The Ones Who don’t QUIT

“Don't you have anything better to do?" Frisk heard for the twentieth time.

Frisk thought for a moment. *Do I?* They never really thought about it; they always just believed they needed to do this, to save the one being without hope. Frisk finally pondered over it and came to the conclusion that yes, this was what they needed to do. They had nothing better to do than what they were doing right now. Asriel, after all, was the one who had the power to release the whole of the monsters, so he deserved to live a long, happy life. Frisk reached out their hand and called Asriel's name.

“What are you doing, Frisk?" asked the monster, confused.

“I truly have nothing better to do," replied Frisk. “And, by the look of things, I think you need something better to do."

With that, the fluffy goat boy took Frisk's hand. Together, they walked to Toriel’s house. Asriel's head bowed as he remembered his life with his parents. They headed to the room where Frisk stayed their first night in the ruins and sat on the bed. Frisk looked at the wall, unsure of what to say.

“You know, Frisk--"

“Yes, I know. You'll turn back into Flowey soon. You've told me that before. But, I believe that won't happen; not when you have the DETERMINATION you do and I am here to support you." They turned to Asriel and looked at him straight in the eyes. “You are a good person, Asriel. You may not be able to feel it in a little while, but you have to know it's true. Just hold on to yourself and hold onto me and we'll figure this out."

“Okay." He took a deep breath. “I need to rest. Can we wait to head up for a few minutes?"

“Sure. Anything for you, brother."

At the word "brother," Asriel attacked Frisk, almost strangling them with a tight hug. He cried for a few moments before they both passed out.

\* \* \*

When Frisk awoke, Asriel was nowhere to be found. They spent several minutes wandering around the house before they spotted, in a small ceramic pot, a yellow, grinning flower. *No.*

“You IDIOT! You thought little weenie Asriel could stop ME from coming back? It hardly took any effort to put him back in his place. But, I still have to wonder; why, exactly did you let me go? Now that I know you're not mute, ANSWER ME! I-I just need to understand!"

“For one, I don't like hurting anyone, not even a psychopathic murderer. I prefer to take a peaceful approach. By now, you know that it works, as even YOU couldn't stop me from destroying you with kindness. The reason I spared you is that I knew that it would be the only way to really win." Frisk smiled. “Also, I get satisfaction from the way people react to me. Their smiles, their laughs, their happiness; it makes me feel like I've done something, you know? You never gave me satisfaction, but your real self sure made me feel good. All I want now is the family that Asriel and I deserve!"

“Why should I give you satisfaction when I am searching for it as well?"

“You'll never get ANY satisfaction if you don't have a SOUL! And, you don't have a choice, anyway. Come on!"

With that, Frisk picked up the pot that Flowey was in and made the trek up to where their friends were waiting.

\* \* \*

“Alright, everyone, let's go!" said Frisk quickly so that their friends wouldn't have time to notice that the flower he was holding had a face. They wanted to get to the surface first and make plans there.

“Uhhh... Uhhh..." Alphys attempted but was cut short by Frisk.

“Not now, Alphys! We shall go forth and enjoy the splendor of the world ahead!" Frisk said in the Torielesque tone he could.

“Child, you needn't speak in such a way, for you are very young," Toriel half-scolded.

“Come on, mom!"

“MOM!" screamed the flower. Frisk held him tight.

“What?" questioned Toriel. “Are you okay, little flower?”

Everyone gathered close and looked at Flowey. The yellow plant started crying. Soon enough, the pot started to overflow. As their friends (except for Alphys) showed compassion toward the little plant, Frisk's DETERMINATION grew. Beings needed a SOUL to feel happiness, right? They had a plan.

"Uhh…Uhhhh…" Alphys tried again, eyes wide in horror as the memories flooded her head.

"OH MY GOD! THAT'S THE FLOWER THAT LIKES ME SO MUCH!" Sans looked at Papyrus, worried.

"No…this is all a dream," Alphys said.

"No, Alphys, it's not. But don't worry; none of you worry! It's not going to hurt you! It's crying! Show some sympathy. Come on! Let's make this flower happy!" Frisk cheered the monsters on as they showed compassion toward the creature.

Encouragement; kind words; a struggled, somewhat creepy caresses from Alphys; and shouting from Papyrus (NYEH!) all were thrown at Flowey, and he remembered what the emotions felt like. It was strange; a tingling was emanating from his body similar to what he felt while he was absorbing the souls of the Underground. Looking up, he saw a grey-and-red heart glowing into existence. Before Flowey could do anything, though, it was gone. Depressed, the plant cried even harder, unable to understand the sad truth of his existence.

While everyone was paying attention to Flowey, Frisk had backed off. While they were expecting something, hoping anything would happen, they were not expecting Asriel's very SOUL to just show up. Before thinking of any consequences, Frisk absorbed the SOUL.

\* \* \*

WITHIN FRISK'S CONSCIOUSNESS

“Where am I?" asked Asriel and Chara simultaneously.

“You're inside of me," answered Frisk.

“Damn, I hurt like I just got mauled by a bear," Chara said.

“Why did you absorb us, Frisk?"

Not knowing how Asriel knew their name, Frisk assumed that the body and SOUL were always connected. They were unable to speak, too much in shock to answer.

“ANSWER US!" Chara shot.

“I need to SAVE you, Asriel. I need you to be happy. Chara, this doesn't have anything to do with you. You've hurt so many people, even your own brother. Your time is up."

“What? Don't you know? I'm bound to Asriel's SOUL!"

“They're right, Frisk. I absorbed their SOUL a long time ago. I'm sorry, you can't save my SOUL. And I don't know if I would be able to let go if I tried."

“That's right, Asriel. I'm always here for you. I am your sibling, after all. We love each other, right?" The fallen child grinned at Frisk. Their rosy cheeks and red eyes pierced Frisk's very being, but Frisk held on.

Asriel noticed Frisk's DETERMINATION worn on the child’s face. He also noticed the evil grin Chara held. He began to cry. He glanced at Chara, then held his gaze on Frisk.

“You know, maybe I am willing to let go. Chara was never REALLY my friend. They hated humanity and, now that I have a new perspective, I think they were using us! Frisk! You’ve opened my eyes!" He jerked his head at Chara. “You were USING us, weren't you! I can't believe I trusted you!"

Shocked, Chara looked around nervously. “You...you really think that? I…I'm your FRIEND, Asriel! All of those years; we grew up together! Asriel, please! I don't want to die! If you let me go, I'll die!"

Asriel ignored them. “Frisk, we didn't live in the timeline. Our combined SOULS lived behind the scenes. With the help of a skeleton—I think his name was Aster, or Gaster, or something—we had the DETERMINATION and raw power to live while Flowey reset time after time. We were dormant until you revived us. I can't thank you enough, Frisk." He turned with a grim frown toward the first child. “I think you are ready to go, Chara."

“Wh…what? You, too, Asriel? No, I'm not ready!"

With that, Asriel released the grasp he had on Chara's SOUL. It was done.

“Thanks again, Frisk. What do I owe you--Oh!"

Frisk embraced the fluffy monster. They had to say, Asriel was quite comfortable.

“Nothing,” Frisk replied. “Nothing but your friendship…brother.” They released Asriel, who was now crying harder than Flowey.

“Chara never treated me this way. They never really liked to talk, or play many games, or well, anything brotherly. I'm glad you're here.”

“I’m glad I could save you.”

\* \* \*

A red heart flew above the heads of the monsters. As if not governed by the laws of inertia, it instantly stopped in midair and exploded into thousands of pieces.

“Frisk!” Undyne called. “What's going on?”

A white light momentarily blinded the friends.

“T-the f-fl-flower! I-it's gone!” Alphys cried.

“Frisk, do you have an explanation for…”

Toriel was unable to finish as a pure white SOUL flew across the room into a little fluffy monster whose arms encircled an innocent-looking child donning a striped shirt. The two children let go of each other and turned to face Frisk's friends.

“Everyone, this is...”

“yeah. we know, kid. or, at least, i do. you're the prince, ain'tcha?”

“WOWIE! ANOTHER ASGORE CLONE! WHO KNEW ASGORE WAS POPULAR ENOUGH TO BE CLONED SO MUCH!”

“Yes, yes I am, Sans,” replied Asriel. “For those who don't already know, howdy! My name is Asriel Dreemurr. Uh, not my dad’s clone.”

“OH! WELL, THAT’S A LETDOWN…”

“My child!” exclaimed Toriel and Asgore in unison, who both ran to give Asriel the biggest hug of his life. Frisk joined as well.

“Dreemurr Family hug!” Frisk playfully shouted. *This is the best day of my life!*

\* \* \*

As Frisk expected, the shattering of the barrier made world headlines. What did surprise them, though, was the fact that their biological parents showed up with authorities.

“We are searching for a ‘Frisk Moore.’” Said one of the men. “Her mother informed us that she climbed Mt. Ebott today.”

“Oh! I almost thought you were talking to me!” Frisk giggled. *Today! I climbed Mt. Ebott a week ago!* “My name is Frisk Dreemurr. Nice to meet you, sir!”

“There you are, Frisk!” They recoiled from their father. “What's wrong? Aren't you happy to see us?”

“I don't know who you are. I am Prince Frisk Dreemurr, and this is my brother, Prince Asriel of the Underground.” They gestured toward Asriel and smiled.

“You don't have a brother! Especially not that scumbag!” their mother screeched.

“What did you call my brother?” “What did you call me?” “What did you call our son?” Frisk, Asriel, and Asgore and Toriel, respectively, asked. Rhetorically, of course.

“Monsters are nothing but dirty creatures without souls. Let's go, Frisk,” she responded.

“What? Are you asking me to leave my family? Sorry, human, but you are mistaken. I am a monster; remember that monsters have many different forms. Also, all monsters have souls. I can prove that.” Frisk held out their bright red soul for the woman to see, while Asriel, Asgore, Toriel, Undyne, Alphys, Sans, and Papyrus did the same.

“I'll be damned,” said Frisk's father. “It doesn't matter, though. Come with us, girl! According to the laws of the United States of America--”

“No! You are NOT my father, I am NOT a girl, and we are NOT in the United States!" Frisk snapped. “My father is Asgore Dreemurr, my mother is Toriel Dreemurr, I have a brother named Asriel Dreemurr, I do not associate with a gender, we are in the Underground, and my name is FRISK DREEMURR!"

"Well, you match the photographic identification exactly. Frisk, you will come with us, now. We will also set up an appointment with a psychiatrist. That is not your real family. you must have experienced some kind of trauma—whoa!" The man was flung off of Frisk and more men tried to grasp them. He had used a swab to grab some skin off of Frisk before flying through the air and landing at the mouth of the cave.

Quickly, Frisk formed a barrier between them and the men. They then held up a magical fireball, impossible for a human.

"I am very proud, Frisk; you are an extraordinary monster." Toriel fought to hold back tears.

"GO, FRISK! YOU ARE GREAT!" called Papyrus.

"goat get 'em, kid."

The paparazzi fled the Underground in horror, leaving only child authorities and Frisk's parents. Frisk put out the flame.

"Like I said, you're not my parents. You may have been Frisk Moore’s parents, but because you abused them, made them do those terrible things, they had the DETERMINATION to separate themselves from you. The name 'Moore' has no meaning anymore. As you can see, I am using magic, a skill only monsters can use; I’m a monster. Stop trying to get me back so that I can become your slave again. You don't love anyone at all"

"But, Frisk, we DO love you!"

Frisk began to tear up. A noticeable shaking in their voice worried Toriel. “You sat around ALL DAY while I cleaned, made you food, bought you beer and wine, and was forced to 'relieve' you! I never got an education or any affection. Authorities, check the records of every school district; ‘Frisk Moore’ didn't go anywhere! In fact, I learned more from my mother than I ever did before I climbed Ebott."

"I'm flattered!" Toriel bent down and embraced Frisk.

"I would ask you, 'is this true, ma'am?' but you'd say 'no' anyway, so we'll just run a full report." one man said.

Someone came running in. "DNA tests negative. Were you adopted, Frisk?"

*Oh. Maybe I really AM Toriel and Asgore's child now.* “All I know is that they’re my family. They didn't adopt me. Alphys, is there a test we can run similar to that of human DNA testing?"

"That won't be necessary," Frisk's biological (?) father quickly interrupted, "She's our daughter, and she'll be coming home with us. Hurry up, Frisk!"

"No, they won't yet." A tall woman in a lab coat sporting a menacing glare entered the cavern. She spun around to face Alphys. "so, your name is Alphys. I'm Professor Grace, nice to meet you! Let's do this test that Frisk suggested, hm?" Her spooky look transformed into a friendly smile as she shook Alphys's hand.

"N-nice to m-m-meet you…t-too? Th-this way, G-Grace, to my l-l-lab."

She hurried off toward Hotland. Grace jogged along with her.

"You don't need to be nervous around me Alphys! I want to help Frisk. I actually witnessed what their parents did years ago.”

“Why don’t you j-just say s-say that?”

“I think this test may prove more than what one voice could say. Again, though, you don’t have to be afraid of me. Why are you stuttering?”

Frisk tugged on Grace’s shirt and whispered, “She did some horrible things, Ms. Grace. Not on purpose, but she did them, and she hates it. Fortunately, she’s starting to feel better. Don’t pry anymore, or she might get worse, and I don’t want that.”

“Of course,” she said to the child, then turned to Alphys. “Can you explain this monster identification test to me?”

“Y-yes. You see, a monster’s body is comprised primarily of magic, whereas humans are composed of cells and water. Because a monster’s SOUL is completely connected with the body, it is easy to run tests on it without hurting anything. We have learned that parents of a monster use part of their soul when they have a child. It can be regenerated in a few weeks through regular nutrition, though, so it doesn’t permanently harm them. Using two permanent imprints on the soul left from creation, we can trace a monster’s SOUL to the ones that created it.”

“Wow! How interesting! I have much to learn from you, Alphys.”

Alphys smiled, clearly happy that someone cared about her work so much.

\* \* \*

In the lab, Frisk presented their SOUL to Alphys for inspection. After a few mechanical whirrs, a display in front of Frisk showed two strings of text.

“Those are SOUL identification strings. I wrote an algorithm that is able to make a unique string for each soul identified from the conscious data flowing from them.” Alphys looked proud. “Those two strings happen to match the SOULS that belong to none other than Toriel and Asgore!”

Frisk made an expression that looked surprised, relieved, and ecstatic at the same time.

“How, Frisk?” Asgore asked before he and Toriel fell on their knees and squeezed Frisk gently.

“Our children! Let us discuss what has happened over pie. I have so many questions!”

“So, uh…you’re my real sibling, huh? That’s AWESOME! I love you so much!”

Asriel quickly joined the party, as did all the other monsters and Grace.

“Mr. and Mrs. Moore, you are under arrest for attempted kidnapping, child abuse, and other various crimes.”

“What? But you don’t even have any evidence against us! I don’t understand how you could believe such a vile creature! Look at her! She looks like she’s going to kill something!”

Alphys just smiled as the man and woman were dragged away.

Undyne walked over to Alphys and smooched her right on the lips.

“Nice work, nerd!” she said as her huge cheeky smile took over her face. Alphys blushed redder than she had ever been.

“Everyone, mom made a suggestion. Let’s go Home and have some B-scotch pie!”

“B-scotch pie, Tori?” Asgore’s mouth hung open, drooling.

“Don’t ‘Tori’ me, Asgore! Well, not now…”

“Asgore’s been trying to perfect that recipe for years! Do you think you could teach both of us how to make it, Toriel?”

“Indeed, Undyne. Let us make our way to the ruins, as all of the ingredients are already there.”

“i think we’ll get there faster if i help.”

\* \* \*

“Sans, w-what did you do?” Alphys asked.

“ill explain later, alph”

“Did you just…teleport?”

“sure”

“Okay, I’ll get started on the pie. Would anyone care to help?”

“Coming Tori!” Asgore said, trying not to seem too enthusiastic.

“Heck yeah!” Undyne shouted, definitely not hiding any of her excitement.

“Don’t cook without me!”

Asriel and Frisk came along, too, while Alphys, Grace, and Sans sat down and enjoyed some tea together. The two scientists were fascinated by each other’s details on how the two kinds of creatures worked while Sans relaxed and listened.

“I don’t understand, though! If Asriel died centuries ago, how is he alive now?”

“I really don’t know, Grace. Uh, I have a few hypotheses, however.”

Frisk peered into the library from the kitchen before walking over to Alphys. Frisk whispered something to her while Asriel also exited the kitchen. Both children took a seat at the table.

“O-Oh. R-really? Um…G-Grace. W-well. I hadn’t even th-thought of that. M-maybe my experiments had a…good side?”

\*CRASH!

“Don’t worry!” Toriel called. “The pie is done and has been set out to cool.”

Papyrus, Undyne, and Asgore rushed out of the kitchen, Toriel close behind carrying the Butterscotch-Cinnamon Pie. When everyone was seated, Toriel stood up.

“Shall we begin? I think we should start at the beginning, if that’s okay with you, Asriel and Frisk.”

“Okay then… well, when I died, Dad, my dust fell on your flower patch. My soul, with Chara’s, disappeared like any monster’s. The next thing I remember; I have two memories of the same time. One was extremely vague… I can hardly recall it. The other was of me, in as a flower. I just… woke up without arms or legs; I don’t know why or how, but it was awful.”

“Oh my god, Asriel! I am so sorry! I made you like that! It was a mistake. While I was working for your father, I was researching DETERMINATION and injected it into a flower.”

“There’s no need to be sorry. I’m fine now, aren’t I?”

“And, Alphys, it’s thanks to you that Asriel is alive again. You should be proud of that! Anyway, everyone, I’ll pick up. The flower, a non-sentient object needed sentience, or self-identification, to be able to contain DETERMINATION. Asriel’s dust, any monster dust, contains parts of the fallen person. That’s why you use it in funerals; I read about it. Anyway, the flower ‘became’ Asriel by taking on his person.”

“Wait… so, this isn’t… Asriel?”

“Hold on. We’re not there yet.”

“What makes you think I can’t tell my own story?”

“You told me everything and I have knowledge from other sources, like Alphys. I’ll tell it.”

“Okay.”

“The flower, who gave himself the nickname ‘Flowey,’ could not feel emotions, as he was soulless. He found you both, Mom and Dad, and you helped him the best you could, but failed.”

“I couldn’t take it, and ended my existence… or, tried to. DETERMINATION is an incredibly strong power. What it does is alters the universe in favor of the determined in the form of saving, loading, and resetting. When I died, I loaded, back to my SAVE point… Dad’s garden.”

“Flowey used his powers for good at first; reset after reset, he found the ins and outs of everyone in the underground. But, because he didn’t feel compassion, he quickly became bored. He started to kill people. The interesting thing, though, is that the powers of DETERMINATION only work for the being with the highest concentration of it. When I fell into the Underground, my power vastly outweighed Flowey’s, and now I have the powers of DETERMINATION. Remember the flower that captured you all? That was Flowey. He absorbed your souls, and that power gave him the ability to take on his ‘real form’—Asriel. Now, to answer your question, this was not ‘really’ Asriel per-se. It was a flower who took on the persona, memories, and personality of him—an unnatural copy. But, remember, no one ever keeps the same body. We grow up; we change. What makes us ‘us’ is our personality, our character, our soul. Because he has his soul, the one-hundred-per-cent real, original Asriel Dreemurr is sitting right next to me.”

\*Sniffle\* “Wow, Frisk. That… that makes me feel so much better.”

“Alphys, it’s because of you that we have Asriel back. If there hadn’t been a vessel for Asriel’s physicality, he wouldn’t be here, would he?”

“W-well, n-no. I suppose not!”

“When Asriel assumed his ‘true’ form, using SOUL power, he attacked me and became the ‘God of Hyperdeath.’”

“I used to hear him and Chara calling themselves things like that.”

“Y-yeah. Uh, I invented those moves a long time ago, for fun.”

“Ha! Nice! Anyway, I awakened all of your souls in Asriel, where we worked together to remind him of the compassion he once again contained.”

“I felt it, all of your souls beating as one. I felt how much hope you had, how much you loved Frisk. I broke the barrier with the power of the six human souls and all of the monsters’ souls. After that… after that… Mom, Dad, I was so afraid. I didn’t have s-soul inside m-me. I was going to be a flower again. I ran away to the ruins where Chara was buried. I missed them. Well, one memory says that.”

“I ran down to the ruins as fast as I could. I spoke with Asriel. I couldn’t think of a way to save him. Sans, forgive me: I reset.”

“i know.”

“Well, actually make that twenty times. I couldn’t let Asriel die. On that twentieth run, I told myself that I just had to do it. I took Asriel’s hand and brought him to Home. Asriel told me he needed to rest, but when I woke up, he had become Flowey again. I brought him up to you guys, and when you were all paying attention to him….”

“So I did see my soul…”

“Yes. I absorbed it. Then-”

“Then you calmed me down and directed my soul at Flowey and I got my body back!” Asriel interrupted. “That brings us to the present.”

“WOWIE! THAT WAS A VERY INTERESTING STORY!”

“Oh, Asriel, you told me there was someone else who helped you. Who was that, again?”

“Uhm, I think his name was Aster or… Doctor Gaster maybe?”

Sans stood up and opened his left eye.

“kid, are you looking for a bad time?”

\* \* \*

“Brother, why don’t you hand me the wrench?”

“sure thing”

The skeleton walked carefully along the narrow path of metal suspended over blazing hot magma to a toolbox at the far end.

“hey, ‘dubs, which one?”

“The one with the blue handle, please.”

“ok”

“Let me just… tighten this up…”

The larger skeleton stood up and took the smaller one’s hand.

“Let’s head on home, shall we?”

“ok”

In an instant, they were standing in their house in New Home.

“Good afternoon, Papyrus!”

“Hello, Sans! Hello, Big Ol’ Duberooski!”

“sup, pap?”

“OH, NOTHING, AS USUAL. TRYING TO FIND A FITTING JOB FOR THE GREATNESS THAT IS I!”

“Man, your ego sure is fed, isn’t it? So, have you found any job openings?”

“NO, BUT I DID HAPPEN TO FIND THE HOME OF THE LEADER OF THE ROYAL GUARD!”

“good luck with that, papyrus. i hear that she’s really tough”

“HOW WOULD YOU KNOW THAT?”

“y’know. through the grapevine. What’s for dinner, ‘dubs?”

“Well, I thought that you might like some pasta! Does that sound appetizing for everyone?”

“PAPYRUS APPROVES!”

“ok”

“Well, then; let’s get started!

\* \* \*

“No, no! Sans, please don’t! What did I do?”

Sans was beginning to calm down.

“oh, i just got a little worked up; that’s all. don’t worry about it.”

“Sans, what’s the matter?” Toriel said as she looked sternly at Sans.

“heh. see, gaster was my brother.”

“Oh. I’m really sorry. What happened to him?”

“he was the royal scientist before you, alphys; you would probably remember that, too if he wasn’t erased from the universe.”

“What? How does that work? How do YOU remember?”

“I DON’T EVEN REMEMBER HAVING ANOTHER BROTHER!”

“i worked as his assistant. all of his experiments had an effect on me, allowing my mind and soul to partially understand the outside existence of the timeline. this means that i can remember my brother and even recognize time manipulations.”

“Yeah! That’s right!”

“heh. anyway, i loved my brother and lost him when he fell into his creation. it really set me off when you mentioned it.”

“Maybe this might help cheer you up: ‘I am the legendary fartmaster!’”

“Frisk!” Toriel reprimanded, “that is very immature!”

“your mom’s right, frisk, that was immature. but, tori, it’s also my triple-secret codeword that only a time-traveler would know.”

“Ah, I see. Very well, then.”

“sorry i overreacted, kid. family matters to me, and hopefully, it does to you, too.”

“Sure does!” they said before nuzzling against Asriel yet again. “Sans, I understand. No need to worry.”

“thanks, bucko.”

“Sans, are you comfortable telling us more about your brother?”

“nah. not now. maybe later. or never.”

“Alright.” (Also, RIGHT NOW, go back to part five and CLICK or TAP on the phrase “exploded into thousands of pieces” if you haven’t already)