "I married another woman."

"Mmmm, seeing that. Frisk's original hair color?"

"Yes. I took a second wife, so I had to share more energy."

". . . kay."

"Frisk is going to be my friend wife," Asriel said.

". . . uh."

"Don't worry, Sans the Skeleton," Gloria spoke up. "You don't have to feel forced to take Frisk." She patted Frisk's head, annoying her slightly. "I'm fine sharing my hub-hub, because I'm the only one hub-hubbing him."

Asriel started to laugh. "That's not royal!"

Gloria shrugged. "I'm learning?"

". . . kay?" Sans said. "Okay. Gloria is obviously your first wife."

"Yes. I am doing everything with her that I would need to do with my wife. Frisk is simply going under 'wife of royal interest' until the contract is up. After that, she will be an official friend wife."

Huh. Funny. Frisk had so little of Sans' power, and yet it was like she felt relief from him. Why would he feel relieved? Nothing really changed.

"Hey, hey, that's great!" Sans grabbed Gloria's hand and shook it excessively. "Couldn't be more pleased to meet you, Princess Gloria!"

"Whoah. I'm not used to the title yet." Sans was still shaking her hand.

“Well, you’ll get there, know ya will!” Then, Sans scooped up Frisk, with one hand, and grabbed Asriel’s hand with his other. “Congrats! You know how hard it is to figure out love from instinct? The fact you actually could pull away from instinct long enough really proves that’s true love. Good for you, Prince Asriel.” He lifted Frisk lightly. “I need to go take my luggage now. Thanks for making it travel size.”

“Oh my gaw, I just made that joke!” Gloria laughed. “Bye, Frisk, have fun in Waterfall.”

“Waterfall?”

“Yes, the reason this conversation needed to be initiated,” Asriel said, “was that I don’t want any residue from me on Frisk. It’s not appropriate to my first wife since Frisk will be my friend wife. So, you need to do what I was going to do before Frisk had a tough moment last night.”

“Why?” Frisk asked. “What were you going to do?”

“Lay his hands on the water . . .” Gloria made the movement of her hands spreading out. “. . . it builds up steam and heat and energy. You get in the bath, naked. Removes any residue that’s built up, or *would* have built up.”

“Uh?” What?

“Come on. You’ve missed hot baths anyway, right?” Gloria teased her.

“Naw, I can’t afford that. She also doesn’t want to go there. Besides, um?” Sans voice sounded strange. “Are you nuts?!”

“You *have* to remove residue, it’s in the rules,” Asriel reminded him. “And I am not dealing with taking care of her residue from you. She is my friend wife as well as my wife’s friend. So, this has to cease. Take her and end the residue nonsense.”

“You don’t have to worry about a fancy bath,” Gloria said either. She winked at Frisk and clicked her tongue. “Let her skinny dip in Waterfall before bringing her back each time.” Gloria just waved. “It’ll still be hot and steamy with energy. Have fun, Frisk!”

Oh yeah, Sure? She was supposed to skinny dip with Sans around?!

“Um. So, uh? Skinny dip. That’s, um, that’s uh, human word for uh . . . yeah. Um?” Sans looked back toward Papyrus. “Umm.” Sans looked back toward Asriel. “I gotta get the human naked and swimming around in Waterfall while I pour energy into it?”

“Yes, each night, I swear there better not be a hint of residue,” Prince Asriel warned him. “If I have to touch Frisk in any way more than a friend, meaning more than the areas you are touching her to lift her each morning, I will make you regret it for the rest of your life.” He wrapped his arm around his Princess.

Frisk was trying to wrap her head around what was just said. “Wait, but, I mean, that sounds . . .”

“Opposite, but it’s not,” Gloria said explaining to Frisk. “See, residue is traces of power. Okay? When you’re covered from head to toe, and in every, well, orifice? It’s not residue anymore. It’s considered bubbled.”

Oh. Uh. Hm. Bubbled? Sans was supposed to bubble her every night before taking her back to Asriel? *Are they serious? Are they really serious? Okay. Surely Sans knows a different way? He’s not going to make me skinny dip every other night in Waterfall.*

“It’s only a month,” Gloria said. “If your jaw could drop, it would be on the ground right now, wouldn’t it, Mister Skeleton?”

“Gonna. Better. Get home,” Sans stumbled. “Nice to meet you, Princess Gloria.”

“Thanks.” Princess Gloria leaned on Prince Asriel. “Clean her up well?”

“Uh. Uh huh. No prob.” He turned around a little awkwardly and walked off toward Papyrus.

“Well?” Papyrus asked excitedly. “What’s going on?”

“Frisk’s best friend Gloria became Princess,” Sans said. “Knew I sensed something heavy. Asriel has two wives. Frisk became his friend wife.”

“Wonderful!” Papyrus didn’t look like he could be any more pleased.

“Yuh, uh huh, it’s great but I can’t leave reside. He doesn’t want to disrespect his first. Pretty sure he’d already made it with her,” Sans said. “So.”

“So what?”

“I’ve got to bubble Frisk in Waterfall.”

At The Lab . . .

“Wow!” Undyne said, amazed at what Frisk said. “So we all have a new Princess, huh? Princess Gloria. Asriel took another wife.”

“A true wife with love. Oh, that’s so sweet!” Alphys said sighing dreamily. “I’ve got to send out massive confirmation. Book, tweet, pin it, everything!”

“Two wives.” Undyne whistled. “You know, I bet Asgore’s not super happy about that.”

“Well, I don’t care, I am,” Frisk said as she laughed and spun around in the lab chair. “I can just be a friend, while Gloria does everything else like a real wife.”

“Not used to seeing your hair in that color anymore,” Undyne said, looking toward Frisk.
“Not in a long time.”

Frisk touched her brown hair. “I guess.” She spun her chair around a little more. “Too bad though.”

“Why?” Undyne asked. “Did you like your hair blue or white?”

“Honestly, both,” Frisk answered. “The kind of hairstyle infusion was giving me back and forth costs a bunch of money. It’s like uh . . . the price of five Grillby burgers.”

“Past or now?”

“Now.”

“Wow, that’s expensive,” Undyne said.

“But, I like my brown too.” She twirled around in her chair again, and hung upside down looking at them.

Alphys chuckled. “What are you doing?”

“Looking at the world from a different angle,” Frisk said.

“I see. Oh yeah, the infusion, it probably made you act a little differently than your original self.” Alphys stood up. “Do you feel different, Frisk?”

Frisk shrugged. “Blood rushing to my head is always a little different, but I’m fine,” she joked. “No, I’m not really all *that* different. I’m just happy. I really didn’t want to do anything in the first place. I feel so much better, and Gloria is stoked to do the Princess thing. Feels kinda like my life is starting to straighten out a bit.”

“I’m happy for you.” Alphys came over and looked at Frisk’s head. “You really don’t have much of anything. No real tiny blue or white.”

“Nope, I’m about as me as I can be,” Frisk said. “Sans left like ten percent, and Asriel came back and took a lot more. He didn’t want any instinct at all. He left one percent, so we technically were still connected.”

“One percent? So you’ve only got eleven percent of the whole monster energy in you?” Undyne didn’t seem happy about that. “Did you tell Sans about that?”

“No, why?”

“That’s not very much,” Alphys agreed.

“I’m fine,” Frisk insisted. “Don’t worry. I lived most of my life without needing any monster’s energy in my soul.”

“Yeah, but I don’t think Sans is going to like that.” Undyne looked toward Alphys.

“Why?”

“Just. I’ll be right back,” Alphys said.

On Duty . . .

Phone? Now? Sans was trying to concentrate on his job, while his mind was dwelling on Frisk. He didn’t need another reason to get distracted. “Cover for me, Bro? It’s Alphys.”

“No problem. I know you’re a little more distracted today.” Papyrus said.

Was he ever. Sans answered it. “Sup?”

“Sans? Hey, um . . . did you know Asriel took back his energy?”

“Yeah, of course, her hair is back to normal.” That was obvious, it didn’t need to be spoken.

“Yeah. And you have like, ten percent in her?” Alphys asked on the phone.

“Yeah, somethin’ like that. Why?” Sans asked.

“Well? Um? I guess maaaaybe Asriel gave the rest to his other wife, for her protection?”

“Oh yeah, first wife is definitely going to come first in a two monster thing,” Sans said. What was her point already? “I’m really in the middle of work here right now.”

“There’s not a speck of white in her hair anywhere. Besides the blue in her eyes, Frisk is almost completely normal. He only left one percent of her power in her,” Alphys finished.

“What?” Sans voice rose. “Are you shittin’ me?”

“No. I guess, he’s . . . not real interested in giving her a long life?”

Sans disappeared.

The Lab . . .

And reappeared in the lab. “Frisk.”

Frisk glanced toward him. Her brilliant blue eyes still shone, but he looked deeper at her hair. It was hanging down in the chair since she was upside down. Alphys was right, no white at all. “Are you joining girl time?” she teased him. “Aren’t you on duty?”

Sans turned his skull and his body slightly to look at her. *Well, at least some of my Frisk is still there.* “You only got 1% of Asriel’s power?”

“Yeah,” she answered. “It’s fine.”

“It’s not fine,” Sans corrected her. “You’re gonna have a human lifespan like that.”

“I know,” Frisk said. “Oh? Look, Sans, they don’t need to live with this two wife thing for a thousand years. Regular human life is fine.”

“A bullet could kill you right now. A stray bullet could kill you out on duty, *right now.*”

“I’ll be careful,” Frisk said as she stretched. She pulled herself back up. “Asriel is limited in his power. He can only give one of us a longer life, and I’d rather Gloria spend a lifetime with the one she loves.”

Kind attitude. That’s still the same. “As great as that is, I’m more selfish, so you need more power. Besides? It was always kind of fun having someone to play magic tag with.”

“That may be true. Then, I could get a different job away from the castle,” Frisk said. “I met Mettaton in G and M 1 before I went . . . too deep. Um.” Uncomfortable. “Grillby is always in G and M 1, and the reason the food takes so much longer to the other G and M’s is because someone brings it over.” She smiled. “I bet I could talk them into hiring me for instant service to the other places.”

Deep thinker she still be. My little puzzle solver. So far, he just couldn’t detect much difference between the Frisk he spent the last five months with, and the Frisk of that moment. Except for her outward appearance. There were differences though, there had to be.

Same charming smile. Same carefree style. “Do you still want me to pick up some hot dogs for lunch, or you want something different?” Sans asked her.

A shrug. “Let’s see. Hmm. Okay. How about grilled cheese with chocolate milkshakes?” Frisk asked. “Get a couple chocolate ice creams from the bunny guy so you don’t have to import it, get some milk, blend that sucker, and get some old fashioned cheddar with bread and grill it up. I can do the grilling if you get me at a decent time.”

“ . . . ”

“Something wrong, Sans?” Frisk asked him.

She thinks even more. She doesn’t want to settle for the same old, same old, but . . . “Heck no, sounds great. All for it. Bet Papyrus will like it too.” She was still a down to Earth girl.

She was still pretty much Frisk. *Thirty. No personality changes at thirty percent infusion.* “Let’s do this real quick before you come to work with me.” After he gave her more of his power, he watched her. Just enough for teleporting, making sure she’d be fine if a bullet hit her, and that was good. Didn’t even mess with her hair.

“Thanks? Um? Unless you like joining in girl talk, you’re not going to have much fun here,” Frisk said after awhile.

“Her subtle way of telling you to shove off and go back to work,” Undyne said to Sans. “Move it.”

“Okay. Alright.” Still her. She was still her. His infusion really hadn’t changed her a whole lot. Some, but not . . . “You’re still you.”

“Who else would I be?” Frisk asked him with that friendly smile only she could give. “I’m always me.”

“Sans. Work,” Undyne reminded him again.

“Yeah, okay.” Sans saluted Frisk. “See ya soon, Miss Frisk.”

G and M 1 . . .

I can do this. She was okay up until Mettaton. She knew that. Just. *I can handle this.*

“You okay so far, Frisk?” Alphys asked. She’d been good enough to take her over with Undyne. Alphys wasn’t a stranger to G and M 1 since Mettaton liked to have her near for repair reasons, it kept their friendship alive.

“Yeah, sure.” Frisk moved through the tables okay. It was just tables. Not the ruins. Just tables. She moved out the door and saw Mettaton shortly in the distance. *This is good. I should get used to this. I should be okay all the way around in the Underground.* But she wouldn’t be going through the whole second set of doors anytime soon.

Alphys waved toward him, and he came charging up in a hurry.

“Alphys! Frisk! Both of you are here? Wonderful.” Mettaton looked toward Frisk. “You had problems last time, honey. You okay now?”

“I think so,” Frisk said. “You said Grillby worked out here, right? Where does he work?”

“Oh, it’s a bit of a secret,” Mettaton said.

“It’s not behind those doors all the way over there, right?” Frisk gestured toward the hard doors she didn’t want to go through.

“Oh no, he’s up further. Why?” Mettaton asked. “He doesn’t like to do autographs or anything. He’s more of a shy guy flame.”

“Yes, I remember you said that,” Frisk said, “but I was wondering if I could help you out for a small fee?” Oh please. It was worth a shot though. For one, she only took thirty percent

magic. For two, she felt bad taking Sans magic still when he was going to be done with her in a month. So, she should really make use of it.

Plus, thirty percent wasn't enough to really be that good to help Sans and Papyrus out. The first time she tried to help out because a bullet went off by a new recruit, she turned it slightly, but it almost hit someone else, and Papyrus curbed it from that.

To be helpful, Frisk not only had to change the direction of the bullet, but follow the flow of the air around it until it was safely in a different target. And as fast as bullets go? She ended up mostly staying in the back.

"Don't need any real help," Mettaton said. "I'm sorry. If we do though, I'll let you know."

"Well, I wanted to see if I could offer my services for a new kind of job?" Frisk continued. "I could get rid of the wait time between the G and M's much easier for you for Grillby's home cooked food?"

"Really?" Mettaton was intrigued. "How?"

"Like this." Frisk disappeared and reappeared on the opposite side of Mettaton.

"Wow, wow! Teleporting? Ooooooh my!" He was definitely enthused. "The meal wouldn't have to be rewarmed up or anything, it would be piping hot like it just came off the grill! Yes, we could use that!"

"Great," Frisk agreed. "I really wanted something to do." Mettaton said a number to her that about made her ears fall off. It was twice the money Sans was making protecting the Underground. "Okay? I might have someone else that's looking for some part-time. Why don't I half that with him if he wants to join?"

"If he has the same power, absolutely! Anyone with that power!" Mettaton started to fan himself. "Boy, the Underground just becomes better and better every day, doesn't it? Oh, let's go let Grillby know. You'll be mainly in his area." Mettaton kept walking straight a short time, then moved toward a wall. He reached behind a painting and the sound of a switch sounded. "Stairs."

Frisk recognized it. Grillby's area was in a trap area that used to be covered in leaves. Following the exact path avoided it. A long time covered up, but it could be open with a fleet of stairs. Frisk moved with Mettaton down the stairs. That area was hollowed out. It wasn't fancy though with anything in it, until they reached up ahead. And then? *Oh my gaw.*

Grillby's. Restaurant. Just like it used to be. His entire restaurant was down there?

"He misses his quaint restaurant, so we moved it all back here, piece by slow piece." Mettaton said as they approached the door. "It's his dream to re-open it, but the Underground is so different now, and the price is too high to come into this one. However, lower the price and he gets overrun." Mettaton smiled. "Oh, once that barrier came down, and borders started to open up more, a lot more monsters started being born. I think a lot of monsters were just

too in despair to really want to create family before,” Mettaton said. “But boy, when you helped break that barrier? Baby monster boom! We went from 400 to . . . around 4300 or so?”

Hm. “Thanks for letting me know,” Frisk said. “Maybe I can help out somehow.”

They both went through the door. *Wow*. The old wood. Some replaced, some refurbished, but everything? It still felt like the old Grillby’s. Even the booths. The old Jukebox. Grillby was right in front of them with his usual waiter outfit.

“Grilly Grillby, most fantaaaaastic news!” Mettaton said as he presented Frisk. “Frisk here, the ‘pacifist child’ of legend wants to use her teleportation skill to bring your food to G and M 2 and 3 quicker!”

Frisk watched as Grillby’s flame seemed to increase in brightness.

“That means he definitely wants that kind of help,” Mettaton said.

“Hey. Uh? Could you ask him something else for me?” Frisk asked. “If he whipped up three classic Grillby burgers, for free because I don’t have cash?” That and she wasn’t allowed to buy her own lunch or dinner. “I could let him have three customers tonight. Like the old days.”

“Sure, I can ask him that.”

Frisk waited. She watched a hamburger without a bun appear right in front of her. On it there were funny grill marks.

“That means okay,” Mettaton said.

Later that Night . . .

Okay. Sans looked around G and M 1. He didn’t know if Mettaton was giving Frisk a free glimpse of the place to help her with her fears, and she was bringing them along for support or what. She knew her own limits though.

“Wow. This place is fancy,” Papyrus noted as they walked up the stairs and saw the four dining tables. “Nothing like the old place at all.” He smiled. “Can’t even see the old ruins, no way to tell where we are.”

“We are in Toriel’s former fireplace area,” Frisk told him.

Yeah. Of course she knew that.

“Just a teeny bit further,” she insisted. She opened the doors and went through. Sans saw Mettaton at the end giving a live show performance. He almost missed when she went to a painting on the wall, reached behind it and flipped some kind of switch.

A staircase descended into the ground. "Ooh, secrets." Frisk smiled at him and headed down the stairs. "Come on, Pap."

"Where are we going already?" Papyrus complained. "I really hope this is all worth it."

"Whoah." Worth that. And so much more. "Home."

Frisk stood beside the old Grillby's just up ahead. "Grillby is on the shy side, so he still runs his Grillby company on the inside. They took it apart and brought it down here, piece by piece, according to Mettaton."

Grillby's. As he stepped in, it felt like taking a step into the past. How many times had he come down to Grillby's? A place to help escape the horror of being trapped in the mountain. A good place that his mind never wanted to let go of

Even in the back, right in the cooker area, was plain old Grillby with his same waiter's uniform.

Frisk moved forward to a stool. Papyrus and Sans joined them. "The food is free so I can't get blamed for it."

Sans watched as a fresh, warm and not overheated Grillby burger was slid his way.

"Okay, puzzle solvers," Frisk said, "try this one. Grillby wants to open up his business again, but there are so many monsters, to keep the fee down, he has to charge outrageous pricing. Because of that, he has just been cooking with Mettaton."

"Makes sense," Sans finally spoke as he picked up his burger. "Grillby kind of pulled a disappearing act once there was actually a line forming outside all the time."

"Because of the baby monster boom?" Frisk asked.

"Explosion more like it," Papyrus said as he dug into his own burger. "This has to be one of the nicest surprises ever! If there was anything to love more in all that time, it was this place. Right, Sans?"

Sans was almost speechless. He was trying to keep himself together so he didn't get his fresh Grillby burger wet. Sometimes, the past did creep in. Some good thoughts. Some bad thoughts. When that barrier opened, the change that happened was like Papyrus said. Explosive.

When it opened and anyone had the right to see the sky, night or day. When days passed by and they were shoved back in their confinement, but was starting to make contact. As the King and Queen talked and became familiar with the outsiders.

Change. Suddenly the small number of monsters were changing into such big numbers. Sans and Papyrus were given their job. Grillby's was overrun by fast-growing monsters and it disappeared. Was there, then just out of business. Sad day.

But today? “Think Papyrus and I can give it our old try again,” Sans said as he looked toward Papyrus. “What do you think, The Great Papyrus? Can we solve this puzzle?”

“Indubitably,” Papyrus agreed as he took another bite of his burger.

“This was really nice. Thanks, Frisk.” It was nicer than nice. It was a dream come true.

“I got a job here,” Frisk said. “Well, on the days I’m with Asriel. Gloria will be filling in everything else, so I can get out of the castle now.” She gestured to Grillby. “They are happy to have me and the pay is decent. If either of you want a part time job helping Grillby out too-“

“Heck yes!” Sans couldn’t say it fast enough. “Hey, Grillby, can I work the opposite days of Frisk?” Ah, he knew that flame up. “What do you say, Papyrus? Royal Dogs hardly do anything. Give them some time at the front of the field?”

“Yes, why not? A change in job structure every other day would be great.” Papyrus bit into his burger again. “Especially while doing such a great service as serving Grillby’s fine home cooking at a much faster rate.”

“Which would bring the pricing down too,” Frisk said.

Grillby gave off his own little yes flame again, and eagerly had a second set of burgers waiting for them, on the house.

“Maybe a pass day?” Papyrus recommended. “Just like the King and Queen have twenty passes to go outside in a given area.”

“Great idea, The Great Papyrus.” Ah. Ah, ah, ah. Sans was drowning in nostalgia. He looked at the human being right next to him, still messy as hell, with ketchup smeared on her face. *Frisk.*

Papyrus had been right. The infusion had only really changed her slightly. This was her. His Frisk wasn’t a dream. He wasn’t manipulating her into being someone . . . he wanted.

She already had been. Easy to talk to. Puzzle solver. Helper. A presence that made someone just want to kick back and relax with.

“Sans, your burger is starting to drip ketchup on the plate.”

Frisk just laughed, her familiar light-hearted laugh. “I thought I was messy.”

“I thought I? Yeah? No.” Sans tried to concentrate on his burger. “Better get going here soon. As nice as this is, I still got to bubble you, Frisk.” He noticed Grillby’s slight reaction to that.

After they finished a couple more burgers, they headed out their way. Mettaton met them on the way out.

“Oh, leaving so soon?” Mettaton asked.

“Yeah. I gotta go bubble Frisk,” Sans said. “Nice seein’ ya. Let’s go.”

“Uh, Sans?” Papyrus whispered to him as Frisk led the way back out. “You know? You probably shouldn’t be talking about that so much publically?”

Ooh. Papyrus was right. For some reason, he just wanted to let Grillby and Mettaton know he was bubbling Frisk. He was more than ready.

Although the first time would be anything but fun.

Waterfall . . .

Frisk stared at the water. Sans had her go to a more ancient area that wasn’t changed as much. It used to have the sign that informed someone they failed a puzzle if they reached it. Overall, it wasn’t too small for the task. It was in a harder to see area, so it gave privacy too. The only thing that could see over to it was the bridge that overlooked anything, but Papyrus was standing guard over that area, just in case someone crossed at the wrong time. *No big deal. He can cover his eye sockets.* “So I just jump in there?”

“Yeah, um, but I’m going to have to take care of your mouth too. It’s where residue resides the most,” Sans told her. “You have to get in there and gulp that water down your throat when I say so. You’re guaranteed to choke. It won’t be nice.”

Sure. Unsanitary water that’s been untreated and left here for hundreds of years. “Are there sanitary concerns?”

“Nah, my energy will purify it. Kill all the germs. Hop on in.”

Well, at least she knew it was safe. She made sure his back was turned as she undid her button-down blue shirt and pants. She jumped in, wanting to scream. *So cold!*

She reached the surface, and saw Sans stirring his bony finger in the water. Even though he probably couldn’t see anything through the water, she was still covering her front. It was still really cold.

“Give it a minute or so,” Sans said to her casually. He hadn’t lifted his eye sockets to look at her. “I need to make sure I don’t push in too much heat. I don’t want to boil you alive.”

Oh. “That would be bad.” Frisk started to feel the water get warmer. Not boiling hot, just a nice warmth that melted into hot tub status. “Ooh, that feels good.” She heard almost a small splash of water. She looked toward Sans and his whole bony hand had splashed the water. Realizing how awkward the moment probably was for him, she made a joke. “Waterfall tea. Add leaves, human, energy and stir until not boiling hot.”

“My energy feels good to you?” Sans said not acknowledging my joke.

“The water feels good,” Frisk said. “Definitely.”

“Water feels good from my energy,” Sans said, slowly stirring his finger in it. Funny. He looked like he was in a different world again. “Asriel never would have made it feel this good.”

“I guess?” That was weird talk from Sans. She swam over closer to him, getting a little more over her shyness. “Does not boiling me alive take that much concentration?” She half-joked.

“Nah. I could never do that.” Yet, Sans still stared at his own bony finger that was lightly tracing the water. So much was starting to come in, the water was starting to glow.

“Am I non-residued yet?” Frisk asked him. Part of her was ready to come out, while another part wanted to bask in it forever.

“Almost.” Sans used his other finger to gesture her closer. “We gotta take care of that mouth.”

With water choking. Frisk moved even closer to him. “Okay.”

“This is gonna seem mean. This is the only time I ever have to do this with your mouth, as long as you don’t kiss any other guy for the rest of your life.” He looked strained. “Ready? Open.”

As soon as Frisk opened her mouth, she felt Sans grab the top of her head and push her all the way down into the water. Water burned in her mouth and lungs for only a few seconds, before she felt like the water was massaging her in and out.

Choking never felt so *good*.

Sans released her again and she broke the surface. “You okay?”

“Oh yeah,” she said breathlessly. “I’m bubbled.”

“Yep. I bubbled you,” Sans said. For the first time since she got in the water, he looked at her. “You’re covered head to toe on the outside with my energy.”

“Yeah, I can feel it.” It felt different. It was easy to see where the word bubbled came from. It wasn’t a claustrophobic being trapped type of deal. “It feels like my entire body is warm and protected, even what’s sticking outside the water.” She dunked herself in the water one more time, before coming closer to the other side by her clothes. “Oh, it feels soooo good.”

“Ye?” Sans looked away again. “How good?”

“Really, really good. Hard to describe.”

“Try.”

“Okay. Hmm.” How to describe it? “It’s like being cuddled from the inside out, I suppose? But, even that’s not it.” Warm. Protection. Like, someone actually protecting her. “It’s like

being on the back of a motorbike and holding onto dear life to the only person in existence who was trying to save you and not kill you,” she joked as she fumbled with her last button. “Okay.” Huh? She touched her hair tenderly. That was strange.

Sans came over toward her, and surprisingly touched her hair. “A little natural infusion since you accepted the energy so well.” He stroked it lightly. “You’ve got brown hair, but your tips are blue.” He curled it around his bony finger.

“Oh.” Frisk should have felt cold, but instead she felt like? “I feel like I’m still in the water.”

“In my energy,” Sans said, curling her hair a little tighter. “I’ll get you dunked every night by this time.”

“Okay.” Frisk watched as he let go of her hair. She took her own chance to twirl it slightly. It needed cut, she hadn’t cut it in five months. “So, I was right about the tea thing, wasn’t I?” she joked. “It seems a little different.”

“Can’t be overridden. It’s your natural hair response to my energy.” He touched her hair again.

Frisk looked at her fingers. “That too?” Not much, just a small brushing of blue on her fingernails at the tips. “That’s a funny look,” she smiled. “Will that go away?”

“Nothing goes away until you get bathed in your husband’s energy the same way,” Sans answered. “Asriel. Not me though, I mean, I’m just temporary.”

“Of course,” Frisk answered. The situation was probably making him feel awkward. “Ready to go home?”

“Yeah. You bet, Frisk. You bet.”

Permission to Hunt

G and M 2 . . .

“Okay,” Gloria whispered. “Are we supposed to just ignore the dirty looks, or do we knock blocks off here?”

Frisk looked toward Gloria. “Ignore them,” she whispered back. The dirty looks weren’t aimed at Gloria and her as much as they were at Asriel. He simply did the same thing.

“Waiter?” Asriel finally caught someone’s attention to take their order. “We’d like a pizza please?”

“Are you sure?” The waiter asked him. “Are you sure that’s enough for you, that you don’t *need* a second choice? Sir?”

“No, I don’t need a second choice, we’re just having pizza,” Asriel said firmly.

“Are you sure you don’t want a dessert with that?” The waiter asked him. “Dessert on the side of your main course. Nothing wrong with some dessert on the side of your main course, is there, Prince Asriel?”

“No. There *isn’t*.” Asriel turned away and looked back at Frisk and Gloria. He tried to smile. “Well, this is a delightful evening, isn’t it?”

“Quite,” Frisk said.

“Except for all the shitty looks,” Gloria said, giving them all looks back. “Our business is our business.”

“Gloria,” Frisk said in a warning tone. She knew her friend. When push came to shove, Gloria didn’t like to step back. “You’re the Princess now, please be good?”

“It’s all fine,” Asriel said. “Don’t worry.”

Frisk watched as their drinks came. She got hers gracefully. Gloria got hers a little clunkily.

And Prince Asriel had two sodas in front of him. “I just asked for one?”

“Well, it’s always good to have a second choice. A backup, in case the first one doesn’t work for you.”

“That’s it!” Gloria stood up. “Stop it with the looks and everything, none of you are pure and self-righteous either! We run our lives the way we want to!”

“Gloria.” Frisk tried to settle her down. She stood up and tried to get Gloria to sit back down. “You can’t change everyone’s minds. Few of them can understand you anyhow. Just hold enough determination to get through it.”

“Fuck determination Frisk, I’m about to blow over here.” Gloria sat back down.

“It’s just been a long time since double marriage,” Asriel said to Gloria. “Really, Morning Glory. I promise it’ll be okay.”

“Hey there.”

Frisk watched as Lyons Forager came up toward them. He visited the Underground twice on his father’s orders. He wasn’t a bad man, just caught between politics and family. “Hey, Lyons? What’s up?”

“Mm? Well? Dad’s thorough.” Lyons handed Asriel something. “So, sorry. I’m here for your Morning Glory.”

“Whoah, what?!” Asriel looked at the paper. “No, no, no. I am completely allowed to have another wife by the book!” He handed it back. “That makes no sense.”

“Well, don’t ask me to explain it directly? I’m going to try here until the contractor comes but don’t quote me ‘cause I’m no professional,” Lyons said. “Okay, so like Frisk is protected under the Contract. Everything dealing with her is in the contract. The whole thing is about her. So, this other woman, she’s from the book. Not the contract.”

“And we are following the book.”

“No, you’re following the contract. Using the clever definition thing, but they don’t pertain anymore.” Lyons went over toward Gloria’s arm and checked it. “See? No scar for the fucking scar you are supposed to produce.”

“I did produce one!” Asriel stood up defiantly.

“Yeah.” Gloria showed off her neck where there was a little flower at the nape of her neck. “It’s cute too.”

“Eeeeh, yeah? But *that* was from the infusion fucking, not the genuine book fucking. Look, she’s not in contract. She can’t cheat that way.” Lyons sighed. “Do you get what I’m saying?”

“She’s my wiffffff.” Asriel gave him a real warning tone. “If it’s by the book, one mess up doesn’t mess it all up.”

“Nah, I agree, you can completely take her as your wife now or later, it’s just that now you haven’t kept up with Frisk. You’ve been making your second wife do that.”

“So?! What is your point?!”

“She’s not covered by the contract, dude,” Lyons said, “but the act of having a second wife is. As a *replacement*.”

“I don’t get it.”

“Well, let’s go back to the castle then and we’ll hash it out.”

The Castle . . .

“Sans should really be present,” Asriel insisted, “*he’s* the only monster who’s been studying about contracts.”

“He can’t, it’s your twenty-four hours,” Toriel told Asriel. “She’s already had her three hours away this morning from you.”

Asriel drummed his fingers, looking at the contract. It was all so foreign.

“Sorry,” Forager said again. “I gotta collect her, dad wants her.”

“No!” Asriel demanded. He grabbed onto Gloria’s hand. “This is my wife, and no one is touching *her*.” His her was a low growl.

Forager sighed again. “Do we really have to make the contractors explain it all again? You messed up. The presence of your second wife is only mildly recognized because of the paper she signed in the contract. The book can’t recognize her because you didn’t follow it right. However, that’s not the point. The point is you haven’t been doing what you need to do for Frisk because your second wife *didn’t count*. You didn’t legally fuck her the way the book said you *had* to, and she has to follow the book.”

“But she just signed the page-“

“That basically said she was the substitute,” Lyons said. “*Not* the second wife. I know, the language makes it really tricky. Contractors are all assholes, believe me.”

“The contract only covers me,” Frisk said, trying to put it together. She looked toward Gloria. “The definitions only cover me, but her signature makes her into a replacement?”

“Yep, but only as recompensation, not for approval through the process,” Forager said to Frisk. “Teeny, tiny, dumb little clause on page 34, paragraph 8. Since Frisk is covered in a lot of little extended contract details, then the only way to get recompensation for fouling up your end of the contract is to-“

“Just charge me. Something monetary,” Asriel insisted. “Please, come on?!”

“Dude,” Forager said again. “You’re not getting it. You *broke* the contract.”

“Then give Frisk to Sans then!” Asriel yelled.

“Uh? Dude. It’s like . . . noon. It’s been over twenty-four hours. She’s not protected by another husband either.” Forager covered his face. “You really still aren’t listening, are you? This won’t take long to come out. Everyone is watching you closer than you know. If Frisk is the one that pays, then she gets hit up to go to like seven guys and your kingdom is dismantled. Whereas, the contract you still have unsigned and sitting of mine enabled you to change the wife. Gloria has way less covering her.”

“I . . .”

“Asriel,” Toriel finally spoke. “Morning Glory must go to him, or Frisk goes out to the others. But,” she added to Lyons. “We have a contract with Madame Cromwell as well,” Toriel said in a hurry. “*That* would protect Frisk.”

“If she gets here soon enough to enforce it. Look Frisk is first come, first served right now.” Lyons looked at Frisk. “Sorry, no offense, but it’s true.” He gestured toward Gloria. “I can take her. Things will be smoother. No one can come take Frisk then. It’s no waiting game.”

“Exchange. Exchange *my* wife for Frisk’s safety?” Asriel looked toward Gloria. He shook his head. “I can’t let anyone take you.”

“If you don’t, they’ll break your kingdom and hurt Frisk,” Gloria said. “Contracts are really heavy, Asriel, and everyone follows them. If we don’t do what they say, it’s going to be disastrous! None of you monsters can handle one human soul, they will take everything down!”

“But you’re my wife, you’re not a bargaining chip!” Asriel covered his head. “I don’t care if I scarred you by the book or not, I didn’t want to be that brutal to your fragile skin! You are my wife!”

“It’s alright, Asriel. I can take care of myself.”

Asriel turned and watched as Frisk went to Lyons.

“Gloria is the official Princess now,” Frisk informed Lyons. “I have no such duty, and trying to claim me as such in court would be fruitless since Gloria is here. Therefore, I will go with you peacefully for only your contract, but I won’t sign any contract until the end. That should give enough time to let the word come out that there is another Princess of the Underground.”

“Oh?” Lyons shrugged. “Well, cool then. Let’s go.”

“Frisk!” Gloria yelled. “Frisk? Wait for Sans, we’ll get Sans.”

“No time for goodbyes, I’m late enough as it is. Come on, I’m out of here. All these contractors and stuff took enough time already. Dad’s gonna have a freakout about how long this took.” Lyons gestured his head. “Come on.”

“If I go, no one can take Gloria?” Frisk asked.

“Nope, no one, once you fulfill a contract, you’ll be fine. Come on, Frisk Shades, let’s go.”

“Asriel!” Gloria called out to him. “You have to teleport!”

“I-I know! I lost Frisk, I’m too stressed to think straight!” And if Sans read the contracts, rescued Frisk, then Morning Glory would be taken. “I need copies of Lyon’s little contract.” He tried to slow down his breathing. “And . . . I’m *not* doing anything that puts Morning Glory in jeopardy either.”

Calm it down. Lyons Forager was a decent human. The only real human to actually give a real first and last name without ample amounts of trust. *Okay, alright, let’s do this.*

On Duty, back from lunch, 12:15 . . .

“Sans?”

Sans looked behind him and saw Jerry. “Nice day for going out.” Hopefully he wasn’t telling the whole Underground about him puking yet. Last thing he needed was for everyone to get worried about him. Sans gestured ahead.

“No. I was paid to do something,” Jerry said as he read out of a notebook. “There are questions about contracts?”

Ah. Sans nodded. Great, they had to pay Jerry to get it figured out? “New contracts came in and need looked at?” He couldn’t go to the castle if Asriel was involved in it since it meant Frisk would be there too. “Things seem a little more heated today since lunch break. Give it some time for things to cool down, and I’ll be able to get Papyrus to watch, okay?”

“Uuuhh . . . so page . . .”

“Nah, nah, Jerry.” Yikes, Jerry. “Give me a bit, alright? It’s not that important is it?”

“Uuuhh . . . I guess not?” Jerry said. “I don’t know, Sans. Is it important?”

“Five, ten minutes at most. Just, quiet.” 12:30 would be the perfect time to have a small stop for Jerry and Contracts. That’s when some of the other humans broke for lunch. It should be mellowed out by then.

12:30 . . .

“Okay. Um this says Page 34, Paragraph 8?” Jerry asked. “Read it.”

Sans checked it out. Second wife as a replacement for the first wife. “Okay.”

“Alright. Um. This?” Jerry gave him a small contract.

Lyons Forager’s contract? “What about it?” Sans asked. “I already said it looked good, just don’t sign it.”

Jerry looked at his notebook. “Could Gloria be considered a second wife to the contract if she wasn’t a second wife by the book?”

What? Sans looked at the notebook. “Scar. Book. Contract.” He was looking at the information up and down. “Good question. She should have signed a page in the contract.” Yep, it said she signed a page. “Technically? Yeah. Contract involves contract stuff. Even if it’s not real marriage, a willing signature under all their jargon would still count. But, no, it wouldn’t be by the book unless you did it by the book. Especially if the signature page had something misleading in it. They do it all the time.”

“Oh. This stuff is confusing and boring,” Jerry complained.

“Don’t I know it,” Sans agreed. “So, what’s that for, is Asriel needing something added to protect Gloria too?”

“Ooh, good idea,” Papyrus said. “She is a little vulnerable according to that thing, isn’t she?”

“Yeah, they didn’t leave much room for the second wife option.” Sans looked back to Jerry. “Well?”

“Oh. I don’t know.” Jerry pointed back to the castle. “So? How bad could that get?”

Sans glanced toward him. *Wait*. “What do you mean how bad could that get? Could what get?”

Lyons Forager’s Ship . . .

“Well, here’s where you get off Frisk.” Lyons pointed dead ahead. “Sorry, but this kind of filled both our needs at the same time.”

Frisk saw another ship ahead. “Who is that?”

“Madame Cromwell’s,” Lyons said. “My contract would have given the replacement, but I also have a contract with her that lets me release you to her. Sorry, but this is my only chance to marry Stacy Throng. You’ll be happier over there anyhow. I mean, you’ll be married practically to a dead guy, right?”

“In a coma.” Frisk patted his hand. “You used this setup to have your father have a wedding prepared, but you’re showing up with the girl you really want to marry? You’re a sly one.”

“I am,” he smiled. “He isn’t even there, so he can’t do shit once I marry her. Marriages have so many contracts below them, it’s ridiculous. Oh, speaking of that, here’s a wedding present for you and your new coma husband.” He moved over toward a corner and picked up a heavy looking book. “This should shave off a good thirty years for you.” He gave it to her. “This was current about fifty years ago when everyone finally just stopped pursuing.”

“What is it?” Frisk asked.

“You weren’t the only one who ever had this problem,” Lyons said. “Turned out my great, great grandma had a similar thing happen in another kingdom. She visited when she was young, the wrong things being said and whammo. They worked on this most of her life, and into her daughter’s life too. After her death it was no longer warranted.” He pointed to the book. “That’s it. That’s the contract.”

“This huge book?” Frisk stared at it.

“Yeah, you are going to have to do a lot of modifying to it, add any new restrictions not covered in it, but it’s all there. Including all 311 districts. With a good contractor, it should take maybe . . . six months to adjust it? A year maybe? I don’t know, I’m not a contractor.”

“Oh my goodness!” *Freedom*. Frisk hugged it.

“FYI, only works with a husband though, so like I said, wedding present.” He opened up communications. “Good day, Cromwell! I got Frisk for you!”

Frisk waved. *Well. A husband in a coma*. Worse things have happened.

The Underground Castle . . .

Sans appeared in the meeting area. He saw Gloria and Asriel, but no Frisk. Asriel was holding Gloria close. She was crying. “What happened?”

“Asriel broken the contract. Frisk is gone,” Toriel said. “With Lyons Forager.”

District of Diarchy: Cromwell and Saetran.

“Thank you for the lift,” Madame Cromwell said to Frisk who helped teleport her home. She had a picture before of what Cromwell and Saetran’s main home looked like. Almost everyone did, it was a famous district and its main home was like a piece of art that couldn’t be forgotten. Cromwell red and Saetran blue.

“Well, I appreciate the contract. It really helped,” Frisk said. “You looked like you needed it too.”

“Oh, I’m not a day over 68,” she joked. “Well, actually, 86. Let’s go to your residence.”

“That’s fine, but do you mind if I call someone?” Frisk asked. “I was whisked away so fast by Lyons, I didn’t even get to say goodbye to one of my best friends.” Plus, he might want some of his energy back too.

“Oh, I know, Lyons is being quick and secretive. He really loves that girl though, his father is just being pig-headed trying to get him another wife.” Cromwell took her hand. “You can call soon, but let’s get this done first. Come this way. You need to get dressed in the ceremonial red color. If we wait too long and something happens to poor Lyons wedding, his father will have you retrieved, I know he will. It’s best not to feud between districts.”

“I agree,” Frisk said. “Especially just for the hand of one human.”

Several minutes later at the Castle . . .

“I’m . . . she . . .” Asriel couldn’t say anything as Sans was looking anxiously through all of the contract. “There was nothing we could do.”

Sans slammed the paper down. “There, right *there*, right in the beginning and you should have got me and sooner! Emergency extension.” Making him play with Jerry? Sending Jerry back and forth?! “It basically says that a husband that doesn’t know the other screwed up and is still playing by the original rules gets an extra three hours when he finds out. I gotta get her in my arms, to the meeting spot, in her colors. It won’t restart the contract, but it will seal her as mine. Recompensation to *me*.” He looked at his watch. “He took her at noon. It’s 12:45.” Two hours fifteen minutes left.

“You said she’d be safe with Lyons Forager or Madame Cromwell,” Toriel pointed out.

“Shoot. There was more time?” Asriel said looking toward Sans. “Sorry. I-“

“Put your wife first. If I couldn’t do shit, then you’d sacrifice your second. I know. Only thing is, I *could do shit*.” Sans looked toward Queen Toriel. “Permission to hunt, if it calls for it.”

“She is with a lovely human boy, Sans, almost her age. What more could we ask for?” Toriel pointed out. “She pointed it out correctly. Once she fulfills his contract, Gloria will be safe, as well as Frisk. She couldn’t become the Princess because we already have one.”

“Where is King Asgore?” Sans asked Asriel.

“Sleeping,” Asriel said. “Mother handles most issues at this hour.”

Sans disappeared and reappeared in Asgore’s room. “Majesty!” He watched Asgore wince. “Sorry, yeah, this is rude. Frisk was just taken by a human, your kid just blew it, and I’ve got two hours to find her before she’s gone forever.”

“What?” Asgore sat up in his bed. “Frisk is gone?”

“Yes. Just give me permission to hunt first, I don’t think Queen Toriel is going to easily,” Sans urged him. “Come on, you took her as your daughter. I know it involves humans, but I won’t hurt anyone innocent. As careful as I could be last time retrieving her.”

“Where is she?”

“Taken by Lyons Forager, but there’s no guarantee I’m gonna get her back as easy.” *Come on, come on!*

“Asriel lost her.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Very well then,” Asgore said. “I give you permission to hunt. Go retrieve Frisk.”

Sans disappeared. First, to his place for the clothes.

Sans’ Home . . .

He picked up the dress. Frisk preferred the pant and shirt usually, but either this day would end good or bad. If it ended good, she should be in a nice dress. If it ended bad? He called Papyrus real fast too before he disappeared. It was time to take action.

The Castle Meeting Hall again . . .

Sans showed up with Frisk’s dress wrapped around his arm and approached Queen Toriel. “I got permission from King Asgore to hunt. Do I have permission from you, Queen Toriel?”

“No,” Toriel said coolly. “A second daughter to me, or a nice human that has shown only the most decent of colors. A relation with a kingdom that has excellent standing. There is no reason to pull hunting into this. Only pain and bloodshed will result. We should be happy such a contract was even here and Frisk wasn’t taken into seven kingdoms. The only one better was Cromwell.”

“Permission to hunt if things get difficult,” Sans said again.

“He can retrieve Frisk,” Asriel said to her. “Bring her back.”

“Not to you, you messed up,” Toriel insisted to Asriel. “You have but one wife now, Asriel.”

“I said not to sign the contracts because they weren’t strong enough for the duration of her life,” Sans said. “Yeah, not bad, but not good enough either. As long as there is a chance to gain this Kingdom, someone will take it.”

“No one can,” Toriel said to him. “That’s why she went. Gloria is the official Princess. You can’t have two officials. Even with the strongest ruling, no one can get anything.”

“Unless the official Princess dies ‘cause some humans decided to seriously enter the Underground.” Sans looked at his watch. Permissions. Dress. Ten minutes lost so far. Two hours five minutes left. He tapped his slippered foot.

“It will be fine. You said before that you and Papyrus can switch the fighting system from soul to body,” Toriel countered with. “Can you not?”

“No, we can,” Sans said. Damn. “We don’t even know the human man that well, *Queen* Toriel.”

“Mother,” Asriel said to her. “I suggest you get with the program. All we know of the human is from three visits.”

“And their kingdom’s history,” Toriel insisted.

“Right, three visits and a kingdom’s history is enough to entrust someone with the Legendary Pacifist Child that once saved the Underground?” Sans was tired of it. Another two minutes lost. Two hours three minutes left. “Permission. To. Hunt.”

He hunted once before without permission. The first time he found a Frisk, he had to. It was an emergency, but he gained permission afterward. If he left now and gained only one of the royalties permission, (when Queen Toriel was in better, healthier shape, and handled more of the royal duties) he was putting himself in jeopardy. He could get Frisk, but if he left a human soul stranded, Queen Toriel could rule the act as a crime. She could place him in confinement, keeping him from following the rules with Frisk, and send her back to the human Lyons or to Cromwell.

And he didn’t know if she’d go that far or not. He couldn’t risk it. “Permission to hunt, Tori!” He insisted.

“Permission denied, Sans the Skeleton.”

“What if someone else intercepts Frisk?” Gloria asked Toriel. “Seriously, if Mister Bony Butt hasn’t left just because you *aren’t* allowing him to kill, then something’s messed up.”

“Oh.” Toriel sighed. “Then we could send her a bodyguard. Send Undyne to watch over her.”

Undyne? “Tori!”

“It is dangerous out there, Sans, and you have but one soul hit point,” Toriel reminded him. “Undyne would make an excellent bodyguard, she is one of the best Underground.”

“Like I said last time, soul points don’t count out there, and I ain’t no slouch!” Sans reminded her. “For having one hit point, I sure as hell have lived a long time, Tori!”

“Because you don’t go doing senseless things out of your range,” Toriel said. “When Frisk was in danger, it was one thing. You highly insisted then too, but her life was on the line. This time, it isn’t her life. She is fine.”

“I help guard the frickin’ border from human attacks!”

“You stir their bullets away with your magic, yes, I know. You do not have to get that close to them,” Toriel insisted. “It is braver than ‘watching snow’ as you complained many years ago, or helping to watch over a human, but it doesn’t put you at a level where you should be putting yourself out there for a simple hand.”

“That simple hand is my friend Frisk!” Gloria shouted at the Queen. “Oh my gaw, stuck *much*? That’s Frisk’s other husband, and he wants to help his wife. Give him permission you bitch!”

Toriel’s mouth dropped. She stood up. “What did you just call me?” She looked toward Asriel. “Asriel?!”

Asriel just held his wife's hand. “Sans may be a longtime friend to you, but thinking of *his* safety above Frisk’s is wrong, when he is trying to save her. Morning Glory is brave, and she says what others *think*. Even I could learn from her. I call into Rules of Royal Conduct, paragraph four!”

“Are you serious?” Toriel scolded him. “Asriel! This contract gets Frisk out of harm's way! Interrupt and who knows what will happen to her?!”

“I give permission for Sans to hunt for Frisk. Gloria, say you’ll give him permission to hunt if that is what you wish,” Asriel instructed.

“I give permission to hunt,” Gloria said. “Defo, get out there and kill whoever to save Frisk!”

“There. Normally you need the King and Queen’s permission, Sans, but you now have the entire tier of the second-in-coming royal family,” Asriel said. “That overrides her rejection. Go.”

Sans didn’t even take enough time to thank Asriel. He could do that later. He disappeared onto the very thin magic trail he could sense Frisk used, that wasn’t anywhere Underground.

Sans' Trump Card

Lyons Forager's Ship . . .

“Bummmm ba da dum, Bummmm ba da dum.”

Sans heard familiar human traditional ceremony lyrics for a wedding coming from a human's mouth, and knew he was in the right spot. Not only that, but even just going a short distance sometimes when you had teleporting power was a pain. *Thank goodness Frisk wasn't in the mood for walking.* “Hey? Need my wife back.” Sans held up the papers to Lyons. “Let's not make things . . . *hard*, okay?”

“I wouldn't know what I was looking at, man,” Forager said. Sans pointed the section out. “Oh. Damn, that's a well-built contract. Emergency three hours? Dad missed that one. She's not here though, I gave her to Cromwell. I'm just using her name for the marriage so I can marry someone else. Sorry.”

“Did she teleport to Cromwell's ship?”

“Nice dress for her, but yeah, how'd you know?”

Alright. Second teleport. Moving location, never easy. From a moving location to another moving location? He'd really have to concentrate.

“I gave her something too.”

Trying to concentrate human.

“A contract that with a little modification could free her. I mean, it's gonna take like a year about or whatever, but it's the size of a huge book. From my great, great grandma. Hope that helps after the mess I made.”

“I'll check it out later human. Now quiet.”

District of Diarchy: Cromwell and SaeTRAN

“How's this?” Frisk looked at the red dress.

“Oh, it fits well.” Madame Cromwell stepped lightly toward her. “That blue in your hair really frames it beautifully.” She took her hand in Frisk's. “I am so sorry that you couldn't have met him when he was able to be well. He was so full of life, his mother and his father too. You are, however, saving a kingdom.”

“That seems to be my thing sometimes,” Frisk laughed. “No, seriously, I am sorry I never got to know him either.” As they approached the room with the coma Prince though, Frisk saw someone else.

“Trying to use her for your Kingdom?” the man asked.

“Garland,” Madame Cromwell growled. “Get out of here. This is already decided.”

“I don’t know. I think Frisk might prefer this contract?” Garland came toward Frisk and handed her a contract paper. “Here’s a pen, dear.”

Contracts were dangerous. She never even signed Forager’s, just went with him willingly. Same as Cromwell. She wouldn’t do any signing until the very last minute.

“You look like you need some help with that decision?” Garland snapped his fingers and his guards brought out people in handcuffs and chain anklets. . .

Mrs. Flaversham. Frisk’s music teacher in the third grade. *Mr. Bartholomew.* Frisk’s neighbor when she was growing up. *The Rachele Twins.* Her next door neighbor friends she played with in childhood. *Paul Conair.* Her first boyfriend. *Dexter Ibbit.* Her prom date from high school. Her high school Art teacher, her high school soul biology teacher, her favorite college counselor. The librarian she used to see every day in college when she checked out books. The lunch lady from high school. Four friends she used to know in Elementary school, Her third grade teacher, her second grade teacher, her kindergarten teacher, her old babysitter and the lady who owned the small store she liked to buy MAKEUPYOURSOUl lipstick from!

Then, there was a small tv wheeled out in front of her. On the screen were three humans. She didn’t recognize them, yet they were sending a chill down her spine. *How do I know them?*

“This is how it’s going to go.” Garland had his guards aim at everyone’s heads. “You recognize the men on TV? The ones that are in chains out here?”

“I know the people you’ve brought,” Frisk admitted. “I have to sign your contract or you’ll kill them.”

“Oh no, it’s better than just that. See the three on the television set?” Garland gestured to them. “They are suspects in the death of Jan Shades, Don Shades, and Clarissa Shades. Serving a life sentence. However, their fate is about to be changed and determined today. I run the district they, and your parents, once lived in, Frisk Shades.”

Frisk’s breath caught in her throat and her soul started to hurt. She took several steps back.

“Don’t sign that contract, I’ll imprison everyone here under some bogus charges, but I’ll let the three go that destroyed your loving family. How long were you on that log by the way? Ten minutes? Thirty minutes?” He asked. “Do you remember why you were there? Want to hear their voices again?”

Frisk covered her ears. She wanted to close her eyes too. She wanted to run! But lives. Lives were there. Lives were on the line. *Can't run. Can't run. Can't run.*

"Instead, sign this contract, and everyone goes free, and my guards just kill those assholes for you once and for all. Justice for all the Shades," Garland insisted. "Never worry about them again."

"That is dirty playing, and this is under my rule!" Cromwell insisted. "You are not allowed to do this!"

"Stop or I'll kill you too," Garland warned her. "You die and the Cromwell name dies, and all your recording devices in this room have been removed. There will be no evidence left behind." He looked back toward Frisk. "So, what will it be, Frisk Shades?"

"How about none of the above!"

Sans' voice. Frisk watched as Sans did something she never saw him do before.

He. Was. Aggressive. With barely a flick of his wrist, he took out all the guards and Garland with a battalion of magic she'd never seen him use before! Then, his contract lit on fire, as well as the bodies afterward.

The chains snapped on everyone else, and they all ran out of the room, leaving a stunned Frisk and Madame Cromwell to stare at what just happened.

"Okay? Frisk, dear?" Madame Cromwell asked. "I hope that is your friend or I am going to piss in my pants."

Frisk didn't respond as Sans approached her.

"Always in trouble, aren't you?" Sans tried to laugh it off but he saw the three men on the television. Same as her. People were undoing their chains.

Freed. They were freed. The people who killed her parents and her sister. *Run.*

Sans pulled her into a hug before she could bolt. "It's okay now, Pal. Come on. Contract termination was read wrong, but I gotta get you in your pretty blue dress and back to the meeting ground. Kay? No running."

Frisk reached for the dress he held. *Don't run. Don't run. Don't run.* "Okay. Uh. Um. I got a . . ."

"Later," Sans insisted. "Don't have much time on this."

"Okay, okay." Frisk shouldn't risk too much yet. "Give me a second." She looked toward Cromwell. "I have to go."

"Yes, please, with permission." Cromwell stared at Sans as Frisk left to put on the dress. "... tea?"

Meeting Place . . .

Frisk waited in Sans arms, holding the book. *Run*. She was in his colors, which was a little odd when she started with Asriel. She should be in her blood-stained dress anyhow, the neutral dress. When she asked him about it he just told her she needed to be quiet for that part. *Run*.

More rules. More things to understand. Story of her life. At least all of the humans who had been there were okay. Except for . . . she shook her left leg up and down. This was the longest session so far. And right now, all she really wanted to do was. *Run*.

Sans just readjusted her, a signal for her to stop that.

What time was it even? It was a little over 1:30 when they arrived. Then Sans just immediately took her there. He let her stand there quietly with him until 2:30 while he looked at the gigantic contract so big it needed to have the binding of a book. After that, he gave her the book, and he started to lift her in his arms.

It was now approaching 2:45. *I don't get it. Where is Asriel and Gloria? What is going on? How different is the procedure now?* Oh, there they were. The Prince and Princess were each just waiting far ahead.

Papyrus was coming from the other side. Papyrus never moved, why was he moving?

Toriel and Asgore were coming too in their official robes, standing next to Asriel and Gloria. Asgore seemed fine, but Toriel didn't look so happy. At all. *Whoah, she's really not happy. What's wrong?*

Papyrus looked fine as he was starting to talk to Sans in a different language. Yeah. Secret Keepers again. *Puzzlers. Really.*

Asriel looked happy. Gloria looked happy. Asgore looked happy. Papyrus seemed happy. Toriel was definitely not. And Sans?

She couldn't read him at all. Not mad, sad, or happy. In fact, his foot started to thump on the ground. She could hear the soft familiar sound of his slipper hitting it. He quit soon after he started. Probably didn't realize he was doing that.

Damn. That contract was not only too old, but it was for the wrong thing. All of the laws it was using inside of it wouldn't work for Frisk's situation. He would have to tell her that soon.

“Sans?” Papyrus said. “Have you thought carefully about this? I called him, like you said. You were right, he was extremely not busy at all today. But? Which will you be wanting?”

“Frisk just watched the people who murdered her family above the Underground go loose.” Sans stared down at her. “She’s trying to keep it together, but every bone in her body is vibrating. She wants to run. I don’t think she feels safe down here anymore. We need to flip it.”

“The fighting boards?”

“Yeah. I don’t like the way she’s vibrating in my arms.”

“Agreed, Sans,” Papyrus said. “Gloria is human too. We can’t let the soul boards go on anymore. Hardly any monsters fight each other. If uneven magic power starts to fight, we can sort it out.”

“Right.”

“Right? But what do you want to use for marriage?” Papyrus asked again.

“Well. I mean, the original plan was to try and get the 5500 AD version of Friend Wife with my trump card,” Sans said.

“The original plan?” Papyrus asked. “What’s the plan now?”

“Well? Friend Wife gets shit for protection,” Sans admitted. “It sounds good but the benefits are bad. No right to work. No right to make money. No right to her own food. If a friend wife was dropped too, it became a burden of the kingdom. I wanted to talk about the book in detail, like a history lesson, to figure out how much protection it could possibly have had to Asgore. Only Toriel was in there though, and I . . . I made up a fake contract excuse instead.” He didn’t want to hurt her directly like that if he didn’t have to.

“If you are going to be married indefinitely, I think it’s good not to go with the original plan.” Papyrus patted his shoulder. “Frisk is an independent woman. You know what is probably best.”

“Evolution?”

“Evolution.” Papyrus patted his brother’s shoulder supportively. “And I, The Great Papyrus, will be here for you! Nyeh heh heh!”

“Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh.” Sans gave his own laugh to join his brothers. It had been a good five months since either one laughed like that. “She needs protection, and evolution is still better than marriage of today.” There’s no way Frisk could want to have an average of a baby every year, and it was nowhere near a good time to Sans either. Skeletons and humans didn’t work like that.

“Sans, what is it?” Papyrus asked. “Something bothering you still?”

“The day I thought I was really losing her. I threw up.”

“Threw up?!”

“Yeah. Vomit blue and glowing. Weirdest thing. Foulest magic taste,” Sans said.

“Wowee, that’s crazy,” Papyrus noted. “That is very rare, but with the way you were being shoved around, it’s no surprise. A monster can only take so much.”

Sans moved her slightly in his arms, causing her to stir and look at him. “Wishing you could speak monster, don’t ya?” That seemed to annoy her because she had no idea what he was saying. “It’s almost all over. Promise, Pal. You and I, we’ll be okay from now on.”

“First order of business, you just have to hold Sister correctly for a little longer again. It’s almost over. You started standing and holding her way too soon,” Papyrus complained.

“I don’t want to risk anything. This contract is over, this final move finishes it off. No extra month, no nothing. I half expect her to teleport somewhere.” Oh, but that worry was almost over. Here came his trump card.

It was almost time.

Frisk watched as everyone started to come forward. Asgore, Toriel, Asriel, and Gloria. But, a new player showed up. A human. She’d seen him before. It was the one everyone called Lawyer. Why was he there? And? He was speaking a different language too. *I don’t know how long it takes to learn monster, but I’ve got to learn it.*

“Why is Lawyer here?” Asgore asked Sans as Lawyer arrived next to his other side.

“Huh? Oh.” Sans said it like it was nothing big at all. “I hired him. Meet Frank.”

“For what reason?” Asgore asked.

“Well, I know what marriage is entailing these days. Used to be easier, but then the barrier broke and wouldn’t you know it? *Lots* of changes, making a real surplus of monsters and, uh, I just don’t think Frisk and I are ready for that yet,” Sans said.

“Of course,” Toriel said. “Friend wife from the 5500 AD book should be adjusted.”

“Toriel, we have gone through this,” Asgore complained. “*No* exceptions. The barrier is down, and everyone does their part.” He looked back toward Sans. “Marriage is marriage, Sans. You must accept everything it entails.”

“Had a feeling you’d say that.” Sans looked toward Lawyer. “Limited options on humans, so Lawyer worked. He knows his shit. Right, Frank?”

“Worked for what?” Asgore asked again. “How do you know his first name?”

“He found me.” Frank shook Asgore’s hand. “I’m Frank Clipper, and I now represent Sans the Skeleton.”

“Yeah,” Sans said. “See, uh, human’s got this new great thing called an ‘outer justice system’. OJS for short. Awesome little thing I learned about while learning the whole contract and legal system. So, after talking to Frank I think uh . . . I’m up to what now?”

“Recompensation of about a third of the monetary cost of the land in the Underground,” Frank said.

“What?!” Asgore yelled. “What are you talking about?”

“Okay, let’s see?” Sans said. “Where to start. The Great Papyrus, you want to help with that?”

“How about the fact that there was no reason to share his wife?!” Papyrus yelled. “There was in no way, in *any* book, any proof that a claim laid over another by complete force meant he had to share. To claim such-such . . .”

“Idiocy, Majesty,” Sans said for his brother, “meant that any monster could open up another’s soul and dive right on in to claim anyone they wanted.”

“Yes, and that’s not it,” Papyrus went on. “After that, you tried to put his wife in as property for a contract, in which many nasty, nasty things would have occurred that Sans never even let *you* know.”

“Yes, that was a very large emotional damage assessment on the part of Frisk Shades, whom is not actually property of any kind,” Frank continued.

“That was fixed,” Asgore said.

“So it shouldn’t count that you tried to do that? Just cause *I* found it and fixed it?” Sans asked him. “You’re right, by law, it don’t, but it *really* put the nail in the coffin I would do this, so in a way? Yeah. It counted.” Sans had a feeling his eye sockets were devoid of light again. He couldn’t help it. It was finally all coming to a head. “You can’t just walk all over on my family and expect to get away with it, King of the monsters or not. Any idea how it felt dealing with instinct while another monster’s hands were on my *actual* wife? Asriel’s power wasn’t even 20% of mine dwelling within her! Not only did I have to deal with that, I had to clean the residue off!” Sans warned them. “Getting the hint *now*?”

“I know that you are mad, but you can’t just claim we up and gave her to him,” Asgore said. “We only wanted our son safe.”

“The contract was a mistake, and we know that now,” Toriel finally spoke up. “Sans, we never meant to hurt you or Frisk, just to save Asriel. Afterward, you could have stuck it out, like you were, and you could keep her. You were the one who insisted you didn’t want her as a wife. There was ample opportunity to change your mind.”

Sans gestured to Frank again.

“Due to infusion, instinct, and the mental anguish of having another monster being with his wife, Sans the Skeleton felt great confusion inside which pulled him into-“

“Oh, Bull, you are ACTing!” Toriel called him out. “You never seriously called Frisk wife. You never took a single date seriously. She was more like a roommate when she was living with you.”

Sans gestured to Frank again.

Frank said it again. “Due to infusion, instinct and the mental anguish of having another monster being with his wife, Sans the Skeleton felt great confusion inside which pulled him into a depressional state.” He finished the statement this time.

“Okay. Let’s talk about this,” Asgore said. “Sans the Skeleton, you cannot do any of that, legally, you’re a monster. You respect royalty and all its decisions first,” Asgore said. “This is outrageous.”

“Nope. Tell him Frank,” Sans said.

Frank nodded toward Sans. “No, what is outrageous is that you don’t allow my client to get his justice from all the damage caused to him, Frisk Shades, and their marriage using the outer justice system in place for all respectable districts. Such a gross negligence, considering everything else you’ve already done, will not be looked upon lightly. You are quite in danger of becoming one of the seven domains that do not use or enforce the outer justice system, and trust me, you do not want that. Now, fact. Mister Sans the Skeleton already has had a reporter and a story written up in Initiative for quite some time and it’s more than ready to go out tomorrow. He also says the host Mettaton could also shed some light on the Underground itself about the true terms and unfairness of the situation you placed him and his family in.”

“Like adding Sister as a second wife to Asriel, instead of gifting her to Sans,” Papyrus added.

“You see, there are many damages that are bound to come your way, Majesty,” Frank the lawyer said. “Not only do I make contracts, I also defend people with the OJS.”

“Well lookit that?” Sans looked toward Asgore, Toriel and Asriel. “Guess boneheads with too much legal knowledge and modern day culture aren’t something to take lightly. So? Let’s talk marriage *again*.”

“I would give him whatever he wants,” Asriel said to Asgore. “He’s completely right, it was quite evil and we had no right to accept Frisk as my wife nor pull her through that archaic book or that contract. Also, the second wife thing, but that was more mother than anything.” He shrugged. “Completely evil. No idea why Sans didn’t just kill me, I would have if someone tried to take Morning Glory that way.”

“But?” Toriel looked at her son. “To keep you monster, we did what we thought was necessary, Asriel.”

“Yep. Which was evil. Hidden evil disguised as love, perpetrated with the intentions of love, but I still know it when I see it. I was evil for a very long time. Even after I became monster, I still had a lot of evil lingering inside,” Asriel said. “Honestly, I probably still have a little. I’m working on it.”

“Once this current contract is over, which is not very long, it will be time to start some court dates between you and my current client for the OJS,” Frank said to them. “Unless you listen to his demands and settle it now.”

“Someone, from my *own* kingdom, can bring this about?” Asgore said, still stunned about it. “Against royalty itself?”

“It is not a common thing, but when a situation is deemed severe enough, as is surely the case in Sans the Skeleton’s case, yes it can and will.”

“But? Well, this?” Toriel groaned. “Sans, you don’t have enough money to handle a contractor, let alone whatever you are trying to do.”

“My personal fee is not applicable to the situation.”

“I gave him a six pack and told him I’d split the winnings, 50/50,” Sans revealed. He didn’t care or have nothing to hide. “Frank said 25 was plenty.”

“Fine.” Asgore nodded. “What is it you want, Sans, and we will do our best to get it for you.”

“Better marriage position for me and Frisk,” Sans said. “We aren’t ready for all the new changes marriage demands yet.”

“As I mentioned before. The 5500 A.D. book that mentions a friend wife with no lover wife. It was done for nobility, I’m sure we could grant it,” Toriel answered. “There would be no awkwardness, and the marriage is based closer on friendship. No new rules could influence the marriage status.”

Asgore let out a groan like he’d been through it with her more than once. “Fine. Friend wife.”

“Nah.” Sans looked toward Papyrus and then back at them. Okay. “I want the controversial book. Initials E.O.M?”

“Evolution of marriage?” King Asgore questioned.

“That’s the one.”

“Friend wife would be a better idea.” Queen Toriel spoke. “You will eventually end up in a weak marriage with the evolution of marriage. It was only ever used and created for one purpose.”

“Eh,” Sans said, “I feel like it’s purpose fits right on in here.”

“Yes, so that no matter what odd thing occurs with others, Frisk and Sans will be left alone in theirs,” Papyrus said. “To make it as tight or as loose as they wish.”

“Perhaps,” Queen Toriel said. “Perhaps it would be like human marriage at the end, but there are many steps between. Custom steps. Each advancing forward. Friend wife is easier.”

“Friend wife isn’t what I want,” Sans said.

“There’s also no telling if the human would want Evolution either,” Toriel came back on him. “Did you even look at all the steps needed?”

“No, I had five months to pick something at total random.” That was it. Hurt or not, he couldn’t do it anymore. “I am not taking her as a friend wife.”

“Okay.” Asgore held out his hands. “You want to start as friends, but by the end, be sharing a bed together willingly when, how, and *if* you want for your own little monsters in the future.”

Queen Toriel scoffed loud and clear. “What makes you think Frisk has those feelings *back*? Not everything is the way someone wants it to be. Has she shown any interest at all beyond friendship? This is putting a great amount of pressure on her. She could continue having a simple and easy life with-“

“There’s no protection for her!” Sans slammed his foot down. Even with the slippers, the force of the message was heard from the magic that vibrated through his feet. It needed to stop.

“Oh.” Toriel said it softly. “That’s what you’re getting at.” Toriel whispered something to Asgore.

“No. We would have to create a whole new book again to add protection. We’ve been through this. Or a contract, which is completely out of the question,” Asgore said. He looked back at Sans. “Evolution then.”

Sans nodded toward Frank.

“My client agrees, but now there is the issue of a monetary settlement,” Frank said. “Once an agreement on that has been reached, a copy of what transpired will be signed and of course copies of the recordings of this event will be given to everyone involved.”

“Do you want a Ceremony of Announcement with Gloria and I?” Asriel asked Sans, not one bit disturbed or surprised by what just happened. *Still* learning to be more monster, it was clear, but he would get the hang of it one day soon. “Getting Frisk to understand that while you are technically in a friendship role could be hard, but later on, she would probably appreciate it. At least that’s what Gloria said.” He groaned slightly. “I *had* to ask.”

Sans looked toward Papyrus who was incredibly giddy. “Ooh. Well?” He looked to Papyrus again who was urging him forward. “Not G and M 1. Nothing big.”

“G and M 3, so this whole business gets known faster. Three hours,” Asriel said.

“Perfect,” Sans agreed. The more monsters who knew, the less hassle he’d have.

He worked out a monetary settlement much less than the cost of a third of the Underground, but enough to pay Frank Clipper, and make sure he could take care of Frisk right, no matter what happened in the future. Money was deposited on his card and the whole thing was almost over.

He looked down at Frisk as it clicked 2:59. *One more minute.*

Frisk would be his one and only wife now. No more competition. No more stupid contract. No bass awkward sharing.

3:00.

Okay. Frisk looked around. The other human was quiet now. Papyrus was happy. Asriel looked happy. Gloria was still fine. Asgore looked . . . relieved? Toriel looked even . . . more mad than before? And Sans. Definitely relieved. As for happy?

His light guiders almost seemed to twinkle. *Am I allowed to speak yet?*

“Really, she is?”

Is what? Frisk finally heard Gloria speak.

“Are you going to tell her then?” Gloria said. Asriel was whispering in her ear.

“It’s over now, Frisk,” Sans said to her. “For better or worse, the contract is over.”

“That’s great?” Frisk asked. Right? Why hadn’t Asriel held her at any point then? She watched as Undyne and Alphys started running over. Of course, talking monster briefly to Sans and Papyrus.

“Got it,” Undyne said looking at Frisk. “So? We get extended girl time today. Alphys, pluck her up and let’s go.”

“Hang on, why am I still luggage?” Frisk complained as Sans handed her to Alphys. Why was she going with Alphys and Undyne now? And still being carried?

“Oh, I’ll be right there too, Frisk!”

Undyne, Alphys, her *and Gloria* were all having extended girl time, while carrying her? *What’s going on?*

“Don’t worry, at the edge of the meeting circle, we’ll stop carrying you,” Alphys assured her. “This is traditional. Sorry. Sans really wants to talk to you I bet, but if he wants to do this right, he needs to get things ready for you.”

“Ready for me? I don’t understand.”

“The contract’s over, Frisk,” Undyne said. “Don’t you get it? Asriel lost you. You’re Sans’ wife now.”

It's All About the Dress

Sans and Papyrus' House . . .

"Okay. Alright." Their house was already fine, it had accurate heat for the weather on that side. "Kay, kay, kay. What do we need to get for Evolution?" Sans pointed to his brother who was holding the checklist Sans made some time ago for it.

"Clothes," Papyrus read.

"Clothes. Yeah, need that," Sans said. "More dresses, shirts, pants. Never got her much, she definitely deserves that."

"Undergarments too."

"Um. Yeah." Sans looked at the closet. He scooted several of his shirts and coats over, giving her half the space. "That should work. Uh, more shoes too. Make a note on shoes. Whole dang old wardrobe. Multiple colors. Stripes and polka dots. Why not? That's her real style. That'll make her feel better. What else?"

"Human wedding bands?" Papyrus asked. "Are they playing for the ceremony?"

Sans started to crack up. "That's a good one you just **drummed** up! Naw, human wedding bands are rings on the fingers."

"Oh, shoot, I forgot that one," Papyrus said. "I need to take more trips out of here again."

Sans looked at his bony fingers. "Yeah, gotta get something from each special kind. Chose that 'cause it's brilliant. Interlocking bands."

"Interlocking bands?" Papyrus asked. "Why is that brilliant?"

"Forgot, huh? Stuff happened so fast with Frisk at first," Sans said. "Remember when she got tied to my magic, and I gave her bone marrow twice?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" Papyrus said. "I remember that. It said not to do it twice."

"Well, I found a little more detail than that. Instead of holding it for six months with one transfer? Um, she's got a part of my magic *forever*. I can never fully let her go," Sans said. "It'll never leave her bloodstream."

"Oh. Well, at least she isn't tied to you like a rubber band anymore."

"Not physically but magically, we are still tied." Sans looked at his fingers. "If it hadn't been for her teleporting around with Lyons and Cromwell instead of walking, she wouldn't be alive right now."

“Yes. I know. That nasty person! Humans! Well, most,” Papyrus caved.

“These bands we get will make sure I can’t lose her. Instead, I can track her, like she was a bone.” He wiggled his bony fingers. “No way is that gonna stay on without chiseling something. Forget that. Spell cast?” It was a small thing, so it shouldn’t take much.

“I bet it’d only take maybe 1% of your power,” Papyrus said. “Definite spell cast.”

Spell cast would be power reserved infinitely for his finger, making sure it never fell off, even when he didn’t think about it. The larger the object, the more power spell cast took. But sharing rings should be fine. It was small, not like stacking hot dogs on a head.

“Let’s see. Her special dress for the announcement,” Papyrus said. “How to handle that. This is quite an unusual marriage. How. Well, how will you handle the nuances, Sans? If you don’t do it right, you won’t get any respect.”

“Yeah, I know what you mean,” Sans said. “What humans do verses what monster’s do. I’m juggling two at once.” On one hand, he didn’t want Frisk to feel trapped with him. On the other, he should get some respect owed to him after all that mess! But, it came back to Frisk’s level of comfort. Their cultures. Their traditions. Not a natural mix. “I’ll figure it out. Let’s see. Dress. Already know which one. Oh, and we’ll need tuxes too.”

“Ah, yes. What else?” Papyrus tapped his chin and looked back at the list. “New bed and bedding.”

“Yeah,” Sans said. “Alphys bed is nice, but not really adequate for long term human health. Hers is centuries old. Humans need to be cleaner . . . she should have safely been here a long time ago.”

“There.”

“What?”

“Let it go, Sans,” Papyrus said. “The terrible lion of instinct has only been getting stronger. Let it go. I won’t repeat what you say, or hold any of it to you.”

“I don’t . . .” Sans shook his head. “It was all an accident. It’s not like that.”

“Just let it go.”

“I just want to find a way to set her free. In the end, still. That *hasn’t* changed.”

“Sans,” Papyrus repeated. “Stop. Every monster has to express when it comes up, and as well as it should. If you don’t want it to bubble at the wrong time, then you should get it over with.”

“This should have happened months ago.”

“There you go.”

“She was *always* mine, not his.”

“I know.”

“I was tied to her, not *him*! *He* forced himself in there, on my Frisk. On my family! On *my* wife! Any other time in the past, and they would’ve just-“

“Left you to kill him off for his offense,” Papyrus finished for him. “I know, Brother. That very night, you should have been able to take her home. I’m sorry. Better?”

Sans nodded. “I guess. It. Hurt.” Sans looked toward Papyrus. “Do you think humans have any idea what it’s like? Instinct and infusion?”

“Did you ever try to explain it to her yet?” Papyrus asked.

“Nah, I didn’t know how to explain the concept. I figured when I did do it, we’d tell her about the other thing together. Get it all out in the open, you know?”

“Then we should do it tonight,” Papyrus insisted.

“You’re probably right.” Sans held his foot up in the air and twirled it around. “I wanted to ignore it. I wanted to deny it, like if I pretended it wasn’t there, it just wouldn’t be.” He put his foot back down. “It never worked, but I got through it.”

“Some of the strongest monsters couldn’t endure that,” Papyrus said to Sans. “You did very well for a modern day monster.”

“My competition was the frickin’ Prince,” Sans complained. “I had no choice but to get it done.” At least it was over now.

“Prince, Schmince. How many battles ended with someone trying to assassinate the king to get to their opponent without losing their wife?” Papyrus scoffed. “You handled everything above board. And. You were even willing to . . . just put up with it for life.”

“Nah, nah, I was going to leave enough for her to have some magic to defend herself but not enough to keep the connection open,” Sans reminded him. “Well, I mean, there would still be my marrow ‘cause of that doubling. But.”

“Sans-“

“I *had* to, Pap! I wasn’t going to put Frisk through what marriage is *now* and I couldn’t free her! I needed to know the deal would be solid, and that I could trust Frank Clipper.” And he had to dig far for that one. At first he thought he’d be okay. Then, came the contract on Frisk. Frank had to put out the contract, but at the same time, he warned Sans as best he could.

When Sans wasn’t working, and Sans wasn’t having his twenty four hours with Frisk, he was digging into Initiative, law, the way they ran things, consequences, awards, and especially into Frank Clipper’s personal life. His wife, his kids, where his office had been, where his kids went to school, what his personal needs were, and his triggers before he trusted him to get this done right.

“Hm.” Sans tapped his slippered foot as his mind thought back to what Papyrus just said. The nuances. “If I don’t do it, other monsters won’t respect it. I’ve had enough disrespect. What do I . . .” He snapped his fingers. “Wife in monster. She don’t understand monster.”

“Well. Can’t take puzzle solving out of our lives no matter what, can they?” Papyrus chuckled, trying to make the mood less tense.

“Only puzzle that can’t be solved is how to get thirty years of work into a year,” Sans said. He chuckled. “Sounds like a specialty of mine.”

“Well? Well, maybe?” Papyrus tried to point out. “Hang on, hang on.” For once, he tapped his own bony foot. “I’ve got it! The Great Papyrus has come up with that answer! Nyeh heh heh, Sans!” He pointed to Sans. “If that human man’s great grandmother had *that* problem, then there are bound to be more. Maybe there is something extremely similar out there?”

“Yeah.” Sans smiled. “Hey, yeah!” That was a brilliant idea. “It probably is already out there, humans tend to get in all kinds of problems. Man, contracts aren’t real public knowledge at all, but if we crawl around some history books, look up trouble in the past, then we can make contact with some current kingdom who might have just what we need.”

“Then you could fix it!”

“Then Frisk could be freed in a year once it’s all fixed.”

“Then your . . . ooh. Your wife would be freed,” Papyrus noted. “From you. You can’t ever completely free her, not because of the marrow mistake.”

“Oh. Yeah.” Sans put his bony hands in his jean pockets. “I could um. I could deal.”

“Are you sure, Sans?”

“I was gonna deal with Asriel and it. So, yeah. Fine. Anyhow.”

“It’s hypothetical anyhow,” Papyrus said. “Maybe there’s nothing and she’ll be in here forever with you?”

“Uh? Well. Whatev, let’s just get started.” Sans looked at the time. “Frisk had a rough day. We’ll get this stuff ordered pronto. I’ll have to make contact for a wedding band person to get what I want. But first?” Sans grabbed his key to the back door of the house. They went outside and through the back, pulling the covers off of a very old machine. No one knew they even had it, and they planned on keeping it that way.

They fixed it again years ago, but neither one wanted to change anything. The less humans had to fear, the better things would go. But, it was time for change.

“Okay. Ready?” Sans grabbed one of the side handles while Papyrus grabbed the other on the other side. It better work. Especially since he just killed a leader of a district too. Better safe than sorry. “Hit it.”

They each held on as they felt electric currents flowing through their bones. Anything else, any other monster, any amount of flesh would be roasted to use the device.

After it was over, their clothes were in shreds, but it was done.

No more soul fighting.

G and M 3 Three Hours Later. . .

As soon as Frisk, Gloria, Alphys, and Undyne walked into G and M 3, they grabbed a seat.

“Nervous at all?” Gloria asked Frisk.

Nervous? She’d been through way too much to be nervous. Frisk still clung to her contract book. Not nervous, just wanted answers to questions.

“I gotta go, I gotta get the dresses,” Undyne said as she left the table. “Schmooze. I’ll be back.”

Dresses? Frisk looked toward Gloria.

“Our announcement, Frisk. Asriel and Sans are both announcing together,” Gloria said. “It’s like an impromptu mini-wedding. Sort of. I wanted to keep it small, but it’s important. We’re announcing being the wives of one husband.”

Would it be much different?

“Got them.” Undyne arrived over by the girls. “Asriel is getting here. Sans is late. No surprise there. Papyrus had both though.” She handed one white box with orange ribbon on it to Gloria. “Princess.”

“Thanks.” Gloria took it graciously.

Frisk saw a white box with blue ribbon wrapped around it. “I’m already wearing a dress.”

“Frisk, this one is for your announcement,” Alphys said. “Real Important.”

“Come on, let’s go get dressed together,” Gloria insisted. Frisk felt herself getting pulled up. They both went to the female’s bathroom area. Bathrooms Underground always tried to look really nice, tried to mimic real bathrooms with a similar flow, but everyone knew it wasn’t that nice. Without water, it didn’t run half as smooth. G and M though, it was the place.

And always busy. There were twenty monsters in the girls restroom alone waiting for stalls. “There’s really not space to put this on.”

“Hey, ladies?” Gloria asked. Well, they didn’t speak their language of course. “Shoot. I guess we better wait for a stall.”

Frisk watched as one of the monsters shouted and pointed toward their boxes. Suddenly the girls poured out of the room, seemingly speaking monster in a friendly manner with wide smiles. Even a couple of stalls were flushed and left.

“Okay? Guess we can get dressed now.” Gloria took the left stall while Frisk took the right.

Taken away by Lyons Forager to get married, then really taken for a Prince in a coma. Watching old friends suffer, and the ones who should suffer go free. Then finding out the contract wasn’t saved, but I’m only married to Sans, and nobody is explaining why. I need food and rest, not a party. She gulped and closed her eyes. She needed to hold it together. She’d been through worse. Much worse. Monsters trying to kill her repeatedly worse. *Except I had help back then.*

She went ahead and undid the ribbon on the box. She opened the lid and about fell backward. *This. Is.* Beautiful. It was done up in blue, but different shades of blue. From an almost white to the darkest blue, sailing upwards against the dress. Inside the blues were sparkles, reminiscent of the stars at night. Along with the dress was a cape, with the dark blues of the dress taking over it, and the same glittering star scenery. *This cost a fortune.* Did she get hers confused with Gloria’s?

“Come on, Frisk, I want to see! Make sure you put your cape on afterward though.”

“You have yours?” Frisk asked.

“Yes, yes, it’s gorgeous! Come on, come on!”

“Okay, okay.” No idea how he got it, but she went ahead and put it on.

The arms weren’t covered, and it wasn’t even spaghetti strapped. It was held up by her bosoms and body shape alone. *Right because this is comfortable.* Well, it was, it actually fit like a glove, but Frisk never wore that kind of stuff.

At least when she would put over the matching cape it would hide everything. In fact, it was quite large and even had a hood.

Frisk looked out the stall. Gloria’s dress was stunning, and it didn’t surprise her how beautiful it was. It was mostly orange at the bottom, with strips of yellow along it and the top was white. However, when she spun around? “Spin for me.” She spun around for Frisk. Yep. “You look like a real Morning Glory. An orange one.”

“And you look like you’re ready for a night full of stars,” Gloria said. “How pretty. Oh, and the running colors? It’s like Waterfall kind of. The abandoned, pretty little areas.” Gloria took her tiny cape and tied it on her neck. It was less than a quarter of the size of the dress and had a little yellow and orange on it too. “Cute accent, huh? Go get yours.”

Frisk moved to get her cape and put it on. When she lifted it out though, she realized it was more than just a big cape. It was a cloak? When she came back out, she took the hood off the cloak so she could see. Gloria didn't look so happy. "Something wrong?"

"That's not a cape, that's a cloak. A big cloak. Asriel did say something happened." Gloria went over and pulled the hood back over her. "You *have* to wear the whole thing, Frisk. The whole focus of today is actually the dress worn. The husband picks the dress for what he wants to get across. Not really the fashion."

"Guys picking out dresses, to use what they want to get across?" Frisk grabbed at the sides. "What's he trying to get across with this? I can barely see the ground with this hood on, it's so big." She lifted the sides of the hood to look at her arms. Everything was covered. "Okay?" That was kind of a waste of a dress. Why was it completely covered?

"Hang on, I'll help you with your buttons." Gloria buttoned the front of the cloak. It naturally held its shape the rest of the way down. "There."

Not one stitch of the actual dress was showing. Not only that, none of her skin was showing except her feet.

"Did yours come with high heels like mine?"

"I don't know." Frisk looked in the box again. There was another small white box on the side. Inside of it were dark blue socks, and shoes that matched the starry night figure of the cape. Not only that? "There are gloves too?" She slid everything on and went outward. "I feel like I'm supposed to commit a crime in the dead of night."

"Well, you sparkle really pretty while your committing that crime," Gloria said, trying to cheer her up. She tapped the front of her left shoe to the ground. "Frisk? If I don't get to see you for awhile at the castle, I understand."

"What?" Frisk moved toward her. "Why do you say that?"

"Because Sans obviously has to show you off. He wants the whole Underground to know you are only his wife now, or he wouldn't have joined in an announcement with Asriel. But, he doesn't want to show *you* off. Does that make sense?" Gloria asked her.

Frisk shook her head.

"Asriel tried to explain instinct to me, but I don't think I really understand still. But he did tell me that whatever he was feeling for you was at least ten times worse on Sans the Skeleton. He was just really good at hiding it," Gloria said. "And." She gulped. "And I don't think you are right about the big lug not liking anyone. Especially the day he went after you."

"He hadn't even known me when he rescued me and brought me Underground," Frisk said.

"Not that time. When you were going to marry the other guy. He wasn't happy, Frisk."

“Yeah, well.” Frisk shrugged in the cloak that felt more like a warm blanket. “I tend to find trouble sometimes. He probably figured ‘she’s gone equals she’ll find trouble’. He’s good at puzzles,” she joked.

“Oh Frisk, you just didn’t see him.” Gloria patted her shoulder. “My time Underground, I wasn’t babied around. I didn’t have to fight anyone, but no one was trying to get all up on me either. Instead, Asriel and Toriel and Asgore? They were teaching me a lot about it. The way it worked down here. The differences between humans and monsters.”

“Well, that’s great,” Frisk answered.

“One of those things I learned was how fast monsters warm up to each other than humans.”

“Oh, I know,” Frisk agreed. “It’s. Fast. Spin the head fast. Trying to kill me, they see the truth, and we are instant friends that same day. It’s their way. How their souls connect.”

“Yeah, and that’s not all that’s fast. Anyhow, this presentation, I learned about it too. And, let’s put it this way? You are wearing a gorgeous dress underneath your cloak. This is like, the version of a human’s wedding dress. Probably the prettiest dress you’ll ever wear in your lifetime, but you can’t show it to *anyone* until Sans removes your cloak. I bet he never takes it off tonight, and doesn’t until he has to for the picture. Even then, I bet it’ll still only be the hood. In fact, I would go so far as to bet Papyrus will be on the other side of you during introductions too. Guarding the other side.”

Frisk looked at her outfit.

“And let’s just say that . . . I think Asriel and the royal family put a real hurting on your husband. More than Sans wanted to admit to you. To anyone. I mean, I don’t speak monster. But. I *know* that shit went down right before 3:00. You know it too.”

Yeah, but Frisk didn’t know what. She moved back towards her stall where she still had her book.

“Frisk, you can’t hold that right now, silly.” Gloria smiled at her. “That’s not the equivalent of a bride’s bouquet you know.”

Undyne came into the bathroom. “Ready for you.”

“I don’t know anything about what to do. Just go out there?” Frisk noticed Undyne’s eyes on her cloak too. “It’s comfier than it looks.”

“Don’t worry, it’s pretty.” Undyne took her book for her. “You *don’t* have to do anything, Frisk. We know you aren’t in the mood for this, and this’ll be fast for you. Just go out there as is when I give the word. You’ll see Alphys hand first, and she’ll lead you to Sans. The guys will tell you what to do from there.” Undyne bowed to the Princess. “Princess Gloria Dreemur already knows what’s up. Come on out first.”

Gloria moved to the door in her pretty orange heels and went out. Frisk heard nothing at first, then Asriel introducing her, and then a cheering crowd.

“See? Nothing to it.” Undyne gestured out the door to Frisk. “Now just wait.”

Sans looked over at Papyrus’ side. “Your side okay?”

“I got it. She’ll be fine.” Papyrus said. “I am sure everyone will get the hint.”

“They better. I can’t say much in front of Frisk. It’ll freak her out.” Sans watched Asriel with Gloria far up ahead. Luckily, he was entranced with her. Last thing he really wanted was to be near royalty right now, but the fact that Asriel had one wife when he previously had two wives, and Sans wasn’t sharing anymore, would make much more sense with less questions if they had it together. Basic math.

It wasn’t a day to show off Frisk, just to make sure the Underground got the message.

“What about Gloria Dreemur?” Papyrus asked Sans. “She is Frisk’s best friend.”

“Later. Not forever, just later,” Sans insisted. He smiled as somebody came back there. “Hey there, I got married, did ya hear?”

“Yeah.” No enthusiasm. He didn’t get it yet.

“I’m my only wife’s husband now,” Sans added.

That changed his tune. He smiled and shook Sans’ hand. “Well, hey, congrats! I’m happy to hear about the marriage. Good luck. Marriage isn’t so easy these days.”

“Yeah, I found that out after studying a lot more,” Sans admitted as he watched the kid on top of the monster’s head, and the two perched on his shoulders. “Been married three years yourself?”

“Nine. Other two take care of two each,” his friend said. “First ones were twins, thank goodness. Got a whole year off with that one.”

Sans just shook his head, but kept up his mood. “Well, I bagged a different marriage. I’ve got an Evolution.”

“Wow! Hang me up and slay me, Sans, how did you manage that?!”

“A settlement from royalty. I also got a heavy chunk of money out of it too,” Sans said. “So, don’t forget all that.”

“How much of a chunk?”

Enough that if Sans wanted to be lazy and never work another day in his life, he didn’t have to. “Good chunk.” Sans waved at him. “Be seein’ ya. Spread the word.”

“Got it, got it. Wow, definitely got it. Thanks, Sans.”

While he didn't have the most well-known name in the Underground anymore, Sans was still going to make sure every monster knew the facts far and wide. That in extreme cases, the royalty could be punished. That Ol' Sans managed to do it, and he got back his wife, fair and square. Not only that, but he landed himself an evolution marriage.

It was only a matter of time before more monsters would want that too. Sans looked at the sealed envelopes he kept in his tuxedo and brought them out. "Here, you hold them, Papyrus."

"Uh huh." Papyrus took the papers. "When will we do this? Before or after Frisk comes out?"

"Before we go," Sans said. He greeted someone else that came up to him. Oh, he was an old, familiar monster too. "Hey there, Buddy."

"Hey there." The bird looked tired as hell. That was no different. "I hear you're getting married. I should say congrats but." He yawned. "Marriage is hell, Sans, I never did it for a reason. Ya know where this surplus of monsters came from, don't you? Only royalty's exempt."

"Ah, no worries," Sans said. "I got myself an evolution marriage, and a nice settlement for taking on royalty with the outer justice system. It all worked out."

"What?" The bird monster was confused. "Settlement for what?"

"Sans," Papyrus whispered. "If you want monsters to understand right, you have to let it go in front of them a little. She's not around yet."

"Yeah. Yeah, you're right," Sans agreed. He looked to his old friend. He'd have to let his instinct run a little bit. Just a little. "I've been married almost since Frisk came back down, only I was forced to share her with the Prince." He glanced toward Prince Asriel, making sure his old friend saw it. "Yeah. Evil little flower. Mommy and daddy made me share my *own* wife so he could keep his Princely self."

"Oooh." The bird monster actually. "You've *been* married? You had to share your *wife*?"

"Yep. Every twenty four hours."

"My gaw!" He squawked. "That's . . . barbaric! How did you manage it?"

"Day at a time," Sans said. "Not easy."

"But gaw, there's only you and your brother!" He continued to squawk. "That amount of pressure. Awww!" He beat his wings up and down. "That's terrible! I'll spread all the news I can everywhere. Hey, forget what I said then. Congratulations, Sansy, on getting your wife back just to you." He gestured to the Princess Gloria. "Then what about her, is she being forced to be with him?"

"Princess Gloria?" Sans looked toward her a second. "Heck no, she's a life saver. Without her, I wouldn't have got my wife back." He waved over toward Gloria. She seemed a little

confused. Probably. “Not the most royal thing with experience, but she’s a dang good human. Just bad taste. She’ll be alright.”

“Got it. Got it. Good luck.” His friend made a low squawk. “If Mettaton still had live shows everyone could afford, the whole Underground would know all at once. Are you getting a recording with him?”

“Let the news spread however it wants, as long as monsters know I’m the only one married to my wife, and I’m the only one around her for awhile.”

“You bet, you bet. You used to be one for the spotlight, Sans,” his old friend said, his energy dying down, and looking like he was heading toward another nap. “I understand that though. After having to share. And. But? Oh, residue.”

“I really?” Sans looked toward Papyrus. Instinct or not, no. “I *really* don’t want to talk about that.”

“Oooh.” The bird shook his head. “Forget I said anything, forget, forget. Good luck.” He walked off.

“It’s over, Sans,” Papyrus said supportively to him. “We should bring Frisk out soon. Do you want me to put up my sign now?”

Sans watched as Asriel and Gloria made their way even farther away. “Yeah. Right on the other side of you.”

It was a big sign that would make sure the knowledge was spread far and wide. Especially as people took pictures and texted it. Sans had kept his marriage to Frisk more at the lower end of the knowledge pool, and quite a few monsters still heard about it. Without facts though, they made up their own thoughts.

Time to end those thoughts. Sans looked at the board. It was written in monster, so neither Gloria nor Frisk would be able to read it. He didn’t want Frisk to get the wrong idea. Like he was trapping her. Like he’d never set her free. But, it had to be said.

SANS IS ONLY MARRIED TO FRISK!

Sans T.S. had to share his wife to Prince Asriel after he forcefully laid down a second claim to restore himself. They are now marrying via Evolution. *Please do not disturb the process.*

PLEASE DO NOT MESS WITH HIS WIFE.

“Via?” Sans questioned.

“Through? Should I have gone with through?” Papyrus asked.

“Nah. Sounds good.” Sans said as he looked at it. Big. Bright. No one could miss it. Yep, monsters were definitely starting to notice it. Phones were coming out for pictures, and being texted on right now.

“Okay.” Sans motioned to Undyne, way over by the restroom. “Now it’s time to bring my wife out.”

Monster Ways

Chapter Notes

Monster Words:

Moonkose: Wife

Steberspa: Stubborn Mule Wife

Shniley: Silly Wife

Nurspa: Funny Wife

Paperclip: Horny Wife

Jattemoon: Loving Wife

Jattehoon: Loving Husband

G and M 3 . . .

Off ya go, Frisk.” Undyne said. “Just head straight. Alphys’ll guide you.”

When Frisk emerged, she noticed there was no cheering crowd like Gloria had. It was hushed and felt eerie. Well, a happy party isn’t what she wanted anyhow. Was she allowed to eat during announcements? She could use some food for her soul.

“Over here.” She saw Alphys hand reach for hers. “Sans is more towards the back. Follow me.”

Remembering not to take off the hood, she walked with Alphys like Undyne said.

“Oh, sorry, I’ll walk slower so you don’t step on your cloak,” Alphys apologized. “You look quite pretty in it. Just a little ways. Here is your wife, Sans.”

“There ya are, Frisk.” Sans’ voice. “Follow me.” She saw his hand in front of her and she took it, letting him guide her to wherever she needed to go.

She did notice though he wasn’t wearing any kind of jacket or coat sleeve, but an actual buttoned up sleeve of a tuxedo. Even Sans got dressed up for the announcement. *Okay. Let’s just get this over with. I need food and rest.* She tried not to trip on the long cloak again. It almost hit the floor and was a lot of trouble.

“Stand right there, Frisk,” Sans said. “*I know* you aren’t in a party mood today, Pal. This won’t take long, but it’s necessary, okay?”

Frisk nodded. “Then food?”

“Better than that. When we go home, we can have some nice cocoa.” Papyrus was on the side of her just like Gloria said. “Homemade cocoa, made by myself.”

Ooh, soul food. That was always the best thing for the soul.

“Stick your hand out and just shake the monster’s hand you see in front of you,” Sans said to her.

Well, hands were about all she could see in her vision.

“Congratulations, Sans!”

“Thanks, Buddy.”

“Fantastic news you getting her back. Hey Frisk, good luck.”

“Thanks, Fella.”

“Take good care of the Legendary Pacifist Child.”

“You bet, but it’s woman now.”

Frisk saw a face actually appear in front of her. And just like that it was gone.

“You’ve got a pretty wife.”

She didn’t even hear her language. Sans spoke monster, and his hand appeared, pushing him back. Physically pushing him back, not even magically. *Whoah. He only saw my face and it made Sans upset?* Meanwhile, she could hear Asriel and Gloria. She was getting told she was beautiful and Asriel didn’t comment at all, or he said something nice. Gloria was right. At least partly. Sans was definitely hurt, and for some reason, he didn’t want anyone seeing her that night. “Sans?”

“Yeah, Frisk?”

“I’m not wearing this tomorrow, am I?”

A small chuckle. “Only if you want to.” He moved her to face him, and he peered into her view. “Almost over, Moonkose, promise.”

“Moonkose?” Frisk asked. “I don’t know that one.”

“Uh, just like pal in Monster,” he said. “Needed for the marriage. Kay?”

Frisk nodded. It sounded like him.

“That was a real bastard thing they did to your wife, Sans, I’m glad you got your justice.”

Frisk tried to turn to shake hands, but Sans caught her hood instead. He had misadjusted it, and her face probably would have shown slightly.

“Thanks,” Sans said in monster. “Really don’t talk about that in her language though. Humans are different.”

“Sorry,” Monster Kid, now closer to teen said. “I’ll be more careful. Congratulations.”

Sans nodded and watched him leave. He put his hands up to the rest and kept up a jovial attitude. “Hey, hey, everybody? We’ve had kind of a hard day. Right, Papyrus?”

“Yes,” Papyrus agreed. “A real doozy.”

“Yeah, so uh, we are going to keep this party moving.” Sans waved to everyone and adjusted her cloak again. The fact monsters had to meet her like that on the announcement day made it pretty damn simple. Not one ounce of her dress was shown, and not one ounce of her skin. If they didn’t get the hint from the board, they were getting the hint now, loud and clear.

No unimportant conversations, no tiny pecks on the cheek, no glancing at her, no nothing. He was running an ACT of 'Mine' to a high degree. He had shared her for almost half a year, and he didn't want anyone thinking Frisk was easy to take again. Last thing he needed was some upstart monster thinking that was allowed just because it happened once to him. He finally lifted back her cloak hood just a little bit.

“I hear seeing is so overrated,” Frisk joked at him. “Thanks for lifting that off a smidge. Any way it could be off completely?”

“Come here, Frisk.” He held her tighter. “Alright. So, we’re married. Just you and me. You got any questions, I bet I can answer them-.”

“I do!” Frisk said. “When you took care of Garland, if you had told me that you were the one being forced to marry me, I could have stayed and married-“

“I meant I can answer them later, Moonkose,” Sans interrupted her. “For now? It’s picture time.”

Frisk saw all the phones out there. Probably using cameras on their phones.

“We’ve got an evolution marriage, so this is going to be kind of different for ya. Okay?” Sans took the gloves off her hands. “Okay, now just hold hands with me.”

Simple. Frisk held hands with him.

“Good. Next, Ol’ Sans needs a hug?” He tickled her slightly under her chin, getting her to laugh, and then held her in a hug. “Okay. That’s it. Not too bad, right?”

No. No, that wasn’t bad at all.

“Great. Last part.” Sans took out two rings from his pocket. He slid one on his bony ring finger. “These are good conductors.” He took her hand and tried to slide the other one on, but she pulled it back.

“Wedding bands? Yip?” Why?

“Yep.” He tried to take her hand back, but she pulled away again. “What?”

“The book, I forgot the book,” Frisk said. “The sample contract? Undyne took it.”

“Later, Moonkose, hand.”

“How much later?” Frisk asked stubbornly. “You still haven’t explained why you didn’t tell me I was marrying you? I didn’t want you wrapped up in all this nonsense. I could have married the coma Prince.” Why wasn’t he answering her? “Sans?”

“For one? You got it wrong. I didn’t tell you I was marrying you because we’ve *been married*.” His voice didn’t hold any nonsense at all. “I’ll get to everything soon, Steberspa, just give me your hand.”

Oops. Slip of the tongue. He even added a different new word in there. “Sorry. It’s just that, you haven’t mentioned one thing about the contract.”

Sans seemed to have a strange look on his face. A little stranger than usual. “It’s not gonna work. Toriel said ‘my child’. In the other case it was ‘wish you were my child’. The contract skews everything to warding off the word wish.”

“So? Nothing?”

“Nothing from that, but Papyrus got a much better idea, so don’t give up hope.”

“Oh. But, it involved me coming back?”

“His idea?”

“Yeah?”

“No.”

“Well, then why did you bring me back, to put yourself in this position?” she asked.

“In what position? We’ve *been* married, Steberspa.”

“I didn’t. Well.” Wow. It was like he took real offense to her mixing it up. She even swore there was some spit in that word. But, wasn’t light and friendly how Sans liked to handle things? “Well, I mean you could have been freed of me.”

“Those contracts aren’t good enough. They won’t last long,” Sans said. “Even under marriage. And yeah, *even* with Gloria as Princess, you aren’t secure. She’s just a target now too. Asriel is going to have to watch her back real careful.”

“Oh.”

“Now, Moonkose, give me your hand?”

Frisk remembered the feeling she had when Asriel slipped his ring on her finger all that time ago. “Do I really have to?”

“What’s wrong?” Sans asked.

“It’s just. Uh. Rings.”

“Something wrong with the rings?” Sans looked at them. “*These* are from the exact same gold source, they’re twin rings. With them, I can tell exactly where you are, and if you’re in trouble. It’s because of the bone marrow accident,” he said. “I’ll just know if you need help, no matter how fast things get out of control. Okay?”

Ring “Okay.” *Ring, ring.* “Um.”

“Come on, Ol’ Sans can tell when you’re hiding something,” Sans said. “What’s wrong?”

“Just. Makes everything real solid like again,” Frisk said, trembling. “Like this is it.”

“ . . . like Asriel told you that one day?” Sans asked her.

“Yeah, and he . . .” Frisk gestured to the ring. “When I slipped his ring on for a bit, everything just . . .”

“You slipped on his ring? *He* slipped a -?!” Sans covered her face completely back up again. “Second, Frisk.”

“Brother, what are you doing?” Papyrus asked.

“I didn’t look deep enough on it, I just knew it would be a good way to track her,” Sans said in monster to Papyrus as he looked at his phone. “Shit! Why did Asriel do that?” He looked up more information. “Ancient tradition. Ah, it’s bigger than I *knew*.”

“Sans?”

“He slipped a ceremonial ring on her?” Sans felt something stir inside him as he read more about them. “Words go away, rings are always there . . . exchanging words . . . It’s a visible display of affection, oh he wasn’t supposed to do that!” He slammed his phone down. “I gotta do it.”

“Sans, you should wait,” Papyrus warned him.

“No, today, I gotta do it. I’m tired of the disrespect, Pap, no more.” Sans looked back toward her, grabbed her hand, and trailed her around. “Asriel!” Sans yelled at him in monster too as he made his way to the part where Asriel and Gloria were. “You slipped a traditional human ring on my wife?!”

“Huh?” Asriel seemed confused, but could clearly tell it was something he better be talking in monster about too. “Oh, yes. Long, long time ago. She didn’t wear it very long.

Rebellious.”

“Gee. I wonder why. Maybe ‘cause it *never* should have been there?” Sans growled. “Sharing. Meant. Nothing like *that*. It’s for single marriage only.”

“Easy.” Asriel put his hands up. “It was only in the very beginning. I gave one to Gloria too. She wears it proudly.”

“Yeah. Well. Good for her. It’s supposed to go with both of you though.” At least he could show him up there. He brought Frisk closer and spoke to her in her language again. “Just stand right there, okay? Then repeat after me once I slip this on.”

“Why?”

“Incantation,” he lied. “Remember, magic rings?” Sans said to her. “Ready?” He spoke to her in monster, little by little. By little. Monster wasn’t easy, but he finally got her to say what he wanted. “Okay, now put it all together while you slip it on? Just try, you can do it, Moonkose.”

Frisk nodded. Without even knowing what she was saying, she slipped the ring on his bony finger. The words weren’t perfect, Sans didn’t expect them to be, but the message was put out across everyone. “With this ring, I hold you. With my loving heart, my willing body, and my eternal soul.”

Sans took his ring and placed it on her finger. He hated deceiving her, but he didn’t want to scare her either. At the same time, there was no way he was going to let that disrespect just pass. He spoke in monster to her as well, changing the words enough to work for him. “With this ring, I hold you, and you *alone*, wife. I have no heart, but every bone in my body, and what I have of a soul, is yours.”

Before he let go of her finger, he did something he promised Papyrus he wouldn’t do yet, but he couldn’t stop himself. Not after that. He took away the 1% of energy that bonded her to Asriel.

She now only carried his. He watched monsters start to clap, especially Undyne and Alphys who had made their way over there. “Aw, crud.” Great. He pointed to both of them, speaking in monster again. “Not a word to my wife in her language.”

“Aw, it’s sooo sweet!” Alphys came toward him and Frisk, still speaking monster. “You are doing what you *need* to do, but at the same time, you’re respecting her human need to go slower than monsters. I even heard you calling her wife over and over.”

“Yeah, I heard stubborn mule wife between that,” Undyne said toward Sans.

“Nah, it ain’t like that,” Sans came back on them. “Look? I . . . I don’t have to explain anyway.”

“Disrespect was high for the sharing marriage.” Undyne said it knowingly. “Earning back respect isn’t something I look down on, Sans. I get it.” She smirked. “Smart too. Making *her*

say that in monster. Calling her wife in monster too. That's using your brain. Except, *you* never use the same words over and over. Bud, Buddy, Fella, Pal, Amigo, Chum, Kid. You should have at least three extra words. Won't look as suspicious."

"Yeah, you might be right there." Sans chuckled as he caught Frisk's glare. "She hates when we talk monster. Silly wife."

"There's one," Undyne said. "So wife. Stubborn mule wife. Silly wife."

"Loving wife?" Alphys asked Sans. "That's always been so pretty."

"Loving wife?" Sans didn't know about that. "I mean. She doesn't know what I'm saying but--"

"Oh!" Alphys shook her head and bowed. "Oh, no, I'm sorry, Sans," Alphys. "I didn't mean to insinuate Toriel was wrong or anything. You are who you are, and I think that's great! This marriage, I guess I just got confused with the way you looked at Frisk."

"I am who I am?" Sans questioned her. "Toriel? What do you mean?"

"That you are the most supportive and best friend in all of its existence to do this for Frisk!" Alphys answered.

"Uh? Oh." Toriel said that? "Kay?" Then why wasn't she at her son's own announcement party? *Maybe later, after we get home. Oh yeah, one more thing.* He looked toward the crowd. Papyrus wasn't going to like this next part, but he had to say it. No one had an announcement and just buzzed off without mentioning it. So, he addressed everyone in monster once more. "Well, this was lovely, but it's time to go home and explore my horny wife," Sans said.

"Sans, what did you say?!" Papyrus complained in monster. "Ooh, if she knew what you just said-!"

"She don't speak it. Leave me alone about it, had to be said. Everyone says it." Sans grabbed Frisk's hand and spoke back in her language. "We are done now, Paperclip, let's go home and get some cocoa."

"Paperclip?" Frisk asked.

"Uh? Oh, that's actually a word in your language?" Sans joked. "Yeah, uh. Well, for evolution, I just have to use my regular words for ya, and turn them into monster. That's all."

"Am I supposed to do something similar?" Frisk asked. "Should I call you something?"

"Um." He looked at the small crowd that became very interested in them. Most of them couldn't speak Frisk's language. "You could call me, uh, Jattehoon."

“Jaaah . . . tuh . . . hun?” Frisk tried. “Jattehoon.”

“Yeah. On occasion. Especially around other monsters,” Sans said. “I’ll call ya Moonkose, Steberspa, Shniley-“

“Shniley?” Frisk whined. “What?”

“Nurspa?”

“No. I’ll take Moonkose, and I guess if I’m irritating, Steberspa,” Frisk said, already figuring out Steberspa wasn’t the kindest addressal.

“And um. Paperclip?” Sans asked. “I won’t use Paperclip much, I *promise*.”

Frisk chuckled. “Fine, Paperclip.”

“And um. One more?” Sans held his index finger up. “Jattemoon?”

Ooh. There was something about that word when he said it. It almost made her ear tingle from the pronunciation of it from Sans. “Um. Okay?”

“Okay. Good. Then, we’re good.” Sans looked toward Papyrus. “Okay. Who’s ready for Papyrus’ hot cocoa?”

“Me!” Papyrus announced. “Special recipe.”

“Me too. Sorry, everybody, Sans has to get going. Papyrus, go give the envelopes to Asriel, then meet us back home?”

“Will do, Sans,” Papyrus agreed.

“Bye, Sans!”

“Bye!”

“Have a nice time, Sansy!”

“We will spread the word!”

Sans and Papyrus’ House . . .

Frisk looked around her. They were back at Sans and Papyrus’ home.

“I will go get the cocoa.” Papyrus said. “Sans, you take care of her.”

“Yeah.”

Frisk watched as the hood was finally removed completely. She watched as he started to unbutton her cloak and finally take the whole thing off.

“You’re free, look at that.” He chuckled for a second, then stopped as he looked at her. He didn’t say anything about her dress at all.

“That is very pretty,” Papyrus said when he came and saw her dress. “Time for hot cocoa yet?”

“Just a second.” Sans grabbed Frisk’s hand. “Come on over, Moonkose. Sit down a second, so we can chat.”

Frisk sat down.

“So? There’s something I’ve been meaning to tell you,” Sans said. “Wanted to wait until this whole competition was over. Then, it’d all just be out of the way. Whether it was me or Asriel or whatever.”

“Ooh! We *should* do the cocoa first,” Papyrus pointed out. “She had a rough day already, Sans.”

“Oh yeah, right, jumping ahead. After today, you’re going to need some before you get this too.” Sans held his own cocoa tightly. “So, you’re married to only me now. What do you think is next?”

“I don’t really know,” she said. “You used to say that when only you were married to me, you’d be able to set me free one day. But, you haven’t mentioned that in months.”

“Yeah,” Sans said. “I didn’t really look at the books, or the updated rules and modifications for awhile. I didn’t really know how it was ran. I mean, it only changed a couple times when we were trapped down here, and it wasn’t really an area of expertise for a sentry.” He took his hot cocoa and drank it the way he used to drink catsup.

Frisk remembered that. He used to drink down catsup like that.

“They weren’t good at all,” Sans continued as he put the empty mug back on Papyrus’ platter. “That’s why I kept going with your plan to stay with Asriel.”

“There are some very tough rules,” Papyrus agreed. “It changed *everything*.”

“Yeah,” Sans agreed. “So now we are married, only us, through an evolution marriage instead. What do you think that means?”

Frisk shrugged.

“It means your mine,” Sans said.

“And mine!” Papyrus also said. “Ours.”

“Yep, ours.”

“Hm?”

“Well, first, I have to do something. You gotta expose your soul,” Sans said.

On the couch? Right there? “Do I really have to?” Frisk asked.

“Yes, Sister, it must be done.” Papyrus stood back a little ways.

“You can trust me and Papyrus.”

“We will decimate anyone who would try and hurt your exposed soul!” Papyrus said proudly.

“Yep,” Sans agreed. “Come on.”

Frisk nodded and gave the okay. She watched her soul fill the room. She watched as lots of blue smoke started to flow away from her soul. Sans was taking his power back? In fact, she was starting to notice that it was getting very cold in the room and started to tremble.

“Now for hot cocoa?” Sans held it out to her after her soul was tucked back away.

“Yes, please!” Frisk grabbed the hot cocoa quickly. Never had she been that cold before!

“Okay. What you’re feeling?” Sans pointed out. “That’s Snowdin’s true chill. That’s the reason your friend Gloria never traveled to Hotlands or to Snowdin until Asriel married her. Even G and M 1, Toriel probably just popped her there. It’s a lot for a mere human, but its okay. It’s only temporary.”

“Sans will give you a little more power, day by day,” Papyrus said. “You aren’t in a regular marriage. You are in Evolution.”

“Evolution?” Frisk questioned. “What’s the difference?”

“Oh? About a thousand kids,” Sans said. “One per year of your life for starters.”

What?!

“Evolution is much different. Sans left you about one percent of his power.” Papyrus looked toward the cocoa that was now empty in Frisk’s hand. “I’ll need to get more cocoa soon again.”

This weather? This feeling? “Why is this weather so cold?”

“Thems the temperatures. Closer to that one place. Atlantica.”

“Antarctica,” Papyrus corrected.

“Right,” Sans chuckled. “Antarctica. What do you **Snow** about that? I must have **water** on the brain to get that wrong.” He was trying for a joke. “The one percent of my energy is what’s keeping you pretty much alive.”

“Okay, so I’m not just a wimp?”

“Nah, not at all. The first time you came through here, you had another soul attached to you,” Sans said. “Second time? Well, by the time I brought you all the way here, you already had a lot of my power. Even when you came, from the blue in your eyes . . .” He delayed himself. “Gaster had already given you a good amount of power,” Sans said. “First time I see you got green eyes. Lovely, Frisk.”

Papyrus handed her *another* cup of cocoa. “Thanks,” Frisk said to him as she took it. She really needed them right now. Especially with the way Sans just said ‘lovely’ to her. It wasn’t like him.

“Evolution was only used one time in history,” Sans said. “When we were put down here. See, only the survivors were brought down here, and not all of them were all romantically smudgeoned when most of their family had been bludgeoned.” He tried for it again, trying to make the intensity less intense. “For the good of the monsters to survive, Queen Toriel and King Asgore made a new book. Evolution. Pap?”

“It took all the monsters that had counterparts, for the easiest birthing chances, and who were old enough to have children, and had them *try* to infuse to marry each other. If it didn’t work, they would try another pair. Another pair. And another pair until someone infused. It improved the chances that monster kind would continue to survive,” Papyrus said.

“Oh?” Oh wow. Frisk never knew about that. “Just trying to infuse? Well, those weren’t romantic relationships.”

“Nah, and some never would become romantic,” Sans reasoned. “When they infused *right* though, like it or not, it made them family. Evolution helped find that energy spot.”

“If the relationship was more Sister, Daughter, or Friend in the end, it could be abolished,” Papyrus said. “Just like Sans just abolished Asriel’s energy completely away without even telling you at the announcement ceremony.”

“She didn’t need that one percent hanging around,” Sans muttered to him. “Not after that move.”

Frisk saw her wedding band glow slightly along with his when Papyrus said that.

“Anyhow, they each followed a set of rules for so long, to see which way it slipped,” Papyrus continued. “However, because it had so many weak spots, many relationships did not flourish the way royalty wanted.”

That wasn’t the fault of the book. Having to find and share energy with a stranger that infused right, and make them your wife or husband? They couldn’t honestly blame a book on that.

“Anyhow, Evolution helps to nail down the instinct the monster is feeling, that made the successful fusions happen,” Sans said. “Humans and monsters are different. More than just the strength of our souls. And, uh? I don’t *know* if we are going to be able to explain it right to you, ‘cause I don’t think there’s anything at all close for humans. But we’ll try. Do you *know* what instinct is for a monster?”

“I know it’s very strong,” Frisk said. “Gloria said Asriel tried to explain it, but she couldn’t understand it. Just that whatever Asriel felt, you felt ten times worse.”

“More than ten times worse,” Papyrus insisted as he grabbed Frisk’s cloak and placed it loosely on her. Oh thank goodness, so nice and warm. “It’s um. It’s um?” Papyrus looked toward Sans. “Ooh, I know!” He gestured to Frisk. “You know how fast it was okay to visit Undyne after she brutally tried to murder you several times?”

Oh. She needed that reminder? *Undyne was so powerful.* “Yes?”

“That’s sort of it, but not really,” Papyrus said. He looked toward Sans. “How are we going to explain this to a human? They are just so . . . numb.”

“Hmm.” Sans seemed stumped too. “Infusion makes instinct more powerful, and its presence known. But. It’s already got to be there?”

Frisk didn’t know how to help them explain. “Infusion makes instinct more powerful, but it has to be there.” Okay. Still so far away.

“Gaster used me. He used me because I had 1 soul hit point,” Sans said, “but he wouldn’t have bothered if he didn’t know we’d fuse right. And he?” Sans sighed. “He was ran across through a hundred timelines. And *that* won’t make any sense either, but he must have picked up that we would fuse fine. I mean, chances with you as a monster were 1 in 100, you as a human would be like 1 in . . . 10,000? Either way, somehow Instinct connected and . . . I’ve run dimensional tests for Gaster in the past that were easier to explain than this, Papyrus.”

“Well, we need to at least-“ Papyrus clapped his bony hands together and pointed at Frisk. “I dated you!”

“Yeah, that’s a good place to start,” Sans said. “That’s where we started to figure it out.”

When they started? “When I first fell?”

“It’s not strong. It’s a little strong,” Papyrus said. “Okay, not really. Instinct by itself can’t be recognized without infusion easily. And, the second soul attached to you numbed it even further.”

“Barely felt it,” Sans admitted. “Think a little, but not a whole lot. Shouldn’t have felt a thing. Even with the second soul, but things for you were . . . different. Intense. Recent and pretty heavy.”

“Too heavy,” Papyrus insisted. “Even if we had known, there’s no way we could have told you about it.”

“It.” Frisk was *trying*. “It being . . . instinct?”

“Yes, instinct, even back then. I felt instinct, and that’s why I asked you on a date,” Papyrus said. “Not much, can’t feel much, but I could feel something different about you. I was trying to figure you out. But, as I said before, I was not romantically into you.”

“Yeah.” Which was good. *Come on, Frisk. Sans and Papyrus are seriously trying to explain something. There must be a way for you to understand it.*

“Anyhow, Gaster saw the connection, so then he infused you,” Sans said. “Papyrus and I had to talk to each other more than a few times to figure out the connections. Hm. But?”

“I’m sorry,” Papyrus said. “I really am. *We* really are. But, Gaster wanted the connection to be as strong as possible, and he must have known somehow . . .”

“He couldn’t have done anything the first time,” Sans said. “He wasn’t out of the Underground, he was trapped in it. I can’t explain how, I just know that he couldn’t be out.”

What? Frisk watched as Sans and Papyrus both touched her hand.

“We are the loneliest kind in the Underground,” Papyrus admitted. “Sans and I are the last two Skeleton monsters. We’ve been the last two, since we’ve been dropped in. When we are gone, there will be no more. And because of that, we . . .”

“Wanted more,” Sans said. “We wanted our mom and our dad. We wanted a lot more of what we *used* to have. The day we dropped in. We lost everything.”

“So when you fell, and you were torn from your loss and former . . . attachments,” Papyrus said slowly. “Even without infusion, that same feeling reached out. It was trapped.”

“Barely felt.”

“But it was *there*, and it only became stronger once we met you again, without any second soul clouding the way,” Papyrus said.

Okay. “Because I lost my family, your instinct connected to me?” Frisk asked.

“Getting closer,” Sans said. “Gaster wanted a perfect infusion though. Equal. One to one. I didn’t think about it at first. I mean, everyone was after you. But when I left your home, your Aunt was getting help, and your cousin Maxie should have been right there with her.”

Oh. No. *Oh no.*

“Even if you didn’t know, your soul still knew it, Frisk. Gaster knew you’d wish for home once-“

“No!” She covered her eyes. Her Uncle Gaster. “He killed them?” To make the strongest connection possible?

“Don’t know what happened to your parents,” Sans said quickly again, “Gaster *couldn’t* have been involved in that. But. Pap and I are pretty certain. He’s responsible for the second loss.”

Frisk curled herself up. She could understand him wanting to take her soul. For his own life, people did strange things for self-preservation. But? He killed them. He outright killed them.

“Nah, nah, don’t curl up and hide again.” Sans wrapped his arms around her. “Hiding doesn’t do anything for the soul but make it heavier. It’s heavy enough, Moonkose.”

She felt Papyrus sit on the other side, and wrap his arms around her too. Odd. It felt like. *No. That’s . . .*

///I was trying to figure you out. But, as I said before, I was not romantically into you.///

/// Even if we had known, there’s no way we could have told you about it.”///

///“Infusion makes instinct more powerful, but it has to be there.”///

///“We wanted our mom and our dad. We wanted a lot more of what we *used* to have. The day we dropped in. We lost everything.” ///

/// “That same feeling reached out. It was trapped.”///

“Infusion. Instinct. Infusion is marriage, but it’s really instinct greatly amplified, while instinct itself is . . .”

“I think she might have got it,” Sans said to Papyrus. “Don’t freak out, okay?” he said to her. “But, instinct is this primal *urge* to . . . uhhh . . .”

“You feel like the closest sister,” Papyrus said, “as well as our closest daughter.”

Daughter? Frisk looked between them. “You think of me as a daughter?”

“Sister. Daughter. Adopted families of humans is probably the best we can get,” Sans said. He beat on his chest, where his heart should be. “You smack me and Papyrus, here. All the time.” He moved his bony hand back and forth, simulating a heartbeat. “Because you fused right with my energy, and you have energy that’s related to Papyrus. That made the instinct hit even harder.”

“A lot of families feel much less energy, because their ‘kind’ is so much bigger,” Papyrus said to Frisk, “It keeps that feeling more spaced out and even among their kind. Like Froggits.”

“Lots of Froggits, too many to count now,” Sans added. “But me and Papyrus? We carry it all. We are the last Skeletons in existence.”

“And even if you aren’t a real Skeleton monster, you fused right, like a real one would. So we feel it intensely, Sister!” Papyrus said, giving her another hug. “As well as when it’s *lost*. Like, when you mess with Asriel’s energy. It feels like-“

“Let’s not go there,” Sans said. “It’s over. It’s done with.”

“It felt like a betrayal stabbing you.” Oh no. All those times she had to become closer to Asriel, she was hurting them? They could feel the change in her? *Sans said I didn't feel good when I had his energy, but they really felt the changings in it?* “It’s like a daughter, running up to someone else, and calling them father. A wife having an affair. A sister replacing you with a new brother.” But . . . which had they thought of her as?

“ . . . yeah.” Sans finally spoke. “I didn’t want you to know that though, Moonkose.”

“Anyhow, that connection is felt, but what you are to each other isn’t as clear. Another father? A brother? A son? But, the Evolution marriage will help us determine where you are inside *our* instinct, by wiping out most of the infusion confusion, and letting it build, while building a relationship!” Papyrus gestured to Sans. “With that, I leave to make more cocoa so your husband can talk to you.”

Somebody Finally Came

Husband? *He really called Sans, husband.* They never did that unless they were ACTing.

As Papyrus left, Sans continued. "I know this marriage thing feels weird, 'cause we've been friends. It's only gonna get weirder, Moonkose. We are going to be doing things each day, to determine *where* your spot is."

"My spot?" Frisk asked.

"Uh, yeah?" Sans nodded. "I've been close enough to rule out some already. You're not daughter or even sister. So, you could be neutral. That means you actually went with Papyrus' energy in some way, but since I'm related to him, that connection is still there. Usually bonds as close friends."

"Okay," Frisk said slowly. "Instinct drove to me to Papyrus, but because you're his brother, it was close enough?"

"Yeah, that's one," Sans said. "Or, you could be my lover and the one I truly love above all others or some poetic shit like that. Or umm? I could have absolutely no lovey-dovey feelings and it's just all out hot passion brewing between us at like all hours. That's called a Luster. It can be a combination too." He put his feet up on the coffee table. "Evolution will know."

"But we're just friends," Frisk said. "It either has to be sister or neutral."

"Nuh uh," Sans said with certainty. "Just 'cause you pair with my brother's instinct as sister, doesn't make me your brother. It's not a blood thing, it doesn't work like that. It's a monster energy thing. Family doesn't find its way that way. Hell. Heh heh heh heh. You could be 'mom' to me."

"Uh?" Frisk blinked. "That's possible? I'm much younger than you."

"Don't worry, you aren't mom either," Sans told her. "I've felt you out enough, I know you aren't that."

"Well," Frisk shrugged. "We're friends then. Neutral."

"Never know," Sans insisted. "We could be friends, but at the same time, you could be more drawn to getting my energy inside of you than keeping a friendship. Everyone lies to themselves all the time, especially monsters who really wanted a wife. Someone to hold every night, emotionally or physically."

But? "We can't be anything but friends," Frisk said.

"Well, aren't you so sure of yourself," Sans said. "Miss Frisk don't like dem bones. How do you know that? I ain't even seriously taken you out."

“Because you don’t like guys or girls sexually,” Frisk said. “Right?” This conversation was getting weird. “I don’t know how it works.”

“Uhhh?” Sans put his feet back down. “Could you come back on that a second again? What do you *mean* I don’t like guys or girls?”

“Oh. Alphys and Undyne told me when we first accidentally got married,” Frisk said.

“ . . . say whaaaa?” Sans stood up from the couch. “Nah, nah, I’m all about girls! Not that being a lone monster is bad or nuttin', but that's not me and, I'm always thinking about girls!” He looked toward Frisk. “I mean, not about you. Well, maybe. But nah, I’m not like that.” He pushed his hands toward Frisk. “Well? I’m not like that either. You know? I’m not always thinking about you sexually. If I do. It’s all infusion confusion!”

“Oh?” Oh no! “Oh, I’m sorry! They just told me so many times that I needed to be careful. I didn’t want you to ignore me like you did Toriel,” Frisk confessed. “I’m sorry, Sans.”

“Toriel was the one who told them?” Sans asked. “How long ago?”

“I don’t know?” Frisk shrugged. “I think many years ago.”

“You *were* always ignoring her,” Papyrus said to Sans as he came back in, interrupting them. “She had to make her own assumption at some point.”

“That I didn’t like anybody?” Sans whined to Papyrus. “I mean, there’s nothing wrong with that or nothing, but, I ain’t like that. And she thought . . . that?” Sans growled. “Oh dear, Sans is ignoring me,” Sans mocked her voice, “and it couldn’t possibly be the fact he wants to stay friends. He must have no sexual desire to be with anyone throughout eternity.” He moaned. “My gaw!” That wasn’t fair. There were a lot more monsters in the Underground now too. No wonder he still felt so isolated! How many of them thought that? “Yeah, well, I’m married now so screw them all.” He picked up his phone. “Don’t like guys or girls? Show you who doesn’t like girls.”

“I’m sorry,” Frisk apologized. “There was nothing wrong with it. Alphys was that way for a long time she said.” Sans ignored her apology.

“Sans, what are you doing?” Papyrus asked.

“Sending Alphys and Undyne attachments of some of my porn collection.”

“Sans?! Your wife is right there!”

“Yeah.” Sans looked toward Frisk. “Umm? If you’re neural, like my best friend, you can laugh your ass off about it later. If you’re my true love, sorry. If you’re my Luster, then we’ll cover much more on this topic later.”

“Sans?!”

“Well I gotta go with something, she’s one of the three, or a combination!” Sans said. He chuckled as his phone made a beep. “Yep, Undyne gets it now.” He texted back on it.

“Oh, Sans.” Papyrus looked toward Frisk. “Would you like some cake, Sister? I made it for you.” He reached his hand out and took her to the next room. “Don’t mind Sans. He doesn’t know who you are yet.” He took the knife for cutting the cake. “Not only that, but he got rid of the 1% of Asriel I told him not to. That’s going to make him a little more erratic.”

“But you really do?” Frisk asked as she started to cut the cake. “You think I’m your sister?”

“Yes, and I would have been there straight away to hunt for you too once discovered again,” Papyrus said, “but Sans is just as protective of me, and he will move *fast* to keep me from doing things like that.”

“Oh.” Frisk nodded. “Sorry? I’m getting used to all of it.” Oh no. She felt them coming again.

“Share it,” Papyrus said. “It’s okay. You’ve been infused. You must feel something too.”

“When my momma, my dad, and my sister were killed, I rebuilt,” Frisk said. “Even though she was my cousin Maxie, she was closer to my sister. In every way. And my Aunt, she was like my second mother. I knew them as my family. I was as close to them, if not even closer, then I ever was with my original family. And. I.”

She felt strange, warm arms wrap around her.

“Ah. I knew it affected humans too.” Papyrus’ soft voice was heard above her. “It’s alright, Sister. Don’t be afraid of the connection you feel. Hold me as tight as you want. I’m not a cuddle bunny, but my body was made to withstand anything.”

Frisk held him tightly. She hadn’t broken down on any monster so far about her feelings. Yet, it felt so genuinely right. Papyrus was a sweet and understanding monster. His presence was always comforting.

“There we go. Much better.” He hummed a gentle song in a different language to her while she was in his arms. He even gently rocked her.

That feeling. *That* particular feeling. She hadn’t felt that since she was eight years old. She felt his hand caress the back of her hair lovingly. *This isn’t what a brother does.*

“Oh. Well. This is a different feeling.” Papyrus tightened his grip on her slightly and continued to rock her. “No matter what happens, you won’t lose any more of us. You are sheltered down here. Even though you are cold, other humans couldn’t survive it in here. Even if they come for you, Frisk. I will do everything in my power to make sure no one ever hurts you again.”

Sans appeared in the doorway. “I made Alphys curl up in a ball with that one!”

Papyrus groaned. “Leave it to Sans to interrupt a nice moment.” He looked down at Frisk. “Feeling better now?”

“Yeah.” Frisk nodded. She looked toward the cake. *Welcome Home, Sister.* It really would be different this time. Although the chill was getting to her again, but she felt a little warmth

start to envelope her.

“Just a little power, Frisk,” Sans said as he took the knife from her. He held it up in the air with his magic. “Don’t get used to it, you can’t have much energy for too long. Just enough to warm up a little while you’re getting cake.” Frisk watched him swing the knife three ways on the small cake. He picked up a small plate, and a slice of the third cake, and handed it to Papyrus. “Yours.”

Papyrus got the piece that said ‘Sister’. Only, he took the knife and smeared the word. “Not quite. Close though,” Papyrus said to Sans.

Sans shrugged. “The mystery of Frisk continues.” He scooped up the piece that said ‘Welcome’. “And this one’s all yours, Frisk.”

Frisk smiled. She got the piece that said ‘Home’.

Home.

As they played a quiet game of scrabble through the night, Frisk was starting to get huge chills. Real chills. *What’s the temperature outside for real?* She didn’t want to complain. “S-s-sans? W-what’s the t-temperature?”

“Mildly cold. Maybe 18 below 0?” Sans glanced at her. “I already gave about as much power as I could for a bit without messing up evolution.” He tossed his new word down. “Game over.”

“Duh?” Papyrus complained. “That’s short, and not even a word.”

“I just said game over, not that I won,” Sans said. “Come on, Frisk. Time for bed.”

Move? She had to move? She was trembling in her heavy cloak and she had to move? *Maybe the bed will be warmer?* Added with her cloak at least.

“Use that determination,” Sans teased her as he helped her up. “Little jaunt upstairs, come on.”

Frisk followed dutifully. “Are you going to tell me yet?”

“What?” Sans asked.

“What Papyrus suggested?” She watched Sans stop in front of her just a moment, and then continued.

“Room, Frisk. We’ll talk in our room.” Sans grabbed his key and unlocked his door.

Frisk walked in. Different bed. Different covers.

“You got pajamas now, excellent, right?” Sans moved toward his closet and opened it up. “That half is yours. You can get more later. I just got you started.”

Whoah. She had some dresses, a lot more shirts, a lot more pants, and even more than a simple pair of shoes at the bottom. Stripes. Polka dots. Much more her thing.

“Got undergarments too.” Sans moved toward the drawer. “Covered everything by the book.”

Frisk went over. Socks. Panties. Bras. And lingerie?

“By the book. Lingerie’s for another night,” Sans said. “I gotta cover the three bases you *could* be.” He moved away from the dresser. “Don’t have to wear those yet though.”

Yet? Did he say yet? Frisk took a pair of panties and a bra. “I don’t want to sound wrong, Sans, but?” All of that costs money. He bought her an entire wardrobe when before he could barely afford the minimum. “How did you afford all this?”

“Settlement,” Sans said. “That’s all you really need to know.”

“A settlement?” Frisk looked back toward him. “Is that what happened before 3:00 with that human?”

“You could say that, yeah,” Sans said. “Let’s just say . . . royalty did kinda wrong to us. So I got permission for an evolution marriage, and a decent settlement to make sure you’re healthy and safe. Especially right now. Okay?”

“Yeah, okay.” She grabbed the things but still huddled up in her cloak. She really didn’t want to get undressed. “Can I just have this tonight?”

“Heh heh. No,” Sans chuckled. “You can use it to get dressed in though. That’d be a fun challenge to see.”

“Uh. Uh.”

“Awww,” Sans teased her as he left the room. “Five minutes. Leave the cloak off and jump in bed.”

Oh gaw. “I’m freezing.”

“You won’t be for long. I’ll warm up the bed when I get back.”

As Sans closed the door, he caught Papyrus waiting by his room. “Going to bed too?”

“Worried. Confused.” Papyrus shrugged. “I was so *sure* it was sister.”

Sans bounced on his feet. “If it’s mom, I’ve gotta be there when you tell her. That’ll freak the human right out,” he chuckled. He noticed Papyrus didn’t shift even one bone at the joke.

“Holy shit, Frisk *isn’t* your mom, is she?”

Papyrus shook his head. “No.”

“Oh, good, ‘cause I was just joking,” Sans said.

“But I believe the energy resonating between us . . .” Papyrus wasn’t as forthcoming.

“What?!” Sans felt something stir in him. “I mean, um. Uh? You already said a long time ago there was nothing romantic there. Long time ago. Long, long time ago. You know? ‘Cause Frisk is my wife now?” he pointed out. “Mine? Not?”

“No, no, Sans. Nothing like that,” Papyrus assured him. “That thought is purely disgusting, I’ve made that clear. That’s why I thought-Brother?”

“You don’t know the way you stooge!”

“You’re the stooge!”

“You’re the stooge!”

Frisk tried to free herself, but she couldn’t teleport. One minute, she’d been getting dressed in some polka dotted pajamas and about to get in the covers, and the next, she was abducted by two people who came into her room and teleported away!

“Well, we gotta find the way out. The Underground only had one way out, and we gotta get out before it happens.”

“Before what happens?!” Frisk demanded, trying to kick herself free. Then, she felt more power rise in her. She looked at her ring. It was glowing bright. *Sans?*

“Don’t even try it, we know what you are trying to do. It’d be by the castle. That’s what John said. Keep going.”

Frisk closed her eyes. They were teleporting all over the place. *They don’t know the Underground, if I can break free, I’ll be fine!* How to break free? But, they found it. They visualized it just right.

She was at the entrance of the Underground. “No, I refuse to go!” She continued to kick and scream. “Let me go!”

Frisk found herself aboard another ship. She looked out the windows and saw the Underground but then. “No. No, no, nooooo!” She screamed.

The entrance was sealed by a barrier. Who? How? Now?!

“Are you going to be noisy all day?”

Frisk watched as her soul started to show. “No, only monsters can do that. Only monsters!”

“I’ve been known to be called that,” the man in front of her said as he reached his arm out toward her soul.

To Sans and Papyrus, trying to keep up with the teleporting . . .

“It’s exhausting, I can’t keep up,” Papyrus said to Sans. “It’s like teleporting a hundred times!”

“Can’t give up. Frisk is being taken.” By someone who could teleport of all things.

Then, they heard screaming. Terrible screaming. Realizing they weren’t far from the entrance, they ran towards the screaming.

“The barrier is back up?!”

No. No. Not again! Sans and Papyrus both ran to the barrier, finding a good deal of the Underground already there, banging on it as well. It was not black or white, but see-through, and wavy like water. Outside of it, the humans kept their weapons down but also looked perplexed.

“We’ve been good!” Someone screamed.

“Never hurt anyone!” Another one yelled.

“Not again, not again, not again!” So many voices. So many shouts of protest.

Someone nabbed Frisk and put up a barrier. “Uh.” Sans stared. “My wife.” He felt his brother try to hug him. “No. Can’t.” He noticed his ring still glowing. “What are they *doing* to her?”

To the ship Frisk was on . . .

“Let go, let me go, I refuse to just let you take my soul!” Frisk yelled as she kept trying to fight the power off. “Never, never, never, I refuse!” She was surrounded by different people who somehow had the ability to get to her soul like a monster.

“This is really the one who did it?” One of them asked. “This whiner?”

“The owner may be a whiner, but it doesn’t change the soul. Don’t forget the other one.”

Frisk yelled as she felt something attack her like a whip. It felt like Flowey did the other time. Then, she felt it again, and again. Her vision went bleary, she couldn't make anyone out through the pain they were putting her through.

"Frisk, not you too?!"

Not you too? Frisk looked to the side of her. Through her poor vision, she recognized that orange. No one wore orange like her.

Gloria was in the same position, her soul exposed as well. Asriel was back to his flower self, doing everything he could to save his wife from the brutality of her soul being- aaaAAaAh! Attacked!

It hurt like the other attacks, but Frisk tried not to squeal as she saw Flowey lending his support for her too. He must have still had good in him, even if he couldn't keep his form anymore.

"Where the hell is your husband?!" Flowey yelled at her. "I can't protect both of you!"

"Who's the flower?" One of the people above asked.

"The Prince. Didn't you even study the Underground before you came?" another one answered.

Frisk felt her body go limp as she felt another whip against her soul. What were they doing? What were they trying to do?

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" Flowey yelled at Frisk. "I can't save you both, even in this form!"

He had to save his wife. When Flowey's physical thorns left her soul, it was like an electric shock. Her body fell to the ground. She tried to crawl. *I'm still me. No matter what!* Another lash on her soul. *I'm still me! I don't care who invades my soul with their evil power, I'm!* Another lash. *Still!* Another lash. *Me!*

"Nah, it's the one crawling, that's definitely the one," one of them said. "Fucking hell. Literally, and she's still moving. She's gonna be a good one. Let the other one go, we don't really need-"

Frisk wasn't surprised that she heard parts getting torn and scraped apart. She would bet it was with Flowey's thorns. He didn't have seven souls, but he was still powerful, and protecting his wife, making him that much more powerful. He would take out every monster there that hurt her until it was done, or he was dead.

"Holy hell, that thing is strong! He killed all three of her husbands!"

Good. At least Gloria would get out.

"Asriel!" Gloria moved toward his form, once her soul was better again.

"I'm sorry. I can't be your prince anymore."

Frisk tried to lift a finger. *It can't end this way. I need help. Please.*

"I don't need a prince," Gloria insisted as she hugged his stem. "What girl doesn't love flowers?"

Frisk laughed. Even with all the pain on her soul, she couldn't help herself. "Flowey, get her out of here!" *Somebody. Help.*

"It laughed." Frisk watched as Flowey wrapped his gentlest vines around her and teleported out while one of the men approached her. "All of this on her, and she laughed. She even spoke. Damn, she's a strong one." She felt herself being lifted up. "Looks normal. Looks like any ordinary pathetic girl, but what a soul. Imagine the strength of the monster she could bear."

"Monster?" Frisk tried to look at them. "You're . . ." It couldn't be. They looked human.

"Did you really think all the monsters left somehow found peace in the mountain with each other?" one of them asked. "Hell no." Frisk felt herself getting strangled as he lifted her up. "So easy to kill, but a soul so strong." He loosed his grip on her neck.

Frisk tried to adjust her vision. Still, human. "You look human."

"Nine brutal districts left in 311. Seven of those not accepting treaties or their means. Don't you know why?" He dropped her back toward the ground.

Ow! Frisk tried to keep moving away. *Run. Run. Run. Run. Run. Run.*

"Clearly when the districts were drawn out, they had to keep us back from their peaceful areas. Keep us from taking souls or getting rough," he answered. "So? We didn't get a barrier. The worst monsters who created the largest offenses, were sealed. Not within a place. Within these hideous human forms."

Kept in human form?

"Fortunately," he mentioned as Frisk felt herself getting dragged back. "Us and that barrier were also linked. For fourteen years, we've been trying to get ourselves more . . . reputation," he stated. "Without revealing that fact. Then up you pop, and well, who could resist this one? A human soul that bonds strongly to monster. Most would be dead after just two husbands. Most monster women can't even handle five, but look at you? Eight darling men to take care of you."

Run wasn't working. It wouldn't work. *Somebody. Help. Somebody help. Help me! Please, anybody!*

Somebody finally came.

Fighting to the End

Red. Purple. Orange. Yellow. Green. Sans looked at all the colors in Frisk's hair. Her skin was different shades, glowing from one to the other. So overloaded with power, power shoved into her, against her will. Even blue was in it, but it wasn't *his* blue power. His 1% was gone like the wind. They had enough power jammed into her to completely erase his. The only faint detection there was ever his power with her, was the magic forever sealed in her marrow. Even the tips of her hair were now missing its natural blue.

Sans noticed all the humans standing around, but he could sense clearly, they weren't people. They were monsters, and not from the Underground.

He didn't care about who they were, how they got there, or if they were responsible for the barrier or not! All he knew is that each and every one of them that hurt her, and that tore him away from him, was about to die. They just weren't aware of it yet.

"Death. Sentence. Written." Undyne was beside him with her spear. With Sans ring still connected to Frisk, they had managed to teleport *out* of the barrier. "They stole your wife and took what was left of yours inside of her."

Sans just stared at her. Bone marrow wasn't enough to be married. He had already reduced her down to 1% for evolution. No one toppled marriage. It took a lot of force, and a lot of monsters to do that. But by letting her have only 1% he just guaranteed it.

Technically, by modern day standards and contracts, he was married, and her only husband. But by monster tradition? By the *classic* ways of an acceptable marriage? Letting Asriel keep his energy was one thing, it was all about the wife's energy, and what was inside of her.

And. Breaking that. From him. Stealing that from her, and flooding her with their own powers?

"Who's the little guy and the fish?" The one in charge said. He sent a ball of energy Sans' way. Sans not only dodged it, but used the opportunity to pick up Frisk.

"Nimble little thing, aren't you?"

Frisk finally felt something in her that wasn't pain. She tried to concentrate on it, like it was hope. Faith. Like it could save her. *Just hold onto it. Whatever that is, hold onto it.* She tried to bend her fingers to cling onto her hope, but her body was swayed away so fast. Yet, her hope was still there. All she could hear was static and screaming in her ears from her soul, but she knew with hope, if she could just concentrate, she could make it through it.

Then, she heard different screams. Screams that didn't sound human, and the feeling of the warm hope increased into something she recognized. *Sans*. Impossible. They raised the barrier, it couldn't be. But, she knew that feeling. That warm, safe feeling. She could now

feel her sense of touch coming back. Bone, she felt Sans' strong bone. "I'm still me," she breathed as she felt his bone. Her fingers could curl now. "I'm still me. I'm still me."

"Here comes another barrage, Sans, hold onto the Punk tighter!"

Sans dodged another attack. He calculated the degrees he would need to set up his ultimate weapons again, but first he sent out a fleet of spinning bones back out, and dodged a right attack while Undyne sent out her own strong spear attack, hitting several monsters, several times at once. If they had been real human bodies, that battle would have been over.

He couldn't just teleport away with Undyne. They held power in Frisk's soul, and it was too strong for him to vanquish. He had to vanquish the sources to free her. All eight of her new husbands.

With Undyne's assist, he would do just that, or die trying. *Over, over, over, over, over, there!* He sent a tunnel of bones swirling through them all, Undyne combined her spear attack, hitting the targets several times over, and then Sans set out five of his ultimate weapons.

Gaster may have been creepy, but he was one of the most brilliant scientists who ever lived, and Sans' weapons, the Gaster Blasters, would eradicate those five.

Shocked and disturbed, the other three monsters he could feel pulsating in hers tried to teleport off, but he wasn't allowing it. He didn't have any extra food. He couldn't get any rest if he needed it, but he had to take the risk to keep the battle going so they couldn't disappear.

Undyne was risking it too. To leave a fellow monster in the hands of multiple husbandry was considered worse than leaving a weak soldier to fend for themselves. She would never do it. "Any food left, Sans?"

"No," he said.

"There is a chance for victory, but a chance we may die too. No provisions. We are both weak, and Frisk may no longer be your wife by true standards. You only left her one percent I'm sure and their power is strong."

"I accept." Sans dodged out of the way with Frisk again. "I accept the chance of it all."

"I do too!" Undyne sent out another barrage of spears, while barely missing another attack of theirs. "Unfair hideous creatures! You don't know real bravery or respect it when you see it! You will pay with everything we've got before we give up to you!"

Long, courageous speeches was Undyne's thing, especially when at the end of her endurance. They took care of five, and had put a dent in the magic body of the other three, but victory was still pretty slim.

"Fuck it all, here!" One of Frisk's husbands started to take his power back, but slowing down to do that wasn't smart. Undyne nor Sans granted it mercy, it just made him an easier target. After a barrage of bones mixed with spears, that one was done for.

Two left. Of course, the strongest ones. Undyne was dripping wet with sweat, breathing hard, but holding her ground. Sans' skull was wet, he wasn't much better off, feeling like he was going to go to sleep any second.

But, the feel of Frisk in his arms, the ring on her finger that still glowed with his, and her hair. Her hair was many shades, but at her very tips, the blue was starting to return. His natural infusion with her was still fighting, even through it all. *Gotta. Stay. For her.*

"Victory is . . . never assured," Undyne gasped as she clung to her spear. "Gotta. Keep."

Sans watched her faint. Her power was so weak, she was almost dead. He wasn't far off. He couldn't even hold his rattling bones still, trying to mask it by waving from side to side. *For Frisk. Not like this. Not with these two!*

"I'm still me," he heard being breathed from her. "I'm still me. I'm still me."

"Right," Sans whispered back, "I know ya are, Pal, I know you are."

"Sans?"

"Right here. Ol' Buddy Sans been right here." He felt her fleshy fingers touch his bony ones. All he wanted to do was concentrate on that, but he had to dodge another attack. "Gettin' real tired though, Frisk. Don't know how long I can keep this up."

"Sans. What was that word . . . Jattehoon?" Frisk asked. "Don't give up. Can't give up. Never give up. I am still. Your weapon, Sans."

Heh. "Last time I looked, I couldn't throw ya, Frisk," Sans said.

"You took Asriel's power. I know you can take some of my determination," Frisk insisted. "Eat it like a classic deluxe Grillby burger."

Could he do that? "I don't think that's possible."

"Anything's possible," Frisk said. "Come on, hot stuff, win this and I'll get ya a kiss."

Whoah. Whuh? "You delirious?" If she was delirious, she could be ACTing with flirt. Or was he getting delirious and imagined that last part. Well, even though he was at the end of everything, that single thought almost seemed to slightly charge him. *Kay. Little extra power.* Probably die, but imagine. Not residue cleaning. Not Frisk just lying there motionless, but actually kissing him back.

If he did win, he had no idea what he'd do next. Everyone was stuck behind a different barrier he knew nothing about. Frisk was still in great amounts of danger, from the contract, and apparently from other monsters who had survived out of the mountain that wanted her strong soul.

"I got a card," he said, "I got a wife that's willing to kiss my actual bony butt." He propped himself up higher. "I have no idea what to do from there, but it's a good enough start." One go. One more go. He dodged another attack, but was putting his all into two more Gaster

Blasters. His enemies were down by at least a half-life each, maybe more. If the Gaster Blaster didn't take care of both of them, if he could at least take down one, then instinct should be strong enough that they'd treat Frisk better at least.

Going for two. Going for broke. He took a little energy to tap Undyne. "You got any energy left? One more spear round, Undyne, I think I can win this."

Undyne started to move slightly. Good enough for Sans, and the enemy. Sans moved Undyne with a little more of his energy. Not something he wanted to waste, but the movement stirred Undyne back to consciousness. "Not dead . . . yet . . ."

"One more spear round. We can win," Sans said again. "One more go for victory."

Undyne nodded toward Sans and held her spear tight. "One. More. Go. For victory!"

She sent out a massive barrage of spears, pouring her all into it. One of them actually cried out in pain as he was conquered from the bludgeoning. Sans recalculated his next move, holding his Gaster Blasters in different spots, but the same position for the dose of the same attack twice.

"How in the . . ." the human like creature held his side as he started to bleed out of it. He stumbled a couple feet to the side before he crumbled away like dust, leaving only his clothes behind like all the others.

"Vic. To. Ry!" Undyne yelled. "Vic. To!" She passed out.

And Sans was about to do the same. He slouched to the floor, the battle now over. "Kay. Saved ya." He looked toward Frisk. "Come on, promise is a promise?" he teased her. He felt her fingers moving, but her body was weak.

"She *needs* power," Undyne said, stirring slightly. She hadn't completely passed out after all, just so weak she couldn't constantly be awake anymore.

"I can't," Sans insisted, "Evolution says that--"

"Can it. I won't tell," Undyne assured him. "Just do your thing. Her life depends on it, Sans."

I'm still me. I'm still me. I'm still me. Frisk felt energy coming back to her. It was light, trying to reach her. Hope. The energy was radiating, but it seemed locked. Familiar, but locked. It was so familiar, but so locked away. How did she know it? *Get it. Get it.* She could feel such power from it. If she could just.

Whoah. Okay, there it was! There was her energy. Not just her energy, but her body was tingling, bristling with the accepted action. She hungrily took more, converting it into the food her soul needed instead . . .

“Hey. Romeo,” Undyne said as she tried to lift a finger. “Now what?”

Sans held Frisk and transported them back to the hole of the Underground. Actually going through the barrier. He saw the usual plethora of people aiming at him and Undyne from the other side.

“Sans!” Papyrus called as he reached him. “Brother, are you okay?”

“Rest.” Sans looked down at Frisk. Somehow, him and Undyne had been able to escape the barrier with his ring, and even go back inside. It must have somehow connected to more than their power connection, but a soul connection too.

“We’ll get this down,” Undyne said to King Asgore, but she was still so weak. Her and Sans.

“I gotta . . .” Sans could barely keep his eyes open. He only had enough for one more round. “I’ll see you, Pap, after a nap.”

He zapped him and Frisk back home, to their bed. Her pajamas were torn to shreds. If she knew their real condition, she’d be upset with how close he’d been, but that didn’t matter. With the very last of his strength, just basic radiating, he warmed the bed so Frisk wouldn’t freeze. His eyes started to close. “Moonkose. Never . . . any . . .” Different.

Frisk was the first to stir in her bed. She yawned and rubbed her eyes. She looked beside her and saw Sans. His poor skull was just covered in sweat. His tuxedo from that night was torn to shreds.

Frisk looked at her clothes. Her polka dotted pajamas didn’t look any better, sliced in several directions. *Barrier. Underground.* They were back Underground.

And that fact was coming back ten-fold, knowing the barrier went up. How and why?

Her soul had hurt so immensely. Her body still hurt from all their mishandling of her. But, she didn’t feel anything unwanted inside her. As she looked at her hair, she saw nothing new. Brown with thin light tips of blue. The tips looked shorter than usual, but were still blue.

Frisk didn’t want to wake Sans up. It was clear he was battling for his very life to save her. Somehow, he managed to come. *Flowey. Gloria.* They had to be somewhere out there too.

Food. She could use a recharge. She didn’t have any. She felt around Sans, but he had nothing either. *Sleep then.*

If someone grabbed her again, she was toast. Her heros were zapped, but staying awake weakened wouldn’t do any good. She closed her eyes, but noticed Sans’ bony hand. *Sans.* Cracking? He was really on the verge. She rubbed her hand against his, and watched as their strange rings glowed again.

The ring? Is that really how he managed to get through the barrier? “Well, ‘Jattehoon’,” she said, trying the funny new word on her lips again. “I am a high maintenance wife, huh?”

Opposite of what you needed.” She sighed and continued to rub the crack in his hand. Would he have that forever now because of her? She pulled her head closer to his sweating skull. Her funny skeleton pal, being so crazy strong. She still couldn’t get over that. How fast he had taken out Garland and all his guards.

Then, she remembered the energy in her mouth. That. Energy. Why did Sans’ energy always feel so . . . good? He had no flesh. No hair. Odd, funny little eye sockets with lights that darted around. A mouth that never opened, yet mysteriously always managed to eat. *Among other things*. No, no, now was not the time to start any blushing. Although . . .

///“Yeah.” Sans looked toward Frisk. “Umm? If you’re my best friend, you can laugh your ass off about it later. If you’re my true love, sorry. If you’re my Luster, then we’ll cover much more on this topic later.”///

She could feel her cheeks starting to heat up. *What’s wrong with you?! This is Sans for crying out loud, Frisk, that was just joking! Weird joking! His specialty! Well?* She was married to him. *No, no, it doesn’t mean I’m just going to start feeling this way. That way, that way!* She tried to correct herself. *I am not. No way, not sweet lovable punnable way too puzzling secret keeper Sans!* Wouldn’t happen. Couldn’t happen. Never happen. I mean, he was the only guy she didn’t care if she farted or burped around. She never had to worry about her appearance or if she smeared her lipstick. If she fell down too many times. Her manners while she ate. Sans didn’t care about things like that.

And in history, only monsters and humans that were highly similar even had a chance of attraction to each other. *Except, that Gloria still doesn’t care Asriel is Flowey*. He did start off as a dashing Prince goat to her. Still, goat. Kind of similar. Just as tall. Didn’t have goat hooves, regular feet. Furry with horns, that was the biggest changes. But, Sans? Bones. All bones.

Energy. Incredible energy, but still? I mean. *Is there even a way for a human to . . . what the hell am I thinking?! Gaw, her thoughts were going everywhere! Just smitten ‘cause he saved you. Although he’s done that before more than once. No, no, I’m just confused because he saved me and now only we’re married and, oh my gaw, Frisk! He’s freeing you in around a year, knock it off!*

Human hormones. One of the few things that was hard to understand or defeat.

Even worse when they left your cheeks pink as hell when the funny guy you were fantasizing about was now looking straight at you.

“Hey.”

“Uh, hey?” *Stop blushing. Stop blushing. Stop blushing.* “You saved me again? Yip?”

“Yep,” Sans answered. “Drained though.”

“I can hear it,” Frisk said. “Your voice is husky- I mean ragged!” She corrected herself. Too tired to notice that mix-up. She wanted to back away too now, she was like right next to him. “Do you like get frequent flyer miles whenever you save me or something?” she asked.

“Nope. Just, responsibility of a husband to his wife,” he said. “I am. You can’t lose it. I *never* lost you, they can’t beat me. Don’t care what they do.” His cracked hand touched her finger. “Forever in your bloodstream.”

Forever in my bloodstream. Hearing him, and seeing he was fine, her own body was taking a backseat to everything now, letting her need for rest overtake her. *Forever in my bloodstream* . . .

By the Barrier . . .

“There we go,” Frank Clipper said as he shined a basic class 3 barrier breaker over the hole of the Underground. Poor monsters were beside themselves with absolute worry. Even fourteen years later, a little barrier could cause such strife. After it came down everyone occupied the twenty five feet of property they now had extra, and stared out at the sky, breathing the air. Some even stood on each other’s head, to feel the freedom

Frank had started working with the monsters while he was still fresh, learning all of his skills in his twenties. They sent him in because they wanted someone who knew what they were doing, but they didn’t send in their best experienced men since they didn’t know what the monsters would do back then. Now, fourteen years later, he was 37, and still trying to find that line between professional helper, in between messenger, and employed worker.

Breaking barriers wasn’t even in his job description but when Initiative heard what happened, (not long with the plethora of men always watching the hole) they of course placed the class 3 barrier breaker responsibility with him.

“Oh, thank goodness. Oh, thank goodness.” Queen Toriel was still repeating her thanks to him. “Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

He just represented Sans and took money and respect from the royalty, and he was being thanked? Monsters. He’d never understand them. “No problem. That was a very weak barrier. It would have evaporated in a day or two but Initiative thought you’d be beside yourself with worry, so it’s taken care of.”

“Thank you so much!” Frank felt the queen hugging him. Monster hugging. Someone help him. “Have you seen my son and daughter?”

“No,” Frank said, trying to remain completely still. “Just here to take care of the barrier. Now, it’s none of my business,” he said slowly. It really wasn’t. He shouldn’t be asking. “Has Kudara contacted you yet?”

“I’m afraid we don’t know this Kudara,” King Asgore said. “Nothing except what Cromwell told of us.”

“Okay. Just making sure,” he said. “His information is classified, but he doesn’t have the best . . . past. Domains who have the OJS have much more higher technology boosts. A barrier of such degradation, it seems like one of the nine domains that don’t use the OJS are the culprit. If so, here.” He held a barrier fortifier. “This is a 490 barrier fortifier. If you feel scared or unarmed, make sure your residents are all inside the Underground before using this.” He handed it to King Asgore. “The reverse trigger will nullify it. It will put a barrier up for three days that is of class 2 strength. Plenty high enough to keep domains like Kудera out of the Underground.” He picked up his phone. “Phones still work through a class 2 barrier as well as wifi, radio, and satellite signals. So just pick up the phone and warn us if you suspect something wrong. And, um, when you get more information about what happened, just let me know.”

So far, no one knew much except that their fighter Undyne, the sentry Sans, and his human wife Frisk Shades had made it back through the barrier and were exhausted and sleeping. With Undyne’s skill level, Frank knew that it had been a serious battle.

And he feared what that meant. “Day or night, just call if anything happens again. I’ll get permission for another barrier breaker. There is never a need to feel like . . .” Like they were ever trapped in the mountain again. “All barriers are temporary except the blue ice barrier class 6. Unless a barrier looks like its frozen solid blue ice, they will all eventually evaporate. Most in days. Even the second strongest can’t last more than six months.” It actually took a different way to break that barrier too, but only Civilization and Peacemaker had access to it. “Goodnight. Let me know how it goes. Oh and.” Ten O’ Clock at night, but since he was there, and they were all so rattled anyhow, he would go ahead and present it to them. “The peace talks and information that Frisk Shades and Prince Asriel provided has awarded you an extra thirty feet. The space is being worked on tomorrow,” he said.

He felt his hand getting anxiously shook all around. Okay. Not his doing, and nothing compared to what they would gain soon if talks with Civilian and Peacemaker continued the way they were. “Yes. Congratulations. I need to get going.” He took his hand back and headed back down. The monsters had mostly been watched and a little ‘hosted’ in the last fourteen years, but it looked like the Underground Kingdom was finally making some real progress.

But if. If his worries were true? *Which side would the Underground fight on?*

Papyrus' Role

11:30 . . .

“Sans,” Papyrus whispered to him. He saw how wiped out his brother was, but everything happened so fast. They never even had a chance to tell Frisk what would be happening in Evolution. It was Sans’ responsibility as her husband to tell her. “Sans?” Yet, his brother was out like a light. Whatever fight he endured, it had taken a lot of strength.

Finally, Sans started to stir.

“Sans, you still need to explain evolution to . . .” Papyrus watched as Sans started to drift off to sleep. He tried to shake him awake again. “You only have until midnight of your first day of evolution to explain. If you don’t, she’s not going to understand what’s going on and you can’t . . .” He tried to wake him again, but it just was no use.

Papyrus moved over to the other side and tried to wake up Frisk. “Um. Frisk?” He knew she wasn’t sister anymore, that wasn’t where she fit. For now, so as not to startle her, he’d just call her by her name. “Frisk?” Frisk wasn’t moving either. “For goodness sake.” He picked up Frisk and took her away from the bed. He would have to get her some cocoa to wake her up and explain as best he could.

Frisk blinked awake as she smelled cocoa underneath her nose. *Soul food*. She started to drink it right away.

“Easy, easy. Goodness, look at your clothes. They are all shredded to bits.” Papyrus tiskd. “Horrible. I wish you two could tell someone what happened.”

Soul food. Frisk tried to concentrate on Papyrus. She saw his rounded teeth, but she was swaying back and forth. “Papyrus?”

“Ah, good. Some functionality now, good.” Papyrus gave her more cocoa. “We are almost out of time, Frisk, and I must explain to you how evolution works. Now.” Her outfit. Torn to shreds. Her eyes. So weak, almost lifeless. Papyrus reached out for her and gave her a hug. “It will be okay. No worries.” He felt Frisk tighten her grip on him as he held her cocoa.

“It was horrible. The feeling,” Frisk said breathlessly. “Like I was being ripped apart. I couldn’t feel the difference between the hurt in my body, or the hurt on my soul.”

“There, there, it’s all right now,” Papyrus insisted. “It’s all gone.”

“It’s never gone. Someone’s always after me,” Frisk said looking toward him. Somehow, she had ended up being rocked back and forth in his lap like a child. “Why is it always me?”

“I don’t know. Special people will have good and bad things happen because they are special I suppose,” Papyrus said. He gave her back her cocoa. “I wish I had a blanket for you, you must be freezing. Hardly anything’s covered, it’s all in strips.”

Frisk didn’t care. She just leaned in deeper into his embrace.

“No one should be after you. You’re right, it isn’t fair.” Papyrus stroked her hair. “It will all end one day though. Like a bad storm that finally passed outside.” Then, Papyrus remembered what he was supposed to be doing. “I need to talk to you about evolution. Sans is going to take it as easy as he can, following the rules the way they must be followed, but making sure he does follow them. If not, he could lose evolution. That would not be good.”

“Uh . . . huh.” Frisk’s understanding was slow. “Okay.”

“Well, good. Sans already changed a few little things on you since he didn’t want to overwhelm you,” Papyrus said. “However, you are going to change who you are each day with him. In other words, ACT. You are going to ACT each twenty four hours as a different kind of ‘person’, until you two come to a consensus of what and who you are together.”

“ . . . okay.” Frisk was good at ACTing.

“Sans believes that the Lover day will be the hardest for you, but the Luster will be an easier day. And of course, Neutral will be the easiest days of all,” Papyrus said. “However, I don’t think that’s true. I know that humans are more ‘loose’ but I don’t think you gave him the right impression with your um . . . Seven Minutes in Heaven shpiel.”

Oh. “Yeah, well, I didn’t want to make it awkward.”

“Oh. Well? Heh. Did you?” Papyrus asked. “Often? Are you that . . .”

Was she that what?

“Is . . . my goodness, why is this so hard to say to you?” Papyrus asked. “Jealousy? No. Hm. Anyway.” He shook his head. “The ending of your marriage announcement, Sans picked as Neutral, so that it wouldn’t be so bad. Just simple pajamas and sleep. Well, that’s what it was supposed to be. Tomorrow is Lover, and the next day is Luster, moving back around to friend again. It is all a very big ACT though.”

“ACT lover and luster?” Frisk’s throat still felt scratchy from all the screaming she had done.

“Yes. You will need to ACT too. Sans believes you have more trouble expressing affection than sexual *things*, so he will try to take over the ACT tomorrow. My goodness, why do I feel like punishing myself for talking about this?”

“Papyrus?” Frisk was trying to put it together. “We are doing an ACT of lover tomorrow, and then an ACT of Luster?” Kay. Um? “How do you ACT out luster?”

“Oh, it’s sickening. I mean.” Papyrus groaned. “Oh dear, I feared that.” He rubbed his skull which was now sweating. “Monsters can go from enemy to best friend in a day.”

“Yes.”

“We know how to switch things quickly.”

“Yes.”

“Sans is going to switch things quickly on you. As soon as the hour strikes midnight,” Papyrus said. “He’s going to be a little more slower on the lover side ACT though because he believes you are more of a Seven Minutes in Heaven loosey goosey human girl and I *don’t*.”

“ . . . what um?” Frisk was getting it now. “What exactly *are* we doing on Luster days?”

Papyrus seemed to humph “Nowhere near any penetration.”

“Sure as hell not penetration!”

Hm? Frisk saw Sans at her side, he teleported her back up to their room, and then he went back down. She knew he did.

He was yelling in monster downstairs.

“Mine, not yours, mine, not yours!” Sans shouted in monster toward Papyrus. He had been sound asleep, but as soon as he realized Frisk wasn’t beside him, he headed downstairs to find Papyrus with her, talking to her with her still ripped to pieces pajamas on, showing more than it covered, with Frisk in his lap, and Frisk asking *him* what they were doing on Luster days! “Frisk Shades is mine, you got it?! You do not get to have Luster days with her, that’s mine!”

“Easy, Sans!” Papyrus demanded. “And-and don’t be so demanding of *that*!”

“So demanding of it?” Sans took a step forward. “Not to want to share my woman? I’m not sharing her anymore!” She almost got ripped apart by the power of eight other monsters. He just got her back from Asriel. And now he had to worry about his own brother? “This can’t be happening. It was supposed to be *sister* for you.” He grabbed his skull. “I married her, Lover and Luster are mine!”

“I am not trying to take her away!” Papyrus shouted back. “I am trying to tell you that Lover will be easier than Luster because when you cleaned her mouth of residue, she was-“

“I don’t want to hear it!” Not that word, not that word. No. No.

“Damn it, Sans, you don’t get it!” Papyrus pointed to his watch. “You never explained anything to her, and look at the time?”

“It didn’t mean that *you* get to weasel your way into this.”

“You want friendship? You want a loving relationship? Or do you just want to touch the poor human?” Papyrus growled at him. “Frisk is not an object like that, get your instincts under

control. I told you not to get rid of that 1% from Asriel and this is why. The events of the night, it didn't help either."

"Really? Watching her getting eight other husbands?" Sans voice was so gravelly it could barely be understood. "Watching her get fucked by eight other monsters, taking away the little energy she had from me, and not knowing if I could even free her from them before I died? Sure, it was an 'event of the night'."

"Really?" Papyrus questioned. "Sans, I didn't know. Nobody knew, you just came home and laid down with her."

"But you can't ever do that, she's mine to lay down with!"

"Oh goodness, *that's* why you are going looney," Papyrus said. "You lost her, reclaimed her, and vanquished eight husbands in one night? You are definitely not yourself. I recommend asking royalty for a delay."

"Yeah, you would like that, wouldn't you?" Sans growled at him. "So you could up and take my wife away from me too!"

"Sans, I'm not trying to take her away!"

"There'll never be penetration by you, only me!"

"Not yet there won't, not even close to that, I would *not* allow it!" Papyrus shouted back. He tried to cover his mouth.

Sans pointed at him accusingly. "See? See?!"

"No, it's not that way," Papyrus said, trying to remain calm. "I know what I am to Frisk now, and it is nothing close to some affectionate lover."

Not a lover? A luster? "You can't be her Luster, you can't, you can't, she's my wife!"

"No, Sans." Papyrus had completely settled down himself. "A little girl, on a log, her mother and sister being hurt and only being able to hear the screams. Before she looked for death as an escape, there's only one *thing* she wanted. It was not a brother." He sighed. "I bonded to her as a father."

Sans stopped his tirade. That reveal about made him lose his balance, as well as his overreaction.

"I'm . . . papa Papyrus."

"Oh." Sans closed his eye lids, trying to think. "Of course. Sorry. I."

"It's okay. Pulling her from that many husbands, I understand," Papyrus said. "However? I do not want to talk about anything else concerning her in that . . . manner."

That's why Papyrus kept going a little nuts on him. "Yeah, no. Dads don't like to hear about that stuff with their daughters." Ooh. That was *weird*. His blood brother had bonded energy to Frisk as a father. His brother was his father-in-law. *Only in a monsters world*.

"Yes. So. Just don't." Papyrus was trying to say something as he looked at the time. "Don't touch my daughter."

Ooh. Sans closed his eye lids, trying to remain calm. Not good. Sister would have been fine, but father, while Sans was married and wanting more? *Fuuuuuck*. "Uh. Not gonna do anything I don't have ta, Pap. But. She *could* become more than a friend. That's what evolution is for. Remember?"

"Your instinct is simply high with all the infusion confusion that just happened," Papyrus said.

Goodness, you thought I was . . ." He shuddered. "No, you are neutral, so don't touch her. It'll just ruin everything. ACT, but don't do anything else."

This was Sans' chance to see if Frisk was more than just a friend. To get their infusion down low, but the ACTing high, to see if anything sparked between them. "Are you telling me not to touch my wife?"

"Yes. Clearly the whole marriage was a mistake," Papyrus pointed out. "You're neutral. Just friends. We'll find a contract, get it fixed, and everything will be fine. Monsters went for years just ACTing. It'll be fine."

"I'm in her bloodstream," Sans reminded him. "I am always going to be connected to her."

"Well. Then. Just. Protect her I suppose."

"Protect her?"

"Yes, I mean, when she leaves make sure no one else ever touches her," Papyrus demanded. "No one should. She's been hurt so many times in her life. She needs hugs and sympathy, not someone crawling all over her. Trying to do things. She should just be happy and laughing, never crying," he smiled. "Making jokes, kicking back. Good friends. That's all she needs is just good friends. Not, not others just running over her and hurting her, or anyone coming close to doing anything rude and crude."

"All that stuff that just happened *might* be affecting your energy too," Sans warned him. "Cause um. I mean. If there's something there with someone as great and fun as Frisk?" And he really did think there was. "Hells to the yes, Pap, I'm going for it."

"What?!" Papyrus looked shocked. "You *have* to let her go!"

"Uh. Later? Doesn't happen overnight," Sans pointed out. "Maybe. If there is? Maybe, she won't want to leave for good?"

"Oh no you don't, you aren't wiggling out of helping her, and taking advantage of her in the process!" Papyrus demanded. "First thing tomorrow, we are starting to look for historical

events that may have led to contracts that could help Frisk!”

Gaw. *Damn it.* “ACT of lover starts soon,” Sans said to his brother. “So, nothing can happen.”

“That’s good to hear,” Papyrus said confidently. “I knew as my brother you would respect my daughter.”

Huh? “Wait. I mean. I’m going to try and score a kiss, but it’s not a Luster night.”

“Try to what?” Papyrus scoffed. “Sans, no! No, no, no, what did we just go over?” He gestured to himself. “Your energy is neutral. My energy is what connected, not yours. Don’t do anything like that.”

“I’m not trying to get with her yet, I just want to try a-“

“No, absolutely not, Sans!”

“Asriel got to kiss her. He got to kiss her every day. I *want* to try a kiss.” Even if it was ACT, he still wanted to feel it.

“Frisk is not a sampling, kissing machine!” Papyrus yelled at him. “Absolutely not. ACT. ACT. ACT. You can get through evolution with complete ACTing, that’s the way it was made! All these instinctive emotions running through you are very high and confusing.”

“I’m not the only one with high emotions right now,” Sans muttered.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“I’m gonna eventually try to touch my wife. Everyone does,” Sans told him. “Hell, we even made a plan to try and get to-“

“Oh no, that plan?” Papyrus grabbed his skull. “No, no, no. All wrong, all wrong. We are being so selfish. We know she’ll be gone within a year or so once we find a workable contract, making anything like that was so wrong.”

Damn this. “I’m going to bed now. Did you explain how we’re supposed to ACT? It’s almost midnight.”

“Yes, yes,” Papyrus insisted. “She needs to change.”

“I know.”

“What she is wearing is way too revealing to be pressing up against next to in bed for only a Neutral and Lover night.”

“Couldn’t. Be. Helped.” Sans was tired, too tired. He almost died. He was still tired, but when Frisk was missing, he woke his ass up. Adrenaline only went so far though. “Life was at stake.”

“Yes. Yes, that’s true,” Papyrus said. “It was very dangerous. Until someone can explain correctly the King and Queen have put up their own barrier after the other was taken down.”

Barriers down, up, their own? “Uh. Just, we good and safe?”

“Yes.”

“Kay. That’s all I need to know.” With the thought of Papyrus trying to take Frisk away dying down, his whole body was getting ready to collapse again. Eight husbands. Eight. Losing her to eight, and then gaining her back. How many monsters did what he and Undyne had to do in one night?

He went back to bed, where Frisk had curled back up. *Eight husbands*. Vanquished in a single night. He didn’t know where those human monsters came from. How many more there were. If they were coming after Frisk again or not.

All he knew was that there was a barrier to keep others out, and Frisk was cold. Sans loved his brother, but he . . . wanted to try and see if there was something with Frisk too. He warmed up the covers, and brought her over closer to him again. He felt her funny breath tickling his neck bone.

Brotherly blood love. *Strongest thing in the world. I gotta be loyal. Even if I am married to her, I can ACT until I can pull her out of this thing.*

“Jattehoon?” Frisk woke up briefly, her eyes fluttering awake. “Are you okay?”

If Sans had a heart it would be beating off the scale right now. He forgot for a second he taught her that word. “F-fine.”

“Are you sure?” she asked. She was still so tired. “It didn’t sound good with Papyrus. I didn’t do something, did I?”

Papyrus’ fatherly energy bonding devotion. *Can’t, I can’t. It’s.* “Nothing.” He touched her jaw. *Perfect excuse. No, I can’t. No, that bond can’t be stronger than mine with him! I’ve known Papyrus all our life, he’ll deal, he can.* “Get, rest, Frisk.”

“Okay. But, tomorrow I ACT as lover, right?” Frisk asked. “Then Luster? How do I ACT Luster?”

“You’ll. Just. Follow my lead,” Sans said.

“Alright, Jattehoon,” Frisk said, almost back asleep. “Is there some special monster word I should use for those days?”

“No.” *Stop it. Quench it. Work it out with Papyrus first.* “Jattehoon is plenty from you.” He closed his eye lids. “It’s all I need to hear.”

There was no telling exactly what was real. Not with all of that going on. What if Papyrus was right, she bonded with his energy and not Sans? That she was just a friend, and that

intense battle was messing with his head? But what if she was destined to be more. What if she was supposed to be Frisk the Skeleton and live with him for the rest of their lives?

Evolution.

Evolution would work out the truth.

Loving Day

Chapter Notes

I really enjoyed this story, and it's almost done too. :) However, I am taking a brief hiatus from this little Undertale to concentrate on some personal things first. When I come back, I will finish off this fun little tale.

Loving Day: Day 1

Sans stirred himself up an hour earlier, so he could get started, but Frisk? Was already up and missing from the bed. He got dressed in his loving day tux, and then checked downstairs and found her.

Already dressed in a different pair of PJs and hanging out with his slippers, Papyrus was playing a word search with her. Had his feelings eased off from all the energy fluctuations last night? “Good morning, darling.”

Frisk looked toward him, almost like she forgot. Then there was a light look of surprise. “Morning, sweetie?”

“How did you sleep, honey?” Sans continued.

“Oh. Well, yesterday was a rough day,” Frisk answered, “but I’m doing better, Pumpkin Pie.”

“I imagine,” Sans said. “From eight new husbands down to tried and true old me. Sugar lumps.”

“Have you heard anything from Flowey and Gloria, Cupcake?”

“Sure not, Tiddly Winks.” Sans looked toward Papyrus. “Anything?”

“No word. Initiative is looking into the situation last night, and the King and Queen still have up their own barrier,” Papyrus insisted. “Easy on my cookies, Frisk, you are getting crumbs all over your shirt.”

“Yeah, but they are good,” Frisk said, her mouth half full of cookie. She swallowed. “You want some . . . uh, dear?”

“It doesn’t *have* to be something different every time,” Papyrus said, getting annoyed.

“Aw, but Pap? That’s half the fun. Right, Scrumptious?” Sans asked Frisk.

“Sure, Candy Cakes.”

“Only bad thing about it, Sugar Cookie, is it *is* making me hungry,” Sans said. “Speaking of sweet cookies.” He came over and took a couple of Papyrus’ homemade cookies too. Soul food. Nothing beat soul food. “So, Pap? Are we both a little more chilled out from last night?”

“Hopefully,” Papyrus answered. “Do you want any cocoa with your cookie, Sans?”

Sans chuckled. “It isn’t Luster day yet, Papyrus.” Although that would be a good one to use. It even made Frisk smile. He watched his brother shudder. “Sure, I’ll take some in a second. I’ll be right back.”

Evolution had more than just one requirement of cute nicknames. Him and Frisk already played that so much, that requirement should be over soon. Time to move on.

Oh yeah. He went to get the second things. When he arrived back he handed them to her. “Here ya go, Soap N’ Suds.”

Frisk looked at his flowers and chocolate. “Oh, how sweet.” She looked at the echo flower he got. “Very pretty.” She opened the box of chocolates. “Only half gone, that’s so adorable, Moo goo gai pan.”

“Yeah well.” Sans shrugged. “Generosity and me go hand in hand, Bubble Butt.”

“See? Feelings are absolutely.” Papyrus filled in a piece of his crossword. “Neutral.”

Papyrus meant it as his own observation, but Sans mind couldn’t see it that way. He was playing around, getting Frisk the feel for it, but that was just the start. “Come on, Jattermoon, get dressed. Get on something real pretty because your darling husband is taking you somewhere new.”

“Okay, Hot Lips,” Frisk said. She passed him up the stairs.

Sans gestured to her “Hot Lips, that’s funny.” He noticed Papyrus’ look. “What?”

“Where are you going that is new?” Papyrus asked. “You can’t go anywhere new, the Underground is sealed by the King and Queen.”

“Going somewhere new to her,” Sans said. “You’ll be fine. Enjoy some T.V.”

“Where are you taking her then?” Papyrus asked.

“Don’t need to worry. I can handle my Jattermoon,” Sans said.

“If you keep that up, on a Lover’s day, she’ll figure out its true meaning,” Papyrus warned him.

“Fine.” Grumpy much? “I can handle my loving wife,” Sans said, not changing the language. “I’m just going to do one thing real quick.”

“Check the new barrier?”

“Yep.”

By the Barrier . . .

It was purple. It wasn't see through. Sans observed it, putting his hand on it.

“It is a class 2 barrier,” he heard from behind him.

He turned around. Queen Toriel. “Uh, hi?” He gestured to it. “How's it doing so far?”

“Doing just fine,” Toriel answered. “How are you doing?”

“Fine, completely,” he insisted. “No problem.”

“Well, with the right ACTing, you should be okay,” Toriel said. “I am sorry about the position you have been forced into. I had been trying to keep you out of it.”

“Wasn't that bad considering Frisk is pretty hot,” Sans said. “I don't mind *girls*, you know.”

Toriel took a step back. “What?”

“Yeah. So, if you could not keep trying to help me stay lonely for the rest of my life, I'd appreciate it?” He was trying. Boy, was he trying.

“But?” Toriel blinked. “But Asgore . . .”

Asgore what? “Hm?”

“It's on your public profile. I mean, every monster down here has a profile,” Toriel said. “Only Asgore and I have access to editing it.”

Uhhh . . . “Huh?”

“I know, I know.” Toriel slightly blushed. “I wanted to discuss it with you when it appeared so many times. I thought perhaps Asgore was jealous and put that in there. Underhandedness was his style, but you kept running away from me. I figured you knew what I wanted to address. I mean, you never gave us enough privacy, and you kept running away, so I left it be.” She sighed. “I am so very sorry for putting you in such a position. I wish we could have worked out friend wife for you.”

Asgore. Asgore. *She wasn't trying to ask me out, or get closer! She saw it in a profile, by Asgore?! No. No. Not fair.* “Damn it, Tori, you were like one of my funnest friends. Why didn't you just-” He never gave her a single chance. Not a single chance. “I thought you were

trying to ask me out or something. I didn't want to ruin anything," he said. "I. Ruined everything though."

"You were running away because you thought I was trying to ask you out?" Toriel asked him. "Well. Ooh. Dear. I mean, not that you're not . . . uh . . . either way, you are married now. How are you feeling?" She was genuinely concerned.

"Not lying. I like Frisk," Sans said. "I'm happy with evolution. Rough night last night."

"Undyne spoke this morning. She said you two had to rescue her from eight husbands infusing her without permission," Toriel said. "When will this torment end for the poor human?"

"Gonna find a contract. Update it. Then, she'll be fine," Sans insisted. "No problems. Anyhow, just wanted to check on the barrier. I've got a wife to take out soon."

"Yes you do!" Toriel shouted, this time, finally happy. "I am glad you are happy, Sans! I wish you the best. I just wish you could have told me sooner. You know I could have helped out so much more."

"Gee, ya think?" Sans commented. Nah. Well. Monsters made enemies to friends pretty damn fast. "Shoulda gave it a chance. Just didn't want to risk change."

"But you want change with Frisk?" Toriel asked.

"Yes." Yes, more than ever. "Papyrus' instinct makes him my father-in-law though."

"Uh? Oooh." Toriel made funny noises with her tongue. "Good luck?"

"Don't I know it." With that last word, he disappeared.

Back Home . . .

Sans looked around. She still wasn't down? "Takes her like five minutes to get ready. What's going on?" He looked toward Papyrus. Papyrus shrugged. Hm. He shouted toward the top of the stairs. He didn't want to interrupt her getting dressed. "Yo, Sugar Lippy Doodle Muffin Cakes! Are you ready yet?!"

Her voice came back with, "Not yet, Snicker Doodle! Gimme about fifteen minutes!"

Sans scratched his skull. Fifteen? Even he could get dressed in fifteen minutes.

ACT Lover. Frisk was getting the hint of it all pretty well. Before Papyrus even got up, Alphys visited extremely early to let Frisk know a little more what to expect considering she

didn't get anything except 'just ACT'. She had time since Undyne was still laid out from last night, and she doubted Papyrus nor Sans would have prepared her right. She knew Frisk could do decent ACTing if prepared, but there was more than the right act to do this right.

It turned out that if she didn't do something required of the day, that she would lose evolution, and be given back a regular marriage. Meaning, a kid once per year. And, if she rebelled and didn't? She'd be taken from Sans and given to another husband. And another. And another.

Anything she could do to help the days out would be helpful. Alphys had already helped out by bringing her some familiar makeup. MAKEUPMYSOUL makeup. She had just finished evening out her matte.

Lover day. Luster Day. They weren't as bad as they sounded. Lover day, the words for it were cute and affectionate. Frisk knew her colors for Asriel was white, so she went with a light pink frilly dress with cute pink sneakers and white simple socks. For her makeup, very light, barely seen. Decent blush though, a little mascara, and some glittery innocent lip gloss. Innocent. Pure. It was the order.

Luster day, the words Alphys used were 'more intense cute, hot and sexy.' As Alphys described the day, Frisk knew what she'd be wearing. All out red, like when she actually tried to attract a cute boy to her. Cherry red lipstick, blush, brighter colors, and the sexiest red dress she had Alphys order for her.

Sans yelled up to her again as she combed her hair. She had more than just bone though to prepare for the day. She even endured a watering with Alphys early that morning.

Placing a pink little ribbon barrette in her hair that was in the professional shape of a skull, she went ahead and got up, staring in the mirror. Almost done. A gold plated necklace with a light bluish green jewel that would help the colors in her eyes and hair stand out without looking out of place. One matching earring. The other matching earring. Done.

Pure middle school first love heartbreaker right there.

Back downstairs . . .

Sans looked at his watch again. It'd been like twenty minutes by now. "Hey!" he shouted back up there. "Winker Kissy Bubbly Annoying Crumble-Wearing Slow Moving Adorable Sprinkle Face, are you ready yeeet?!"

"Coming!"

Finally. Sans watched as she came out and started to walk toward the staircase. His lightguiders traced her steps as she reached the staircase and started to descend down them.

“Nice enough dress, Sweetheart?” Frisk asked as she twirled around from him. She touched her cheek ever so lightly. “Sorry for the long wait, I tried to look nice for you.”

Sans hadn’t said anything still as he looked at her.

“Alphys saw her this morning,” Papyrus said. “Your wife should be well prepared,” he said to Sans.

“That’s um. Luster though,” Sans said as he gestured to the outfit.

“Uh? Of course not, Silly Boy,” Frisk said, giggling and pushing him back slightly. “Outfits don’t get cuter than this.”

“I think you look very pretty,” Papyrus said coming over. “Very nice for the day.”

Frisk courtied. “Thank you kindly, Papyrus. Alright, Honey, where would you like to go?”

“Um. Uh.” That wasn’t Luster? That was supposed to be innocent to her eyes? Makeup. Dress. Frilly. The little skull in her hair, she had a little pink ribbon skull in her hair? “Um.” Sans reached for something, felt it, and pulled it out. His sorry excuse for a flower he already gave her. “Here? Pop Tart?”

“Well thanks, Hon.” She closed her eyes and smelled it thoughtfully. “Nothing like the sweet sounds of echo flowers, laying out their secrets to the world.” She opened her eyes again and tucked the little flower in his pocket. “Keep it safe for me?”

“Uh. Uh. Yuh.” Sans snapped his fingers. “You. Pap. Be back.”

“Have fun,” Papyrus said waving at them. “Wish you both lots of luck. Not too much luck. But a lot of luck.”

Sans grabbed her hand and teleported her away.

The Bridge Ticket Booth . . .

He’d find the right words, he would. He wasn’t letting it go unsaid. He had to say something about what she wore for the date, it was required, but ‘pretty’ didn’t cover it. Frisk had a new look to her, one he’d never seen before. She was right, it wasn’t Luster, but it wasn’t quite pure and innocent either.

“Tickets?” A monster asked from beside Sans.

“Yeah. Two. One for me and one for my loving wife.” Frisk was still trying to figure out where they were. He only brought her there one time, and only on one part of it. She’d get a kick out of it, and he’d been saving it for their first lover day.

“This is for you.”

Frisk watched as the monster next in line to them had wanted to give her a flower. Not an echo, but a red rose. Frisk tucked her arm beneath Sans’. “I’m sorry, but this sweet monster right here is my husband. You’ll have to save it for another pretty girl.”

“ . . . you sure?”

“You sure?” Sans asked him back. Sans locked his arms tighter with hers. “Buzz off, Pal, this is my new wife. Come on, loving wife, let’s go. Been saving this one for you.”

“Oh. Yes, loving husband.” Frisk followed him down the bridge. “Where is this?”

“This is kinda where I took you when I showed you the Underground thanking you,” Sans said. “Starts off way over by the castle, then follows the old classical route that I used to travel every day before the barrier busted open and changed everything.”

The bridge was squeaky but secure. “I don’t recognize anything yet.”

Sans stopped and stooped over with her a little. “That part right there is called Judgment Hall. A little further, you’ll start to see the lab.” They both walked slowly, arm in arm, until the inevitable happened.

“Aw, crud!” Frisk fell unceremoniously. “Dang ol’ stupid dress is too long and . . .” she chuckled. “Sorry, dear.”

Sans just chuckled at her and helped her up. This time, he didn’t just help her up after her usual clumsy spell. He brought her in for a hug. “Never say sorry. That’s what I love about you, Jattemoon.”

Frisk felt several tingles in her body. Sans wasn’t bad at ACTing at all, but that felt almost real. Especially when he picked up her chin with his bony fingers and . . . *ACTing, ACTing, ACTing*. She opened her mouth and felt herself locked with Sans’. *ACTing, ACTing, ACTing*. Yet as she was kissing him back, a thousand signals were popping off in her brain that it wasn’t an ACT.

No residue. Her not being motionless, and enjoying him just as much as he was her. *That* was what he always wanted from her. Sans pulled her even closer as the good vibes of that kiss were traveling into overtime. Dopamine heaven left him stuck there, and there was no way he was going to be the one to end that kiss.

Unfortunately, Frisk knew what should happen on a Lover day. His happiness was taken away after only ten to fifteen seconds. “Tour. Continue, Honey?”

Let it be more than an ACT. “Ye.” He hoped he didn’t sound too odd. He held her hand and somehow managed to walk through his vibrating bones. *I stole a kiss. I stole that kiss*. Just

what he wanted, just what he craved. But while Frisk still walked side by side with him, he knew it wasn't enough. He knew Papyrus wouldn't be happy with him, but every time her human legs got tripped up by the weird lengths of the bridge-

“Of all the!-“

-or his magic or whatever, he'd be there to catch her again.

Frisk tried to watch her step as carefully as she could. She had already tripped and fallen twelve times. Twelve! That was like a record. Had she become that incredibly clumsy each time just so Sans would hold her and give her a short kiss? Or was he doing that?

He certainly didn't look like he was complaining. Not that she could tell on a skeleton, but he seemed happy enough. “And see that down right there?” He brought her closer into his embrace like it was nothing as he held her over the bridge. “That building right there is where the lava is broken down into its parts for some . . . reason or some shit, and that over there . . . is more building. Pretty swanky, huh?” His chuckles were certainly happy enough. “Greatest bridge ever, Butter cup.”

“Yeah, Sweet Pea” Frisk giggled, feeling him tickle under her chin just a little. His playfulness was off the charts. She even felt herself getting spun around the bridge, before landing half in his embrace as they walked again.

“Slowest walkers ever,” someone complained behind them.

“Oh lay off them, they just got married,” someone else said, defending them.

That wasn't it though. It was all an ACT. An incredibly fun, flirtatious ACT they had to do. It wasn't her or Sans. Right? *You are getting caught up in the ACT. Don't do that, Frisk.*

“Ooh, our first break.” Sans gestured ahead on the bridge where it started to fork. “Lunchtime.” He held onto her hand tighter. “Hot dog, dear?”

A hot dog? *I am so screwed.* They went over toward the hot dog stand. Sans paid for two hot dogs, ate one, and then just watched her.

Okay. So, she had on a nice dress, and a tasty hot dog with fixings. *I'm Frisk. I can totally do this.* Just, careful. Just. Careful. She held it away from her dress, as far as possible, trying to come toward it for a taste. She didn't back away until she was sure not an ounce stayed on her chin that could drop on her. It was intense. Tough.

And Sans watched the circus display she had to perform to make it happen. “Only took three minutes to take one bite, Frisk?” He was half complaining, and half amused.

“Hot dogs and dresses don't really go together,” Frisk said in her defense.

“Are you kidding? Obviously they go together for some interesting entertainment,” he teased her.

The Barrier . . .

“I’m not so sure about this,” Toriel said as she held the barrier fortifier in front of her. Was this really what she should be doing?

Papyrus was right beside her. “I just need out, and then I will text to come back in.”

Papyrus had found someone through some researching that matched Frisk’s case. It was close enough that he wanted to look into seeing how close the contract would be to fitting Frisk herself. It was actually a brilliant idea, but?

Sans just married Frisk. ACT of loving day was just beginning. What if Papyrus found something that matched too much? That fit so right, Sans only had a short time with her? She felt awful enough knowing she’d been wrong all those years ago.

Frisk deserved to go too though. *Oh, the chances.* Besides, Papyrus was supposed to have the energy bonding more in the father direction anyhow. Keeping him occupied might be a good idea. “Just be good out there, and call when you need back in.”

She nullified the barrier long enough for him to walk through.

Nightfall On the Bridge. . .

They had gone a decent ways on the bridge, and then made their way backward on it, and then, he took her in a different direction. After seeing all the classic areas one way, Sans pointed out all the new areas. The old and the new of the Underground. Everything was so beautiful. Even the bridge itself, up on the bridge there were stands for food breaks, and music, and entertainment of several kinds. It was like a whole 'nother world above the Underground, that was still underground.

The night was ending in a location Frisk hadn’t really known about. It was a position where monsters had to take their own lives into their own hands, because Sans and Papyrus couldn’t defend it. It was up, high above the cliffs. It soared so high, the people with their guns below looked like red twinkling lights.

On that bridge, in that spot, were little lights and chairs to lean back on. It had to be one of the prettiest places in the Underground, next to the gorgeous views and sounds of Waterfall. As she lied there in Sans arms, getting rocked back and forth in an embrace, it was hard to know where ACT stopped and started anymore.

And maybe . . . that was the point of evolution. To get monsters that would never do something, to have to do something. She never dreamed she'd be on a date with Sans. Even as a husband, he was so much more of a friend. She did a lot not to lose that connection over the months in that strange marriage position they had been in, scared that she might screw up something.

Is his ACT skills so good that he's really making me feel this way? "What's that one?" Frisk asked, pointing to the sky. Sans had been sharing the location of constellations out there.

"Uranus I think."

"Are you joking?"

"Am I?" Sans asked her. "Could be Jupiter, Babe. Could be anything."

Frisk nestled deeper against him. He in turn, wrapped his arm around her.

"Think it's getting to be time for bed, Babe," Sans reminded her.

"The day's already come and gone, Honey?"

"Yep, but another day comes tomorrow," he reminded her. "Besides? Papyrus is probably starting to get a little worried. I haven't seen him all day."

"That true," Frisk agreed, slowly pulling herself out of his grasp. "You two are always together. It was probably hard spending a day without him here."

"Uh." Sans seemed off. "Yeah. Better get going." They disappeared from the romantic scene.

Sans' Room . . .

"Okay, Babe." Sans looked in the drawers and brought out some lingerie. It was well-covered though. Silky but long, and that same innocent flirtatious vibe Frisk had been giving off all day. "Get dressed. I'll go downstairs and talk to Pap a few minutes."

Frisk took them with no problem. "Okay."

Sans headed downstairs and looked around. "Papyrus?"

"Oh, there you are, Sans." Papyrus poked his head in from the kitchen. "Did you have fun, Sans?"

More than he really could confess. "Great time."

“Fantastic.” Papyrus strolled into the room with a large book. “You didn’t go overboard though, right? Just stuck with cute little words and cute subtle actions?”

“Uh?”

“Sans?” Papyrus’ attitude was changing. “You did not kiss her while ACTing. Did you?”

“ . . .” He held up his bony fingers, showing a small amount between. “A squidge?” He couldn’t completely lie, Frisk was bound to say something, or someone on the bridge was bound to connect and say something one day because that was Sans’ luck.

Papyrus shook his head, like he felt extreme disappointment. “Why did you do that, Sans? I told you not to do that.”

“Papyrus, she’s *my* wife,” Sans reminded him.

“Not for long.” Papyrus held up a book. “I left the Underground today. It seems I stumbled upon something very greatly.” He handed it to Sans. “In fact, there is more than one person right now who has the same kind of contract protecting them. Twenty lovely Districts. They have been using a very similar outline to each one, and it is all updated.”

“What?” Sans cracked open the contract book.

“The only reason no one told us or Frisk about it was that they knew we couldn’t afford it,” Papyrus said. “The money for it was so great, that it would have taken twenty years of our annual paychecks just to get the blueprint of it. However, with the settlement money?” He gestured to it. “It’s done, Sans. Replace the names. Look it over as you want, but it’s done.”

“What?” Sans started to look deeper into the book. My child. Focusing on laws, stirring away from the wording of my child. It. It was . . . *It looks almost perfect.* He’d have to look it up, he’d have to look into it, check every nook and cranny.

“That blueprint is currently protecting twenty princesses from another kingdom,” Papyrus said. “In fact.” He gestured to the endtable where a disc was at. “That is the original writing utensil they used to edit it. Once it’s done, it is printed to become a book. Any changes can be made anytime. In fact, that book is just a physical copy, but the digital binding copy that can be changed counts as well in this new world.” He started to number off his fingers. “Just yesterday, five princesses had another law added to their contract. They have people they pay to oversee it, to make sure everything is fine.”

Sans closed the book and looked toward the disc on the end table.

“Once you look it over and adjust to Frisk’s needs, she’s free,” Papyrus said. “So? Make sure she knows your act was simply ACT.”

“But.” Too fast. In one day of not having to be friendly Sans, he’d already managed to get so close to her. He knew it couldn’t all be ACT, he knew something was really there. But. *Home. She’s going to be going home. Soon.*

“Be more careful tomorrow,” Papyrus warned him, but then smiled. “It will be okay. She will come visit, I know she will.” Sans didn’t say anything else as he went back upstairs.

Her pajamas covered everything up real well, but it was still leaving her legs sticking outward, and some of her chest area because of the spaghetti straps. The robe that went along with it was more see through but also worn.

As he came closer, she gestured to the book. Of course. He patted it. “Uh? Could be freedom.” He couldn’t lie. “Papyrus found a contract. I only glanced at it. It looks real good.”

“How good?” Frisk asked.

“Good, good,” Sans said. “If it’s all legit, home’s not uh . . . real far away anymore. Maybe as . . . little as a month. Maybe less.” He expected to see her smiling and dancing, cheering, or even hugging him.

“Oh.” That didn’t sound thrilled. “No, I mean, that’s great,” Frisk said. “It’s just that . . .”

“What?” She wanted to stay? “You want to stay longer, it’s totally fine with me,” he said quickly. “This is your home, forever, or however long you want it to be!”

“Well?” She scratched her head. “Truth is, Sans, I want to go back to college and get back on track, but now college is gone,” she said. “I have to get more financial aid and . . . and until then I used to stay with Maxie and my aunt Ida.”

Ooh?! “So you need a few years? Uh, months?” Sans said.

“Well. Where I am from, College semester is more than halfway through,” Frisk said. “To be in school again, I would have had to be enrolled some time ago. And then all this financial aid, without my family, it’s all going to be tricky.” She chuckled. “Wow, I can’t really believe I’m going home. I just.”

“Have to figure out where home is and how to get back to that groove?” he asked. “No need to fret,” he said, practically sliding over to her and scooping her closer. “Your loving husband’s got you for now, Sugar Cream. Stay as long as you want.”

“Are you sure?” she asked. “But, when I’m safe, you can finally be free of me. I thought I’d need to stay with Alphys or something.”

“No, heck no! Stay right here, that’s fine.” Freedom. That’s right. Even if she wasn’t leaving, there’d be no reason they needed to stay married for her protection anymore. “Besides, Alphys liked to have Undyne around. You’d be cramping their style, if you get my drift?” He held onto her and moved her toward her closet. “All moved in. All super secure. All decked out.” He closed it again. “Papyrus and I got that settlement to take care of you, Frisk. Anybody else, it wouldn’t be half as good. So.”

“You think Papyrus really wouldn’t mind?” Frisk asked.

“Nope, nope, nope,” Sans said quickly. “You kidding? He’ll be thrilled.”

“Oh. Well then, now what?” Frisk asked.

“Let’s not jump the gun,” Sans said gesturing to bed. “I still have to look real close at that contract, so until then, you’re still safer as my wife. So, Cute Patoot, go ahead and get in my bed. Our bed,” he corrected himself. “Our bed.”

Frisk moved back into the bed. “Sans?” She asked. “Why haven’t I been feeling cold? Did an extra one percent really take all the cold away?”

Oh. *Shoot*. “Uh, yeah, I kind of bent the rule on that a bit, considering what happened. I.”

“Oh.” That seemed to satisfy her. “That makes sense. Emergency stuff I’m assuming? Okay.” She moaned as she moved into the covers.

Sans got in the covers, but scooted her toward him. “Night, Sugar Dumpling.”

Frisk chuckled. “Night, Jattehoon.”

Yeah. “Night, Jattermoon.” He watched her curl up closer in his embrace. A little while. Let her figure out her life on the other side again, but keep her safe there. With him. For now. Still. *Don’t leave. Don’t leave, don’t leave, don’t leave. Please Frisk, don’t leave.* Still had one more requirement too. “I loved your dress so much, I couldn’t come up with the words for it.”

“Oh?”

“Ye.”

“Has anyone ever left the Underground?” Frisk asked Sans.

“Uh? All the time,” Sans answered. “Why?”

“Well? Um. Not for pass. Well,” Frisk said.

“Naw, naw, naw, Sweet Cheeky Cakes, come on,” Sans urged her. “Why?”

“Oh. I was just thinking, that maybe marriage would let someone be in another place?” Frisk asked. “I mean, like Gloria. Technically she was in college, but now she has Flowey. They still aren’t here. Is that legal?”

Wait. Wait. Was she . . . ? She wasn’t just dragging that up for no good reason at all.

“Technically?” Sans answered. “Yeah, I think. I mean, I . . . you know, even *I* should be able to stay out there with you,” he said softly. “Marriage. Connects.”

“Oh. So, Gloria and Flowey, they aren’t doing anything illegal by not being Underground right now?” Frisk asked one more time.

“Did you . . . want me to go to your college with you, Frisk?” Sans asked outright.

“Uh?” Flustered. “Well, I? Change of scenery. Well, um, not that . . . I . . .”

Sans just pulled her closer. Normally, he didn’t jump like that. Ask something outright, but he just found out he lost fourteen years with his favorite knock-knock buddy *because* he wouldn’t be outright with her. He wouldn’t mess that up again.

“Might be a better way to get humans accustomed to seeing . . . monsters?” she said. “Of course I know you have a life here, and Papyrus here, and of course we’d have to stay married I guess. And I am just . . . uh.”

“Just stay married to me and maybe I might go with you.” It would be tough. He’d be the only monster out there. A lot of people would freak out more since it was so far from Initiative. Hell, half the world still thought monsters didn’t exist, even though they’d been on the news constantly. But. He’d never get to see Papyrus. All that time. But. There were also monsters that looked like humans out there too. Most likely they were someone from the contract that wanted Frisk. He needed to know about them, where they came from, and if they would pose more problems. But, in the end?

If he did it. If he risked it all. *She’d stay my wife.*

He held her hand in his. Two more hours and Loving Day would be over. That ACTing would be over. Luster Day would begin, as well as a whole new set of thoughts he never thought of before.

Luster Day

Chapter Notes

Thanks everyone for reading! Special thank you to the commenters too. :) There's only one chapter left after this I think, unless it ends up being too large, but it should be about the right size. I had a real ball writing this, and I hope you enjoyed the journey.

Luster Day . . .

Sans and Papyrus' House, Downstairs.

“Before I get into the heat of Frisk’s oven, I needed to talk to you about the coolness of the fridge,” Sans said to Papyrus as he moved downstairs.

“Ugh.” Papyrus looked toward Sans. “I am going to hate today.”

“I’m gonna likey,” Sans said, “but, seriously, before she comes down? Um. She invited me to do something.”

“What?” Papyrus whined. “The day hasn’t even begun, and the answer is no!”

“Huh? Oh.” Sans chuckled. “I’d miss that. Uh, no, Papyrus, she invited me to go to college with her.”

“Huh?”

“If it’s all fine. You know, there’s no problem, then she’ll stay for a bit and then go back to college. She asked if I wanted to come,” Sans said seriously. “I kind of want too.”

“Move? Away?” Papyrus asked.

“Yeah. Plus, you know, I could breeze through those college classes. Probably find someone who loves me for my over advanced skill and have them take advantage of it by hiring me at minimum wage,” Sans joked. “Gots more than enough to get established out there with Frisk.”

“But, you’re a monster.”

“Yeah, but a married monster.”

“But. Well, you’ve never lived anywhere else but the mountain, Brother,” Papyrus reminded him. “No one has.”

“Yeah,” Sans agreed. “I haven’t. Never left here, but . . . everyone’s gotta move on.” He looked toward Papyrus. “I want to stay with Frisk.”

“Last night was just an ACT,” Papyrus warned him. “What if that conversation was simply a part of it too?”

Sans shook his head. “It’s not, and I’m not gonna lose Frisk just ‘cause I’m scared to go outside the mountain and really live out there. I won’t leave my wife hangin’ like that. Now, can you show me how this whole contract thing works?”

“Uh. Yes. Uh. I don’t want you to leave. Do you want to leave?” Papyrus asked. “To live among the humans, is that what you want?”

Frisk had planned on getting a head start waking up again, but she heard Sans from downstairs instead.

“Not really. Humans will look at me strange, laugh at me, get in a fight with me, or run away in terror. I gotta imagine it’s not going to be the easiest lifestyle when their law enforcement keeps getting called over and over again. But. I love Frisk. No matter what I have to do to keep her, I’m going to do it.”

Loves me. He didn’t want to leave with her. She thought maybe he’d want to. Maybe she could make her dreams come true, and still have her Sans in the strange twisty turny friendship-girlfriend-kind of thing they had.

But. How did humans respond to monsters? Would they get any better? Was she putting Sans in danger by having him tag along with her? Or, should she put her own dreams aside for him. For his happiness. *I want him to be happy.*

“I am worried,” Papyrus said. “I am worried in so many ways with that! I mean, you’re a monster and people won’t be nice. You won’t make any friends, and you always needs friends. And Frisk? She is a human married to a monster, so I’m sure humans will lash out at her too. Unless she plans on hiding it? Are you going more as friends?”

“Uh? No. No way, right?” Sans sounded nervous. “Nah, she wouldn’t invite me just ‘cause . . .” He was shaking his head. “Not just as a friend, she wouldn’t invite me like just as a friend, right? Papyrus?”

I don’t know why I invited him as. I got stuck in the asking, he’s the one that progressed it. She wanted him to come with her if he wanted to explore the world. At least, that was the excuse in her head.

“Sans? Perhaps she thought of it because there was a terrible thing that happened a couple of days ago?” Papyrus reminded him. “Multiple husbands? Pretty sure that kidnapping was not

going to matter whether there was a contract or not.”

“ . . . shit.” Sans whole skeleton seemed to sink. “You’re right. She knows she can’t be out there alone as long as some weird monsters are trying to snatch her like that. Of course. Dumb, I’m so dumb.” He shook his head. “Fine, I don’t care. Even if it is just friendship, I’ll still go. Eventually, maybe, we can get something more. I mean I know she liked kissing yesterday.”

“How do you know it wasn’t ACTing?”

“It just wasn’t.”

“But you said the human had done so much more than you, Sans,” Papyrus reminded him. “How do you know?”

“That’d be damn good ACTing skills.”

“She is the pacifist child. Her ACTing skills are highly incredible.”

Stop, Papyrus. It was ACTing, but it wasn’t ACTing. She couldn’t let Sans think that. Sans is ready to give up his life Underground for me, just for me, not even knowing my true feelings. And that day was Lusting Day which was going to make it even harder to convey the truth. I am a really good actor. So is he. The only way of really being able to tell whether I’m acting on Lusting Day is if I . . . Her cheeks felt hot and a picture of Gloria winking popped up in her mind.

She went back to the room and closed the door. Just a couple of days ago she was starting to get a small crush on Sans. Yesterday, they were making out like crazy whenever they had an excuse. It was short, had to be short to fit ‘Loving’, but they still did plenty of it.

She moved to the package she hadn’t opened yet. Frisk really hoped it fit, Alphys guaranteed it would, and she couldn’t risk Sans seeing the dress. She wanted to see his reaction. She craved to know it. *Did I just become some sexually obsessed woman?* When did that happen?

She had to talk to Gloria. She just had to.

“Oh? Good morning.”

“Alphys, thank goodness.” Frisk opened her door and looked downstairs.

“You need to help Frisk get ready?” Sans asked her.

“Yeah. A few touchups she’ll need,” Alphys said.

“I’m just saying if you made the chunks bigger, you could throw more ice and more work could get done!” Undyne’s voice came from outside until she peered in through the doorway. “Oh. Sorry. Damn neighbors, Sans. I remember when things used to make more sense around here. Alright, let’s do this.” Undyne rubbed her hand into her other one in a grinding motion.

“Well, at this rate, I better go change in your room, Papyrus,” Sans said. “Probably be fine.”

“But, they are all my clothes,” Papyrus said.

“Yeah, but Cool Dude should work.”

“No way, you’re not going to be rubbing on Frisk in that! Not that you should be rubbing in the first place. Just stick with acting,” Papyrus insisted. “Undyne, Alphys, go get the clothes he wanted while you help Frisk.”

Frisk took off back to her room area as Undyne and Alphys came toward her. “Those.”

“ . . . those are Lusting?”

“It’s troublesome finding things in the Underground I guess for a skeleton?” Frisk chuckled.

“Yeah, I thought so.” Undyne brought out a special box. “I’ll work with Sans. Alphys will work with you.”

“Wait, before we start?” Frisk asked. “Have either of you heard from Gloria yet?”

“Uh huh,” Alphys said. “They are having an extended stay in a hotel room. She won’t say which one because she doesn’t want anyone coming after her or her husband. But, I have the number?” Alphys pulled out her phone. “You want to call?”

“Yes, please,” Frisk said. “Desperately?” Alphys dialed the number and gave it to Frisk. It rang a couple times. Frisk rehit the number and let it ring again.

“Yeeees?”

Frisk knew that sound in her voice. “Enjoying your new husband?”

“You wouldn’t believe how a flower pollinates Frisk. I don’t think I’m going to be able to look at flora in an innocent way again. The twists and the turns and . . . oh sorry. Anyway, how are you? I heard you had a lot of trouble out there but Undyne and your husband saved you?”

“Yeah, um?” She looked toward Alphys. It wouldn’t be right to ask her to leave, but she didn’t. Well, she wouldn’t tell, right? “Hang on.” She looked at Alphys. “I’m going to be talking about something and I don’t really want the guys to know?”

Alphys nodded. “Of course, Frisk.”

“And. It might be a little . . . humaney with extra long sentences?” Frisk added.

Alphys smiled. “However, Frisk.”

Frisk took a deep breath and plunged into the conversation on the phone. “Okay, so like me and Sans are really good friends, and we’ve been really good friends even though we were married but like after he saved me I really started to notice that I wasn’t quite looking at him in the same way, and I don’t know exactly how long I’d been looking at him that way, but I knew for sure I was looking at him that way last night. Then yesterday we had our Loving

Day and it was fun, but we made out and it was supposed to be ACTing but it wasn't really ACTing, and I kind of accidentally maybe invited him to my college and I just overheard him downstairs how he really didn't want to go, but he wanted to go for me, and Papyrus made him all unsure about the ACTing yesterday so now he's all questioning everything and I don't want to leave him questioning and--

"Friiiiisk!" Gloria yelled at her. "Gee, settle down. Wow. Okay, you like your husband. He likes you. You're going to get things figured out and he's going to college with you. What is the problem?"

"He doesn't know if I invited him as a friend or as more," Frisk said, "and, well, uh. Cause of the ACTing all the time. I just. And today's Lusting Day and."

"Be with him."

Frisk looked over toward Alphys who had spoken. She covered up the phone. "What do you mean?"

"Be with him," Alphys smiled and gave her a brief hug. "That's what Evolution marriage is, to figure out feelings. You know your feelings. Be with him."

"I should tell him I love him and I'll stay for him?" Frisk asked, not quite knowing what Alphys was referring to.

Alphys blinked. "Yes, that too I suppose?"

That too? But that wasn't it? Gloria was getting restless on the phone so Frisk uncovered it. "Sorry. Um. Anyhow. Um."

"I heard it. Alphys is right, Frisk. Be with him. Now I gotta go, my Honeysuckle should be waking up soon. Good luck, Frisk." Gloria hung up on her.

"What's wrong?" Alphys asked her.

Frisk shook her head. "I can't . . . nah, I mean I just started realizing and yesterday we were kissing." Frisk bit her lip. "And I. I don't . . . when I was married to him, I easily handled residue cleaning by saying it was nothing. That I'd done so much more. If I just married him, and we were just kissing, then I'm moving too fast for a monster if I. I don't want him to think that I've--"

"Oh, the speed?" Alphys took one of her hands. "Relationships with monsters is a thing, Frisk. We don't get actively involved with lots of monsters. We tend to be rather selective. So, you saying that probably didn't trigger Sans in a happy mood," she said knowingly. "But, you're his wife, and it sounds like you know your feelings, and his feelings." She smiled. "Monsters make enemies to friends in a day. What you think is fast is just the progress your heart is moving."

Undyne came into the room. "Alright. Got him. Was not easy." Undyne looked at Frisk. "Not even dressed yet?"

“Can I tell her?” Alphys asked. Frisk nodded. “Frisk wants to have sex with Sans tonight.”

Frisk covered her face.

“Banging,” Undyne said, “sure he’ll enjoy the night then.”

“But she’s afraid it’s too fast. She just realized her own feelings a couple of days ago,” Alphys said to Undyne. “She doesn’t want Sans to think badly of her if she attempted to move that fast.”

“No, that’s it. I mean,” Frisk blurted, “it’s just that, I don’t want him to think it’s an ACT, that my feelings are all an ACT because he thinks they are and he thinks I invited him to come with me because of our friendship, and I kinda half did, but I don’t-“

“Whoah.” Undyne held up her hands in a block. “If your words were spears, they would be crooked and all over the place, Frisk.” She sighed. “What do you want? Sex, or just to let him know it’s not an ACT? Because a third party is all that’s needed to say, hey, it’s not an ACT. That’s the way it works.”

“So, I wouldn’t necessarily get to-have to-“ Her mouth slipped. “My goodness, what’s happening to me?”

“You are craving your husband’s touch.” Undyne pulled Alphys closer to her. “It’s not an untested date. It’s not someone you barely know. You love Sans and you want to be with him.”

“There’s no shame in that, nor is there a deadline,” Alphys added. “Just, watch him tonight. Don’t force yourself into anything, just enjoy your time and see what happens.”

“And with that, I’m out,” Undyne said. “I got duty. Alphys will finish you up. I can’t stay here much longer. If I hear one more That’s What She Said from Sans, I’m hanging your husband on the wall with my spears.”

Alphys looked back at Frisk. “Okay. Let’s get out your dress.”

Sans waited downstairs. He figured a tux wouldn’t go today. He had no idea why this even fit the day. “Is this really a Lusting look, Papyrus?”

“I don’t know, San. I’m your Brother,” Papyrus said. “You look kind of funny to me, but Undyne probably knows what she’s doing.”

“Sure, a fish dressed a skeleton. This is going to end fantastically.”

Wow. Frisk looked downstairs. Sans was wearing a gold chain with a small heart at the bottom of it. He was wearing a dark red vest unbuttoned with a bright red button-up shirt. He

wore pants that matched the vest with a pocket chain hanging out of it. He was even wearing a pair of dark red slippers.

Frisk felt herself getting giddy. She didn't know whether she wanted to run back to her room or just secretly stand there and stare at him. Undyne must have remembered how much humans got attached to their colors. Red. She had no idea he looked so good in red.

No, get it together. She adjusted her outfit one final time, tried to put the night out of her mind like Alphys said, and just have a nice time playing around. Whether it lead to just a fun time or other things. Wherever the night took them.

As Frisk came downstairs, Sans spied a lot more of her than yesterday. She was wearing a gold skull necklace like he wore a gold heart, but the rest was a dress. A small dress. Red, bright red like his shirt that hugged her every move as she descended the stairs. The top of her dress hugged her front curves, curving itself outward like the inside of a heart. She was wearing red high heels, somehow pulling her figure more upward. The sleeves didn't even look like sleeves, it looked like the inside of the heart continuing down the side of her, leaving the tops of her arms exposed. Basically, take a naked human and draw a heart on them starting from the inside outward. She was definitely wearing a cherry red lipstick and something else to make her skin radiant too but he had no idea and he didn't really care, just that- "Fuck."

"Sans!" His brother scolded him. Papyrus looked toward Frisk's dress. "You might consider adding a light sweater over that?"

Sans grabbed the much better gift Undyne brought, a little gold broach. He pinned it toward the top on her. "When do I get to fill up your heart tonight?"

"Ugh, and it starts," Papyrus complained. "Be home by eight. I'll have something delicious for us all to eat."

"If we're not ready for beddy," Frisk flirted, "so we can make our own spaghetti."

Sans chuckled. "I don't know, I was thinking about something to do with your oven instead."

"I don't know, the oven's pretty hot already."

"I can handle the heat real well."

"I bet you can, Hot Lips," Frisk teased him.

"Oh yeah? What kind of lips you got, Babe?"

"Why don't you find out?" Frisk challenged him.

Sans easily took that challenge, until he heard his brother's scolding voice behind him.

"That is not ACTing!"

Sans grabbed Frisk's arms. "We'll pucker up soon, Buttercup, once we get out on our date."

"Are we walking or are we riding?" Frisk asked.

"That's what she said."

"It is what I said," Frisk said pulling him closer. "You got a problem with what I said?"

"Yeah. Your mouth keeps getting you into trouble. Gonna have to preoccupy it." Sans didn't care as he heard Papyrus complain again. At this point, he was just going to have to get used to it. Heh. Even if they ended up with just friendship, at least these ACTing days would always be there. At least, until the lessons ended.

"I wouldn't normally do this," Sans said as he knocked on the door of G and M 1. "But I am for two reasons. One, you seem okay up to Grillby's last time and we are just gonna go in and eat. You cool with that?" Frisk nodded. "For two, this place caters to the richest people looking to have the best dining experience. So hearing us in there will just be like frosting on a meatloaf."

Frisk tried not to laugh too hard. They were escorted in and seated.

There was about eight monsters all eating quietly at first.

"Good evening. How would you like to start?"

"From the top," Frisk said.

"Nibbling downward," Sans added. "I don't need a menu, I see what I want already."

"I'll take a menu. So much out there can be done, it's better to be explorative."

The waiter seemed confused. He handed Frisk the menu. "Here you are? Just call for me when you are ready, I am your personal waiter."

"Will you wait on me hand and foot?" Frisk asked.

"Yes," the waiter said.

"Nyeh, hey? That's my wife, so what are you doing with her hand and foot?" Sans warned him.

"Um?" Clueless. "I'll be a short distance away."

"You scared off the waiter," Frisk complained.

"I'm the only one who messes with hands, foots, or anything else of yours."

Frisk was about to smile, but his expression seemed serious. Then, like he just figured out he went overboard, he smiled. "Just kidding? I am getting myself a classic warm and fresh Grillby burger."

Still, Frisk was reminded of the announcement night, when no one even saw a shred of her dress. “Gloria’s back.”

“Knew that one,” Sans said. “Figured you’d find out soon. You are explorative.” Sans sat up in his chair a bit. “The monsters who attacked you were the Kudara’s. Frank came back today. Got a feeling things are about to change. Hopefully for the better.”

The day moved along nicely. A light little snack here and there with beverages. It looked like Sans planned on spending the whole day there, and that was fine for her. They joked and laughed, ACTed but had a fun time doing so too. The day just seemed to pass by in his company, like it did every day. Any day with him was one worth having, even if it went quicker. But then, something started to interrupt their fun time.

When Sans spoke to her he wasn’t ACTing as much, and he didn’t seem as happy as he kept looking behind her. *Oh. Someone’s staring at me.* Well, it was Lusting Day, what did he expect? Her outfit was bound to attract more than a little attention. Not wanting him to worry about it, she moved her chair from across him, to right beside him.

Yeah, that made him cheerier. She could see that twinkle in his eye socket. “Is my human getting cold in that slinky thing?”

“I’ve been warmer,” Frisk admitted. That part wasn’t fake, she was still in the heart of Snowdin and she didn’t have a huge amount of power. More than she did, but she still felt the cold.

“Then let Ol’ Sansy warm you up.” Sans brought the chair even closer by wrapping his arm around her. Not wanting to be outdone, she leaned herself against him. The skull and heart chains clinked together as they both looked down.

“Well, they know how to have a good time,” Frisk said looking at the chains. She noticed Sans’ eye sockets still hadn’t come up yet. “I haven’t told you yet, I like your outfit. Determination red shirt, and the dark red around it.” She rubbed her hands on the vest, feeling the softness in her fingertips.

“Yeah. Determined to get somewhere tonight,” Sans teased. “What’s up with the dark red though, how come Undyne didn’t drape me in all bright red?”

“Darker representations wrapped around a soul color is a trigger, making the object more desirable.” Frisk brought out her small purse and brought out her MAKEUPMYSOUL lipstick. “That’s why the lipstick that’s my bright red, is wrapped in a container of dark red. It makes the consumer want it.”

She felt Sans pull her even closer into his grasp. “Need it?”

“They charge a high price for a reason.” Frisk watched him steal her lipstick.

“Well, you don’t have to wrap that around your lips when you’re wrapped around me.” Sans looked at the wording on it. “I’m a new brand called NEEDFORMYSOUL. You’re the first customer.”

“Oh, really?” She clicked her teeth. “What does the first customer get?” She closed her eyes and opened her mouth, receiving another kiss. This time though, it wasn’t a short kiss. Didn’t have to be. Wasn’t supposed to be.

Frisk didn’t even care about the time as she heard scooting chairs and someone complaining about them.

“Skeleton kissing looks disgusting!”

What? Frisk caught Sans starting to move away at that. When he did that, she saw the trace of blue that seemed to go in his mouth.

“Food should be coming,” he said. “Homemade burgers, something else yummy for the tongue.” However, she could see that didn’t make him feel good. She looked back toward the group of people eating and easily found the one that said it when he said ‘that’s better’. *Don’t take on a woman of determination. You haven’t seen anything yet.*

She stuck out her tongue at Sans. “Let me see your tongue.”

“Why?” he asked.

“Cause.” She traced curlicues from the top of his finger downward. “It’s like a hidden treasure always hidden behind your teeth. I get to know it’s there, but I never get to see it.”

“Just a tongue.”

“Ah, ah.” He stopped ACTing. “I’ll make it worth your while if you show it to me, Sans the Skeleton.” That got him jazzed up. He was shifting slightly.

“Kind of a weird tongue,” he warned her.

“Weird tongues can do weird things,” Frisk said, keeping her ACTing up for the both of them. “Come on. You’ve used your tongue a ton with me.” She winked. “Show me your secret treasure and I’ll show you something too.”

That did it. Sans opened his mouth and showed her a strange, plasmic light bluish tongue that slowly glowed. She knew not to expect a regular pink tongue out of his mouth, so she held back her surprise. But then, that same idiot that complained about the kissing actually said ‘oh, it’s even more disgusting hanging out.’

Oh, that was it. Frisk took the opportunity to steal her own kiss. Outside his mouth. It shocked him for a second since she was literally sucking on his tongue. She felt his hand cup her cheek and break his tongue free, only to start massaging against hers.

“Oh that is so disgusting, I am out of here!” The enraged monster said. He wasn’t the only that started to leave, but Sans definitely didn’t care. There wasn’t a single shift in motion.

And there shouldn’t be. How else did skeletons actually kiss each other? She was showing affection the way his kind would. Although, after making the loser leave, she did get closer into his teeth. Then, she felt herself getting pulled away.

Don't let it be an ACT. Don't let it be an ACT. Sans didn't want to believe that was act. She was kissing the way a skeleton monster was supposed to kiss. With no teeth and barely something considered a mouth, plasmic energy was what skeletons used for it. But that, that move she just did? "Click your teeth again, like before."

"Click my teeth?"

"Yeah. Snap them for me."

Frisk snapped her teeth and Sans grabbed her again. This time he was starting to paw at her dress. *ACT. ACT. ACT tonight. Friend, friend, friend tomorrow.* He let go of her again, but it wouldn't be for long.

"You still haven't told me how I look in this dress?" Frisk asked.

"Yeah I did," Sans reminded. "There was nothing else to say 'cept what I did."

"Huh?"

"Fuck." Sans snapped for the waiter. "Yo, bill."

"Great to hear. I mean, that you had a lovely time, Sir," the waiter. "I will get your ticket right away."

Frisk looked around and realized what Sans knew some time ago. Their little ACTing drove everyone away. It was a fantastic night.

"Here you go," the Waiter brought the whole bill. Sans gave his gold card and it was quickly returned. "I hope you enjoyed your stay."

"Don't forget the 'we hope you come back' standard part too," Sans teased him. "Come on, Frisk. We've got one more requirement before we get back home for Papyrus."

"What?" Frisk asked.

"Ya kidding?" Sans wrapped her in his embrace at she got back up. "It's Lusting Day. There's only one thing a monster lusts after most." He stuck his tongue out and she easily opened her mouth up without even needing to ask anymore. After their little kiss was done, he finished his statement. "Bubbling. We're off to Waterfall."

A Bubbling Ending

The Castle . . .

Queen Toriel met with someone. Someone she had heard about. She had Asgore right next to her too. “You must be a Kudara.” Yet, even though it was human . . . it didn’t feel like it. “What an interesting . . . human.”

“Cut the crap,” Kudara said in monster to them. “You both know I’m no human any more than you are.”

“So, you are monster,” Queen Toriel said, not surprised he confessed. It would be hard to hide that power level. “Sans the Skeleton is married to Frisk now. You can’t have her.”

“I never wanted a pathetic human,” Kudara said. “I hate humans. I *despise* humans. All of the monster domains do.”

“All?” Asgore interrupted. “What do you mean?”

“Why do you think there are still domains that deny the use of the OJS?” Kudara said. “Don’t want them involved in our kingdoms. In how we treat our humans. The relationship between monster and human will never change.”

“How can you be a monster?” Asgore said. “And the power. You’re . . . you are the boss monster, Kendali? You survived?”

“Yes, but instead of living Underground, we were imprisoned in human bodies. Our magic sealed away. Until you broke your barrier,” Kudara informed them.

“Frisk is no longer an option, she is married peacefully to one monster,” Toriel said gesturing him away. Having someone so against humans consorting with them will not be good.

“I don’t care about her. I took her for the contract, so that I could kill the other suitors to save your kingdom. You see, monsters have never betrayed each other. We fight each other, but we don’t betray each other,” Kudara said. “I had come to tell you how to save her, but I got word one of your guards already know, so I didn’t bother to waste my breath. I am not here about her. I am here about joining us.”

“I knew it,” Toriel whispered to Asgore. “We will not join with any other kingdom to try anything to overthrow the humans. Haven’t you learned anything?” she growled at Kudara. “Never.”

“Then you’re content in this cute little area you have in a mountain?” Kudara said, gesturing around. “Why do you think Initiative is giving you part of its land. Why do you think they demand so much proof of loyalty, when all of our kingdoms are out there, whole?” He

gestured to Toriel. “Queen Toriel. Your kingdom share was taken by Initiative, and they don’t plan on ever giving it back.”

“That’s not true,” Asgore said from beside Toriel. “They do. They have helped us so much.”

“With their own commerce. Their restaurants. Their delivery services. They are making money off of your kingdom because you are still trapped. You give them plenty of reason to help. You satisfy their human greed!” Kudara banged the wall. “For sixteen years, we have slowly been gaining our magic back, but we are still stuck in these reviled forms. Once humanity knows that we are getting our magic back, they will wipe us out again! And you are just going to sit back and take it?”

“Even if what you say is true,” Toriel said, “our citizens have been happier. Every day more we make incredible progress. We will earn their trust. The humans will not attack you as long as you work with them.”

“This world is lawyers and contracts, things work slow,” Asgore added. “They will not simply attack all at once anymore.”

“Fine. Let me rephrase this,” Kudara growled. “If you don’t join with us, you ally with the humans, and we will not just sit back and take it. Are your residents still great fighters, because my kingdom fights well. So do the others.”

“Someone attacked Frisk. Someone who wanted to use a barbaric marriage for her!” Toriel accused him. “Then, you suddenly show up? No!”

“The Underground will not wage war against the humans.”

“Then you are traitors to the monsters.” Kudara stood up and spat toward them. “Disgraceful. Allying with humans. You’ll regret this!”

Waterfall . . .

“Well, bubbling. You want me wrapped around just in your energy again?” Frisk teased him.

“Yeah.” Aw, that wasn’t lusting enough. *She’s really good at this. Don’t lose it yourself.* Sans gestured to the water. “Hop on in, Lovely.” *Lovely? That’s not lustful either.*

Frisk cleared her throat. “Umm.”

Ooh. He was doing fine. “Something wrong?” Sans asked.

Frisk just gave him a stuck up look. She couldn’t say anything though. Surely, what she wanted to say was ‘turn around so I can get undressed’. But, nope. No, he had control this

time. “You sure you can handle that?”

Okay, good comeback. “I don’t know, Babe. Won’t know until you try.” Okay. It was funny at first, but now Sans really did wonder what she’d do. They were acting. Acting yesterday. Acting today. But, dangit, it couldn’t all be acting. Papyrus had to be wrong. She wanted him to come with her. That couldn’t have been an act. And actually kissing with tongues? That couldn’t have been an act.

Frisk jumped into the water, fully clothed squishing any hope Sans had of having her show her whole body to him. *I’m getting too wrapped. This is just ACT. Tomorrow, we’ll be back to friends.* Then back around again. “Think you forgot the removal of the clothes,” he tried to joke. “Can’t bubble you with them on. Got to cover every crevice.”

“Well, I felt dirty earlier, so I figured I should wash up everything,” Frisk said.

Act. Sans kind of wished she wasn’t as good at it. He watched as she went underwater and came closer to him. She had her dress, panties and bra off. Sans ducked down. “Forgot something.” When he bent down, his chain got wound up in hers. Which was right near the edge of what he could possibly see in the water.

Frisk took her hand and tried to unwind them, but it just pulled him closer.

“Think gravity’s got a different idea?” He tried to help, bumping into her hands too. Her cheeks were getting red. *She can’t fake that.* Flustered at least. He went ahead and lied down on the ground. Maybe he didn’t get it wrong?

He took his finger and started to stir the water, watching her reaction.

“Hey,” Frisk complained, yet her voice shivered, “that’s not fair. We’re tied up here. What kind of chain you got?”

“I don’t know, but I think it’s heated a certain way to cause a reaction with other chains it likes,” he half joked. She almost got it out, so he crouched closer to her. Then, he pulled her up slightly, stealing a kiss.

“No, wait, wait!” Frisk tried to back away as he pulled her up more. “Sans, this isn’t funny.”

“I’m not laughing,” he said seriously. He yanked his chain away. “Just caught on the top. You knew that.”

Frisk was silent.

“Failing the day now, Frisk. This is supposed to be your specialty,” he remarked. He moved her back down to the water, taking her necklace off. “Now how you gonna make up for that failing? Let’s see.” He started to take off his vest. “Should I put my finger in, or should I just jump in with you?”

Trapped. “If I say finger in, you’ll say I’m failing again. If you jump in with me . . .” Frisk looked away. “I don’t want to ACT anymore, Sans. I don’t really have to tonight. It won’t be half as good, but . . .”

Sans jumped in. He wasn't missing the opportunity.

"You forgot your clothes?" Frisk looked around, but Sans caught her from behind. He already took care of those, and she was about to go . . . lax. Her whole body was as limp as a ragdoll. He brought her down deeper into the water with him. Then he felt it. Just like she did.

She was completely bubbled. Head to toe in nothing but his energy. He moved back up to the surface with her, knowing humans couldn't hold their breath forever. Right up against her, as she gasped for breath, he held on. "I'm tired of acting too, Frisk. This outfit ain't me. All these innuendos? Well, some are me," he said. "But I'm just this too. A fumbly bumbly funny skeleton."

"With incredible energy," Frisk managed to speak. She laughed. "I don't need you in any of this either. Jean jacket. Blue coat. It doesn't matter." She chuckled. "Make a pun?"

"Can I bone you?"

Frisk started laughing and he stole another kiss from her. "You're still a friend, no matter what happens, Sans. You get that, right?"

"Yeah. Took a long time before I figured it out," Sans admitted. Longer than it really should have. "Plus, you know, promising to help you leave doesn't exactly . . . inspire leaping."

"No, I guess it didn't." Frisk laid her head on his shoulder bone. "But leaping doesn't exactly help me leave. I want to be happy, but I want you to be happy. In the end, it doesn't matter. I just want to stay by your side, whatever you . . . choose."

As soon as she said leaping didn't exactly help her leave, Sans knew he wanted to see how far leaping would get him. They were already bare, in the water, and he wanted to test the waters. He placed his hand down lower between them, past the necklace onto her breast. The water was creating a barrier from feeling her as well. So, he picked her up alongside him, wading with her over to the walking path more. "I choose you, Loving Wife."

"That's Jattemoon, isn't it?" she asked him.

"Yeah," he confessed. "And Jattehoon is Loving Husband."

Frisk chuckled. "You cheater, that's not fair."

"Well, I'm not always fair." But she didn't seem to care that his hands were right underneath her breast and they were half lying on the surface. And that was it, he couldn't keep it together anymore. He stole a kiss, luring out her tongue with his. He felt Frisk hold onto his hands. He wasn't even going to waste time explaining what the hell was happening beneath the water. She probably felt it already. If not, she was about to. He moved his hands up higher, touching the orbs that she always kept hidden from him. They were all soft except for the tips. As he played with them, they only became harder.

He brushed the side of her hair as he placed himself over her just right.

Frisk held herself steady as she felt Sans entering her. She didn't know how. Probably like a tongue, and she wasn't going to question it. Maybe it just happened when he was ready, and she was more than ready. There was no more acting between them. She wasn't a flirty fun crush girl that called her boyfriend something different each time. She wasn't a girl that made sexual innuendos or affirmations out of every little thing she did. She was Frisk Shades, the girl who tried to follow her heart and determination.

And it was leading her to where she wanted to be the most. She just didn't know it.

With Sans.

Frisk crushed her hands in his as she felt him push harder. She wasn't a stranger to pain though, and she concentrated on the good while she got used to the strange sensations. She felt him gripping her hair as he pushed harder. She moaned a little, knowing she never was the kind that wanted it tougher than it needed to be. More than anything, she just wanted him to know that he was her only one, and to know what it felt like for him to be inside of her.

They found a steady rhythm, and Sans started to explore her neck with his tongue. The sensations made her fine hairs stand on end and a chill through the body she kind of liked. Oh, her body was flowing with his energy sooo much! She couldn't help it as she moaned, not being able to help herself. That action only pressed more into her. There was hardly any pain anymore, just the feel of Sans and his incredible energy. While she did that though, she was surprised to hear Sans losing control too.

Sans was always in control. Ever since she met him, he knew exactly what he was doing. For a little while, she wondered if he orchestrated every little thing to make sure they ended up right there, like that, caressing and being with each other.

That unsteady groan of his was a sign he didn't know anything more than her. He tightened his grip on her, holding on tighter. They both could feel something incredible, moving between them. Frisk found herself actually grinding beneath him too, feeling a need to get something. Sans picked up his momentum too, fondling her breasts and stroking his tongue with hers, anything he could to find his way too.

Then, it happened, a crest of an indescribable sensation rippled through them. They both cried out, their whole bodies going rigid, and then they relaxed.

They were so relaxed with each other. Frisk watched as Sans poked out in front of her face.

"Order up?" He laughed. "Sorry, I don't know what to say afterwards."

Frisk didn't care. She didn't need a romantic. She stroked his cheekbone.

"Thank you?" Sans tried again.

This time, Frisk laughed. "Thank you too. I had a lovely time."

“Yeah. My favorite part was the sex,” Sans joked. “So? Did you want me to buy you a little jacket like mine?” Frisk didn’t understand. “For the little me inside you. Sans always needs a coat, and it seems pretty comfortable there.”

Frisk laughed again and patted his rib cage. “Don’t get too comfortable.”

“Too late. Little me’s already sleeping,” he teased. “I don’t think he wants to get up for awhile. Well, then again?” He chuckled. “Maybe I am closer to Luster than I want to admit, but so are you.”

“I’m not just addicted to your energy,” Frisk corrected him.

“Yeah, you’re addicted to my jokes too. Can’t get enough of Ol’ Sans. Or little Sans.”

“I just can’t get enough of my Sans.” Frisk kissed him for a few more minutes until she didn’t feel him anymore.

Sans got up and picked her up. “Hey? Do you think the monsters on the bridge had a fun time watching us?”

Frisk froze. “What?!” She looked up toward the bridge. No one was there. She hit his shoulder lightly. “Sans, don’t tease like that.”

“Honestly, like I would let anyone see you? I didn’t even on our announcement day. Although?” Sans looked at her with a twinkle in his light guiders. “Maybe I should have another special day with you? Show you off a little?”

Frisk just relaxed deep in his arms. She just wanted to relax there all-

“Aw shit, Papyrus! We’re gonna be late for supper and that won’t be good.” Sans looked at their clothes. “Oh, dang. I’m gonna have to tell my Brother-Father-In-Law about this. I can’t hide it.”

“Brother-Father-In-Law?” Frisk asked.

“Yeah, Frisk. You’ve figured out where Papyrus’ energy had gone, haven’t you?” Sans asked her.

So, it wasn’t her imagination. “Yes,” Frisk admitted, “but I . . . it’s just that . . .”

“Don’t matter. Don’t worry about it. Don’t think about it,” Sans assured her. “Don’t feel all weird around him, or like you’re doing your own passed on dad a disservice. It’s just an energy feeling.” He scratched his elbow. “Although that feeling is always trying to keep you protected, even from me. Eh. Let’s just get to my room, get some clothes on, and we’ll get to supper.”

Sans and Papyrus’ House . . .

He's gonna know. I should just tell. After all, they weren't even in the same clothes anymore. Frisk was in some regular clothes. He was in some of his favorite regular clothes. Frisk's hair was naturally fused almost completely blue. Why even try to pop in by the front door?

Papyrus wasn't stupid. He'd know. Even if he pretended not to know, he'd know. Sans walked down the stairs with Frisk. "So, are the yummys ready?"

Oh yeah. Papyrus looked at them brightly. "Welcome home! It's all ready." But to Sans telepathically. *You did not, Sans, what?! What the? Different clothes, from the stairs, no! You didn't.*

I did, Bro. Sans approached with Frisk. *I bubbled her at Waterfall. Our clothes got wet.*

Frisk smelled the food. "It looks so delicious, I can't wait to dig in." She took a seat.

You know me, I'm your brother first, Frisk's husband second, Pap. Remember? Sans sat down. *I'm happy. Doesn't that count for anything with you?* "Looks really good."

"Yes, well." *Maybe I shouldn't have made it, you clearly have something else you'd rather do.* Papyrus looked away. *Why?*

She's my wife. I know the energy is tough, Papyrus. You want to shelter her from the world, fine, but I'm not the world. "Catsup, Frisk?"

"No thank you," Frisk said as she grabbed some spices and put it over her food.

Papyrus stubbornly ate.

Come on. Please, stop this.

Not saying anything, Sans.

Still feel it. Sans poked his food. *It's not one way. I make her happy too. I'm not a charity case to her, she didn't just do that to make me feel better!* "Catsup, Pap? Or is it just too beneath you?"

Frisk gave Sans an odd look. She had no idea about the conversation they were having at that moment.

You're going to leave with her, aren't you? Papyrus looked at his food. *I'm going to lose both of you.*

Yeah. Years together was much stronger than instinct. Heck, a lifetime together. *I don't know yet what we'll do. But she said it's gonna be together. And, I'm gonna rehave the announcement soon.*

"I guess, everyone has to grow up sometime, Papyrus said.

Frisk just looked at him. “What?”

“Maybe we don’t have to go too far?” Sans asked. “Frisk, do you think that, you could go to school closer to here?”

Frisk nodded. “Whatever makes it easier.”

“Really?” Papyrus asked her. “You’d really do that?”

“Well? I don’t really want to get that far from everyone,” Frisk admitted as she took a bite. She swallowed it. “I got really close to Alphys and Undyne. I love Sans, and you mean a lot to me too, Papyrus.”

Did you hear that?! She said she loved me like, like it was the most common thing in the world! She loves me, Papyrus!

“Yes. You mean the world to us too!” Papyrus agreed. He looked toward Sans and nodded. *She is a keeper brother. Forever.* He picked up a piece of his food. “And you are too.”

Sans cheekbones and teeth couldn’t have raised any higher. “Thanks, Papyrus.”

Papyrus raised his glass. “To the Skeletons! May we live long, prosper, and eventually grow in number.”

“Yeah, but not that fast,” Frisk said to Papyrus as she clinked her glass with his and Sans.

Six months later . . .

“I really, I got this.” Alphys tried to hold her bag. “I got it.” Undyne helped her anyway and she smiled at her, picking up the smaller bag. “Thanks.”

“Yep. We ready?” Undyne asked Frisk.

“Almost,” Frisk said. “A skeleton is missing.”

“Well, he’d better hurry, moving in time will not be open forever,” Papyrus warned. “Sans! Move it!”

“Getting there.” Sans held a simple suitcase. During the time that he was checking the contracts for Frisk and learning how it worked, there had been a breakthrough for the Monster Kingdom. Toriel and Asgore had to make a difficult decision when Kudara shared information with them, and they rejected to go against the humans.

Not wanting their human allies to be left in the dark, Toriel and Asgore informed Initiative.

After hearing of the encounter, Initiative sent Frank Clipper, and for the first time, other humans including someone from the districts of Peacemaker and Civilian came to. They respected the Underground for telling them the truth, and real progress was finally being made. The Underground was promised their entire half back, which was half of Initiative. Progress was slow, and with building and streets already made, Initiative and the Underground simply moved forward and backward a little each day.

Monsters were starting to live in the buildings and houses of what Initiative had, while Initiative was using a compromising solution and learning to rebuild upward safely, so that their residents that were being moved away from Underground's property had a place to stay.

Day by day, progress was made in all areas, including education. By passing a test, a monster could be placed in schools. And with Toriel being so close to Frisk and Sans?

College placement came first.

There were two college factions now. One for those who were all human, and the other that compromised and now allowed monsters. So, more than Frisk were ready to go.

Sans, Papyrus, Undyne, Alphys, and a handful of other monsters were beginning college that day, having easily passed the college placements.

No more guarding. Each and every one of them could now have a future in something different. Whatever they wanted. Just like Frisk.

Best of all? With all the monsters starting to thin out across Initiative, Grillby separated from Mettaton and opened his old place back up. He watched as Gloria opened the door with Flowey. "He's going to?"

"What do you *mean* am I going to?" Flowey complained from his pot in Gloria's arms. "You think I'm just going to let my Morning Glory leave without me? Never, ever." He rubbed up against her, vining around her arm. "She's mine 'til the end."

"Okay, okay, save the pollination for the bedroom," Sans said as he went toward Frisk. "Ready?"

Frisk nodded.

"Alright then." Sans looked around his house one final time. They'd still have it. Still keep it. Still have a place to come home to for the holidays. But even Papyrus was ready to move on. Move on from the darkness of the Underground into a new future.

With human allies beside them, but the other Monster Kingdoms now against them, he didn't know what the future held. But as long as he kept up his own hope and determination?

It'd be a future worth having.

The End

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